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SECRET AGENT OF JAPAN

A Handbook to Japanese Imperialism

by

AMLETO VESPA

With an Introductory Note by

H. J. TIMPERLEY

*China Correspondent
of the Manchester Guardian*

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

by H. J. TIMPERLEY

HAVING BEEN INVITED to write an introductory note to this book, I venture here to offer a brief explanation of the circumstances surrounding its publication, as well as a short account of the author, Mr. Amleto Vespa.

I first made the acquaintance of Mr. Vespa at Shanghai in the Autumn of 1936 when he came to see me with the object of enlisting my assistance in giving publicity to the seizure of his wife and family by the Japanese authorities at Tsingtao while *en route* by steamer from Dairen to join him in Shanghai. I gave Mr. Vespa a note to a colleague in charge of one of the local newspapers and soon afterwards he disappeared from my ken.

Towards the end of 1937, Mr. Vespa came to see me again. He told me he had written a book about his experiences in the employ of the Japanese Secret Service in Manchuria, and wanted advice about getting it published. When I asked him why he had come to me about the matter he replied: "Because you know about such things, and because you also have been in trouble with the Japanese¹

¹ During December, 1937, I became involved in a controversy with the Japanese authorities when I challenged their right to censor my messages to the *Manchester Guardian*.

and I feel sure you will not give me away. If the Japanese knew that I had written this book they would bump me off immediately. Now that I have finished the thing I want to arrange for its publication as quickly as possible, so that I may get my family out of Shanghai."

I promised to look into the matter, but with my tongue in my cheek, as I had a book of my own on hand and knew I should not be able to spare time to read the kind of thing which I feared Mr. Vespa might produce.

When he delivered the manuscript to me a day or two later, I turned it over to a critically minded journalistic colleague and asked him to give me his frank reaction to it. To my surprise, I received a most enthusiastic report, but still I was not satisfied and decided to apply one more test. I explained the situation to a trusted friend who was a foreign government official and, as such, had exceptionally good facilities for testing the truth of Mr. Vespa's statements. After reading through the manuscript and making careful enquiries, the official asked whether I could arrange for him to meet the author so that he might cross-examine him on certain points which seemed to require clarification. The rendezvous was arranged, and after many lengthy conferences he was convinced that Mr. Vespa was telling the truth.

"Familiar as I am, through investigation, with most of the abuses described," he wrote, "reading of the depths of cynicism, corruption, vice and

savagery revealed as characteristic of the Japanese army's method of ruling new subjects, has been for me an emotionally shattering experience. To Hitler and Mussolini, avowed defenders of western civilization, it is a bitter rebuke, and I believe that even they, if they should read this book, would be alarmed at the sort of thing they are defending instead.

"To the dyed-in-the-wool conservatives in England, of the 'they-are-doing-no-more-than-we-did' school, it should provide a clear object lesson, and for the pacifist isolationists it should be a strong antidote to their notions of the law and order and prosperity which Japan's invasion means for subject peoples.

"This is the most powerful indictment I have ever read, of a class, a whole people, in fact of 'the whole system of organized injustice by which few govern many, hundreds of millions work in darkness to support a few thousands in ease, group imposes on group, and the greater part of the human race has to live in filth and starvation to maintain artificial means of profit'."

Desiring a third opinion, I asked my friend, Edgar Snow, author of *Red Star Over China*, to read the manuscript; and he returned it to me with the following comment: "In so far as I know about certain of the events, personalities and conditions it describes, the book bears every internal evidence of authenticity. It is an inside story of unquestionably unique value."

Since then, I have personally gone over the manuscript, word by word, using as a criterion the knowledge of conditions in Manchuria which I gained in the course of visits there during 1933, 1934 and 1935 as correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* and *Asia Magazine*. It is my conviction that in the main Mr. Vespa's remarkable story must be accepted as authentic.

So much for the book. The reader will doubtless wish to know something of the author's earlier background.

Amleto Vespa was born in Aquila, Italy, in 1888. At the age of 22, after having completed his education and his military service, he went to Mexico and joined the Revolutionary Army as an officer under General Francisco Madera. In the course of his service in Mexico he was twice wounded and attained the rank of captain.

In 1912, according to Mr. Vespa's own story, he left Mexico and travelled as a free-lance journalist through the United States, South America, Australia, French Indo-China and China. In the course of his journeyings he visited places as far distant as the borders of Tibet, Mongolia and Eastern Siberia.

In 1916, during the World War, the Allied powers availed themselves of his expert knowledge of the Chinese marches and he was attached to their Intelligence Service, following the Japanese Army into the Maritime and Amur provinces, to Baikal and Nicholaevsk. During these years Mr. Vespa had exceptional opportunities of meeting prominent

Chinese and Japanese, amongst whom was Marshal Chang Tso-lin, at that time Governor-General of Manchuria; and after the War, in 1920, he joined the Manchurian warlord's service. From that moment he became a real power in the backstage politics of Manchuria.

Before long, however, Mr. Vespa's new connection brought him into conflict with his own authorities, as Italian arms were being smuggled into Manchuria and it was his business to check the traffic if Marshal Chang was to maintain any semblance of order within his territory. Eventually, he decided to change his nationality by becoming a Chinese citizen, his sponsor being General Chu Ching-lan, at that time Governor-General of the Chinese Eastern Railway zone, and his guarantors General Wen Ying-hsing, then head of the North Manchuria Police, and General Ao Chi-tseng, Chief of the Chinese Eastern Railway Police. This was no hole and corner business, but a public, authentic, open and notarial act. In this way he maintained his independence of action, and, what was equally important, his livelihood. Despite his change of nationality, however, Mr. Vespa remained what he still is—a loyal fascist and an ardent admirer of Mussolini.

After the assassination of Marshal Chang Tso-lin in 1928, allegedly by Japanese agents, Mr. Vespa suddenly found himself faced once again with a struggle for existence, and embarked upon various commercial undertakings. In 1932, however, the

Japanese had become masters of Manchuria, and, with it, masters of Mr. Vespa's own fate. They held him to ransom by the simple method of threatening the safety of his family if he refused to serve them. Thus Mr. Vespa became the unwilling tool of the Japanese Secret Service and that is what makes this book of prime importance to the world today. No one has ever been and certainly no one is ever likely again to be in such a privileged position under the Japanese. What he says deserves our attention and he himself deserves our gratitude for the courage he has shown in publishing his amazing experiences.

The change of nationality which had freed Mr. Vespa from interference by Italian officials placed him at the mercy of the Japanese when they took charge of Manchuria. With the lives of his loved ones at stake, he felt that he had no alternative but to swallow his feelings, steel his nerves, and obey, but his revulsion to the methods employed by the Japanese in their attempt to subjugate Manchuria emerges from every chapter. Caught in the machine, his efforts were directed to saving himself and his family from the fate which he had seen others suffer who had revolted too late against the venality and viciousness of his new masters.

Mr. Vespa has told his own story in his own inimitable way, without, in the American phrase, "pulling his punches". It is the story of a man who writes with passionate indignation of events which have left him with a feeling of profound disgust for the Japanese race as a whole. It will be noted, how-

ever, that here and there, as in the case of Marshal Muto and Colonel Oi, he speaks in the highest terms of one or two individual Japanese officials who excited his admiration because of their sterling qualities.

For my own part—and I know this view is shared by the publishers of this volume—I believe the Japanese nation as a whole to consist largely of patient and hard-working people, much like the peasants of China, of India or of Europe. The Japanese people are not to blame for the crimes of their ruling military and financial class; they are, indeed, in the final analysis, as much the victims of it as are the people of China themselves. In so far as the Japanese people appear to aid and abet these abominations, they do so partly from ignorance of what is really going on, and partly because they are being conditioned to believe that honour and the supremacy of Japan are synonymous.

H. J. T.

London

June 22, 1938

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CHAPTER I

ITALIAN INTO CHINESE

DURING MY YEARS as Secret Service Agent in the Far East since 1916, I became well acquainted with many Chinese officials and officers. Amongst them was Marshal Chang Tso-lin, the warlord of Manchuria. On several occasions, knowing the nature of my work, he had requested me to keep him posted on the true conditions of the Chinese living in Russia, and also to supply him with other useful information which I was always glad to impart. Repeatedly he informed me that if I should decide to stay in the Orient for good, he would be glad to have me in his service. His offer was attractive. I took stock of the general situation. The deplorable state of affairs in Europe after the World War made me decide to accept the invitation, and so, on September 24, 1920, I entered the Secret Service of Marshal Chang Tso-lin, Governor-General of the three eastern provinces known as Manchuria.

The first condition which the Marshal requested of me was that no one should know that I was working for him, except General Wu Shu-chen, Governor of Heilungkiang, one of the Manchurian provinces, who was his closest friend and with whom I was to keep in touch for orders and instructions, but that I should let it be believed that I was

still under the orders of my own Government or of the Allied Powers.¹

Whenever I had to pay one of my rare visits to Marshal Chang Tso-lin in Mukden, I had to do so under cover of night, dressed like a Chinese, wearing dark goggles, my European hat pulled over my eyes, and escorted by one of his faithful adjutants.

For eight years I worked for the Marshal, and it gives me pleasure to be able to state that I always found him a man of honour and courage. True to his word, he was a splendid chief for those who served him faithfully; very severe with those who committed errors or tried to abuse his trust in them, he was implacable with traitors.

During all those years in Russia, in Mongolia, in Korea, and in China, I carried on my work under different names and with different passports. It was all a necessary part of the game.

My assignments were many and varied: to gather political information, to keep an eye on the agents of other nations, to hunt bandits, smugglers of arms and narcotics, white-slave traders who exported thousands of young Russian women refugees from the revolution, to keep a check on Soviet and on Japanese activities.

It was necessary for me to adopt in all sincerity for a while different professions and trades, such as, for instance, that of gold or coal-mining prospector in Mongolia, of Secretary of the Chinese Political

¹ During the World War I had been employed by the Allied intelligence service upon various assignments in Manchuria, Mongolia and Siberia.

Mission for the re-establishment of railroad communication and commerce between Manchuria and Russia, in which capacity I travelled to Russia in the inaugural train on March 7, 1911; of editor, in 1922, of a Russo-Chinese newspaper in the important railway town of Manchuli, on the Russian-Manchurian border; and, later, of correspondent of several papers in Ulan Bator (or Urga), Outer Mongolia.

In February, 1923, I was ordered back to Mukden and was told to investigate the arms smuggling, which had assumed by then dangerous proportions.

I spent my first two months at Shanhaikwan, Chinwangtao and other places on the Tientsin-Mukden line, and my efforts were soon rewarded. On March 2 I succeeded in confiscating my first 500 smuggled rifles. These proved to be of Italian make and I captured them while they were being taken through the Great Wall, some nine miles from Shanhaikwan. On March 22 I captured a further 1,000 rifles, and on April 12 my agents confiscated 200 Italian automatic pistols near Peitaiho. On April 27, some distance further inland, I caught smugglers with 2,000 more rifles. All of these were destined for the bandits in Manchuria who were making the task of the Marshal increasingly difficult, since the restoration of law and order must precede all other attempts at raising the standard of living and prosperity of the country.

As a result of my activities, which were widely known both to the public and to the interested

Powers, when I visited Tientsin in July I received a request from the Italian Consul-General, Gabrielli, to call upon him.

This I did, and he asked me what I was doing in Tientsin. I replied that I was on a pleasure trip.

"Don't talk rubbish to me," he rejoined, "I know very well what you are trying to do in Tientsin, but I warn you that while you may have some formidable documents issued to you from the Chinese authorities, being an Italian subject you are still under my jurisdiction, and if I have any more trouble from you I shall not hesitate to have you arrested and deported. Clear out now; I have nothing more to say."

I was not surprised at receiving this threat. I had, however, to fulfil my duty, and I was determined to do so honestly, irrespective of the nationality of the law-breakers.

My confiscations during the course of that summer included amongst the thousands of rifles, pistols, etc., which I was looking for, also 200 kilos of morphia and heroin and some 1,500 kilos of opium.

Finally, on November 14, with the full agreement of the Japanese authorities and the support of my Chinese masters, I went on board a Japanese steamer at Tientsin and confiscated no less than 4,000 Italian rifles. These were destined for Canton and I was amused next day to see an official notice in the local newspaper signed by the head of the Italian Concession Police, in which it was stated that "although the arms found on the Japanese steamer and confiscated by the Chinese authorities were of Italian

make, they were not from the store of the Italian Naval Barracks in Tientsin."

On November 18 an Italian police official with whom I was on the best of terms came to see me at 10 o'clock. He was obviously very upset and he spoke to this effect:

"My dear Vespa, I am charged with a mission that is revolting to me. The Consul-General Gabrielli has ordered me to communicate to you an expulsion order with immediate effect. You must be at the station within half an hour ready to leave for Shanghai by the 10.45. You are not to be allowed to speak to anyone or telephone to anyone, and you may only tell your wife that you are being called urgently to Shanghai without telling her of your expulsion order. I have orders, if you attempt to communicate with anyone, to handcuff you and send you to the station under military escort. I have my men in the garden now. I know that what I am doing to you at this moment is a terrible injustice, but I have my orders to fulfil and I hope that you will avoid an open scandal and will help me by not attempting to resist arrest. If you will give me your word of honour that you will be at the railway station within half an hour and that you will not communicate with anyone during this period except as instructed, I will go to the train and await you there with your escort."

I had no choice but to accept the conditions imposed. I gave my word to the poor man and I told my wife only that I was called urgently to Shanghai. Half an hour later I was locked in a

railway carriage with four Italian sailors and a petty officer named Romagnoli.

We reached Shanghai on November 19, and I was immediately conveyed to the cell of the Italian warship *Calabria*.

Fortunately, the Commander of the ship was a true Italian and he called me immediately into his presence. I told him my plight and he sent an officer to the Italian Consul-General, de Rossi, with a message to the effect that he would not lend a ship of the Royal Italian Navy to any irregular practice and unless he received by four o'clock that afternoon some formal document justifying the action taken against me, he would set me at liberty. The documents were never sent and at five minutes past four I left the ship a free man.

Two days later the Italian Vice-Consul, Ferrajolo, transmitted to the French Concession and to the International Settlement authorities an order for the arrest of one Amleto Vespa, sailor and deserter from the R.N. *Calabria*.

The British Chief of the Shanghai Municipal Police, who was a man of great integrity and strength of character, called on the Italian Consul-General and pointed out that if the photograph attached to the order for the arrest of Amleto Vespa truly represented the wanted man, the arrest could be effected immediately since Mr. Vespa was in the Chief's house at that moment, but that it would then be necessary for the Consul to erase the words "sailor and deserter", since Mr. Vespa was known to him as a resident in

China for 15 years. If, on the other hand, the sailor was wanted, the photograph was the wrong one and should be changed.

The Chinese authorities also protested to the Italian Minister, but were told in reply that, Mr. Vespa being an Italian subject, there could be no cause for the Chinese Government to concern itself with Mr. Vespa's affairs.

The whole matter became the subject of correspondence in the local papers and the Consul in Tientsin refused to cancel the deportation order. Eventually, so as to bring the matter to a head, in consultation with the police I allowed myself to be arrested and was brought before Vice-Consul Ferrajolo. In front of witnesses Ferrajolo was asked what charge there was against me and he was unable to reply. He muttered something about a mistake and I was set free.

A few days later I was again called to the Italian Consulate and was there informed that the Italian Minister desired my departure from China. My passage would be paid and I would be given \$5,000 to see me on my way. I refused to accept this offer.

On April 9, 1924, as I was crossing Dent Road, I was stabbed in the chest by a man who escaped. The Chinese authorities believed the assailant to be an Italian ex-sailor. Another Italian, who twice made an attempt upon my life, is still living in Shanghai. His accomplices, three Russians and one Indian, were severely punished. The Russians were sentenced by

the Chinese court in Harbin and the Indian by the British court there.

Shortly afterwards I returned to Harbin, but unfortunately found that my own authorities were making it difficult for me to earn an honest living. I therefore took a decision which was then distasteful to me and which to-day I find regrettable, since, with the change of officials and the spirit of Italy through the victory of Fascism, it would not now be necessary.

I became a Chinese citizen, my guarantors being General Chu Ching-lan, Governor-General of North Manchuria, and Generals Wen Ying-hsing, and Ao Chi-tseng respectively heads of the North Manchurian Railway and the Chinese Eastern Railway Police Forces. As a Chinese I was able to wage my war against all outlaws without hindrance from anyone.

One more attempt was made on my life, and I attach herewith the newspaper account of this which appeared the next day.

“HARBIN PLOT TO KILL AGENT FAILS

Indian Extradited When Attempt Is Made On
A. Vespa's Life

HARBIN, Jan. 12.—(Special).—The alleged attempt last month on the life of A. Vespa, general manager and part owner of the Atlantic Theater, a local silent picture house, resulting in the prompt arrest of an alleged Indian accomplice, Burr Singh, and his extradition to the British authorities at Shanghai, still leaves at large an Italian named G. Condoveros, thought to be the prime mover.

The plot was discovered on December 20 and soon afterwards the British Consul applied to the Chinese Police for the extradition of Burr Singh, who had been arrested on a charge of complicity.

According to local speculations, it appears strange and incomprehensible that Condoveros was not likewise arrested but is still at large in Harbin.

Vespa, it will be recalled by the Shanghai press, has been in China a good many years and has been prominently associated with the Mukden Intelligence Service, in which he is credited with valuable work, especially activities against Communists and arms smugglers. It is generally believed here that the alleged plot to murder him might have been motivated by personal enmity arising out of his work for the Mukden Government."

WHITE-SLAVE TRADERS

After my return to Harbin as Chang Tso-lin's agent outlaws of all sorts, racketeers, smugglers, white-slave traders and the underworld gentry declared war against me as openly as I had done against them.

Of all the refugees from Russia who escaped to the Far East before the wrath of the Bolsheviks, 90 per cent settled in Manchuria, and of these nine-tenths were absolutely destitute. Like birds of prey white-slave traders fell upon Mukden, Harbin and other centres to pluck the best-looking young women from, as they termed it, the terrors of starvation and

to bring them to more temperate countries. Of all the groups with which, in the course of my life as a Secret Agent and Police Officer, I came in contact, the one which I found to be the most powerful, the most implacable, the best organized and the richest was the noble army of white-slave traders. All the arrests that we made ended in the bribing of judges and the liberation of the criminals.

The veritable king of the white-slaves is to-day, as he was 10 years ago, a Czarist Russian. He has been arrested 23 times on unimpeachable evidence and has been freed 23 times on payment of bail amounting sometimes to as much as \$20,000 or \$25,000.

The situation was so desperate that eventually the Manchurian authorities had either to overlook the crimes or to resort to extra-legal measures to deal with them. Extra-territoriality was the cloak behind which countless foreigners carried on this wicked trade. Two Swedes who had become the terror of Manchuria within a year or two of their arrival in Harbin, were caught by my agents at the station of Harbin in the company of six respectable girls whom they were sending under escort to be "governesses" in Tientsin. Upon instructions my agents, knowing the futility of legal action, took the men to the border of the railway zone and hanged them then and there on the nearest telegraph post.

In 1926 an impeccably dressed Frenchman took two of the best rooms in the Hotel Moderne in

Harbin and soon after his arrival he inserted in various newspapers an advertisement to the effect that on application he could arrange to place typists, aged 18 and 22, in excellent positions. I put some agents to watch him and discovered that he had had no less than 20 requests for work within 24 hours and that he had paid each applicant \$20.00 as a retainer. I called upon this Frenchman myself and found him about to leave the hotel. I explained to him that I had two daughters whom I was anxious to place in suitable employment and before bringing them to him I wished to satisfy myself that the employment would be respectable and reasonably paid. The Frenchman looked me over once and asked me whether I knew who he was. "I am the Secretary of the French Concession in Shanghai," he said, "and it is for work in our Municipality that I wish to engage stenographers." (Actually, as it turned out subsequently, he had nothing to do with the French Concession.)

"But my daughters do not know any French," I replied.

"That is of no importance. In the French Concession in Shanghai there are already over 20,000 Russians and our administration has more use for Russian speaking people than French."

"Excellent," I said, and in my turn I gave him the once over. "This is just what I wanted to know. Here is my card. If you have not left Harbin by the nine o'clock train this evening, you will not live long to regret it. I need hardly remind you that white-

slave traders have in the past disappeared without leaving a trace."

The Frenchman left that night . . . without any typists.

With the arrival of the Japanese in Manchuria my war on white-slave traders was stopped immediately. As a Japanese agent¹ I was forced to see big payments being made to my superiors for permission to open and operate brothels and "collection centres" for the export of human flesh.

My agents, one evening in the early days of the Japanese occupation, hearing screams from a goods wagon in a siding at Tsitsihar, broke open the wagon door and found inside a woman called Ida Rosenberg, together with 11 Russian girls, of whom two had died of cold and none was over 16 years. This woman had bought them for a few dollars from peasant families and had been intending to take them to Tientsin. She was strangled that same night in her cell by the warders of the jail in which she was housed. It was more than flesh and blood could stand to see this foreign woman taking advantage of the poverty of their kith and kin and the Chinese in charge of her made her pay the penalty in their own way . . . or so I explained it to myself. No questions were asked next day . . . least of all by myself.

¹ By that time, as will be explained later (see Chapter III), I had been obliged to join the Japanese Secret Service.

HOW CHANG TSO-LIN WAS KILLED

Ever since September 24, 1920, as related in the last two sections, I had been fighting a bitter battle with inadequate weapons for law and order under the best of all chiefs, Marshal Chang Tso-lin.

Chang Tso-lin was born in Haichen, a small village in Fengtien, the southernmost of the three Manchurian provinces, in 1876. The stories of his youth are almost legendary and it is even said that on one occasion he walked into the yamen of a magistrate, accused him of oppressing the poor, judged him before the gaping multitude of his underlings and soldiers and condemned him to death single-handed. He then executed the sentence and walked out before anyone had recovered from his surprise.

During the Russo-Japanese war, Chang Tso-lin had entered the service of the Japanese and harassed the lines of communication of the Russians. That the Japanese appreciated his services can be shown by the fact that they obtained from the Court of Peking at the end of the war a complete pardon for him and his nomination as Governor of his native province of Fengtien. From that time dates the progress of Manchuria and the official advancement of Chang Tso-lin himself. Finally in 1922 he left Manchuria for the first time and took part in one of the wars around Peking. His army was, however,

beaten by the forces of Wu Pei-fu, and he withdrew with it to Manchuria, where he declared the independence of the three eastern provinces we now know as Manchoukuo.

An excellent administrator, he was a pitiless autocrat. He made up for his lack of education and culture by having an exceptional intelligence and a phenomenal memory. It was Chang Tso-lin who made life for the peasant in Manchuria so pleasant compared with the life in the neighbouring provinces of China and Korea and even of Russia that from being a country sparsely populated by some 10,000,000 inhabitants, of whom only half a million were indigenous, Manchuria became by the time of his death a rich prize with a population of 30,000,000. Every year thousands upon thousands of Chinese, and even some people of other races, went to Manchuria to help harvest the crops and stayed on to make it their home.

As an example of his violent nature can be cited the fate of the directors of the native banks whom he caught in flagrant manipulation of the paper currency of the country. Nine of them were invited to a conference at Mukden and on their arrival Chang Tso-lin gave them a lecture which for brevity and directness must constitute a world's record. He said:

"It is clear to me, as it must be equally clear to you, that you have been making vast fortunes by manipulating the currency of Manchuria and ruining the peasants and merchants. I have warned you in

the past, that I held you responsible, and you failed, but now listen to me. If in your position you are unable to check this speculation, you are incompetent, if you are able to check it, but do not choose to do so, then you are at fault. In either case you deserve death."

Five minutes later the heads of the nine bankers were rolling on the ground in Chang Tso-lin's courtyard.

For many years the Marshal had been playing the Japanese on the end of a line, and on numberless occasions he had used them to further his own ends. On November 22, 1925, General Kuo Sung-ling sent one of those circular telegrams beloved by Chinese "politicanes", in which he demanded the retirement of Marshal Chang Tso-lin for reasons of state of his own invention, and on the same date he marched his troops through the Great Wall towards Mukden. The troops were good and Marshal Chang's defenders were unprepared.

By June 18, General Kuo was within striking distance of Mukden. Marshal Chang Tso-lin had not been idle and he had persuaded the Japanese to strengthen their garrison of the railway zone at Mukden and to proclaim to General Kuo that his troops would not be allowed to come within 20 li of the South Manchurian Railway. This meant that Mukden was saved. A few days later Marshal Chang Tso-lin, having armed and reorganized his troops and having issued Chinese uniforms to a whole division of Japanese soldiers, delivered an attack on General

Kuo, in which he was entirely victorious. General Kuo was taken prisoner with his wife and both were immediately executed.

In 1926 Marshal Chang Tso-lin, encouraged by the Japanese, marched on Peking, where he remained for two years. In the meantime, however, the Kuo-mintang armies had swept over the whole of China. Under the able direction, first of the Communists and then of General Chiang Kai-shek, they had reached Tsinanfu. At that point Chiang Kai-shek's forces met with considerable resistance on the part of the Japanese, who were then in possession of the Tsingtao-Tsinan Railway. Marshal Chang Tso-lin, however, could see which way the wind was blowing and was anxious to return to Manchuria. General Wu Shu-chen, who had been left in charge of the three eastern provinces and who was the Marshal's oldest and most trusted friend urged him also to return.

On May 19, 1928, instead, the Japanese Minister in Peking warned Marshal Chang Tso-lin not to return to Manchuria. This was probably the direct cause of the Marshal's decision on May 26 to take a train back to Mukden immediately.

On May 31, Mr. Swineheart, Marshal Chang Tso-lin's agent in Tokyo, warned him most urgently not to travel by train to Mukden, since he had certain information that Chang was to be assassinated during the journey. Although the Marshal did not believe this rumour, he mentioned it to a Colonel at the Japanese Headquarters. The latter smiled and replied

that to prove that there was nothing to fear, he himself would travel in the same compartment as the Marshal all the way to Mukden. I was on the train which left Peking at midnight on June 2 and which bore the Marshal to his fate, but I had to get off at Tientsin to investigate certain questions there. On June 4 the Japanese military authorities requested General Wu Shu-chen to meet the Marshal at a station 20 kilometres south of Mukden. This General Wu did, together with some members of his staff, and he was on the return trip with the Marshal from that place to Mukden. Ten minutes before the train was due to get into Mukden the Japanese Colonel, who had thus far fulfilled his promise to remain in the same compartment as the Marshal during the journey, got up and stated that he would go next door to fetch his sword and cap. Instead of this, as it was afterwards discovered, he went to the last carriage in the train, so that a few minutes later, when there was a mysterious explosion while the train was going under a bridge, he was in comparative safety. The carriage which was carrying the Marshal and General Wu Shu-chen was blown up and the latter, together with 17 persons, killed instantly. Marshal Chang Tso-lin was severely wounded and died a few hours later.

That the Japanese were the authors of the Marshal's assassination cannot for a moment be doubted. Explosives had been placed under the steel supports of the bridge and Chinese sentries who had always been on duty at this point had been replaced only a few days before by Japanese soldiers.

With the death of Marshal Chang Tso-lin, Chang Hsueh-liang, his son, inherited his father's domain. He was, however, far more sympathetic to revolutionary young China and more inclined to pursue a policy of direct opposition to the Japanese, with the result that in spite of the good advice which General Yang Yu-ting, Chief of Staff of the Manchurian Army, pressed upon him in season and out, the day could not be far distant when the Japanese would take steps to enforce their views.

CHAPTER II

THE JAPANESE OCCUPY MUKDEN

FROM THE DAY of Marshal Chang Tso-lin's death my whole life changed. For a year or more I was in the service of General Yang Yu-ting, Chief of Staff of the Manchurian Army, but I found it necessary as time passed to supplement my irregular and inadequate pay by embarking on various commercial undertakings. In these I was comparatively fortunate, but my life was always in danger. Worse, however, was to happen.

On the night of September 18, 1931, acting with a rapidity and certainty which showed accurate planning, Japanese troops of the South Manchurian Railway zone advanced into Chinese territory, occupied the city of Mukden with its arsenal and its aerodrome and massacred the Chinese garrison, which was taken unawares in the small hours of the night and had no chance to strike a blow in self-defence. The Japanese version of this incident is given in the declaration of Lieutenant Kawamoto, which is as follows:

“On the night of September 18, 1931, I happened to be with six soldiers carrying out exercises along the railway line. Suddenly we heard an explosion not far from us and we realized that the railway lines had been blown up by the explosion. While we

were investigating this incident about 100 Chinese soldiers hidden not far away opened fire upon us. I immediately established contact with my superior officer of the Third Company, who was about 1,500 yards away [how he established contact is not explained]. At that moment we heard the Changchun express train from Mukden approaching. To avoid a catastrophe I ordered my soldiers to fire several shots and to signal to the train-driver, but apparently the latter failed to understand. He continued on his way and having reached the point of the explosion, miraculously crossed the spot without derailing and eventually reached Mukden on time."

This was the version for the public and for the League Commission.

A pamphlet, on the other hand, distributed to all Japanese soldiers and officers, in which much was made, as usual, of Amaterasu-O-Mi-Kami, known as the Sun Goddess, and the divine origin of the Japanese people upon whose fate such incidents had a beneficent influence, contained the following remarkable account:

"On the evening of September 18, 1931, in the vicinity of Mukden some Chinese soldiers commanded by the bandit General Chang Hsueh-liang, son of the late bandit General Chang Tso-lin, who for many years had terrorized Manchuria and held it in slavery, set off a mine at a spot on the Japanese Railway near Mukden so as to cause the derailment of the Japanese train, which a few minutes later was to pass from Changchun to Mukden. Fortunately in the

neighbourhood of that spot there happened to be, together with six soldiers, Lieutenant Kawamoto, a direct descendant of an uninterrupted line of Samurai ancestors of 48 generations. Realizing that the train was approaching and that no human power could avoid a catastrophe, since several yards of the railway line had been destroyed, he turned to the divine power. Turning towards Japan and bending low in all humility, he invoked the intervention of Amaterasu-O-Mi-Kami. His humble and fervent prayer was heard. The train reached the spot where the lines had been destroyed, raised itself in the air, and having passed the dangerous point gently came down again on the other side of the railway line and continued on its way. The testimony of the driver and the fireman of the train as well as of Lieutenant Kawamoto and his six soldiers, who saw this event with their own eyes, is sufficient to prove the truth of this supernatural fact—a fact which has once again demonstrated for the whole world the divine origin of Japanese people.”

As was conclusively proved before the Commission of the League of Nations which investigated the facts thereafter, the truth of the matter is that the explosion of the railway line occurred *after* the train had passed and was engineered with the sole object of taking photographs which would justify the official version of the origin of the incident.

Not only had the Chinese had nothing to do with this explosion but they did not even have the slightest suspicion that such an incident was contemplated.

So much so, that the majority of the garrison were killed in their sleep at their barracks. Their arms were stored in a separate building and there was not even sufficient time for a single weapon to be issued. Afterwards the barracks were set on fire so that no trace should remain of this hideous crime.

The most convincing proof, however, of the pre-meditated nature of this incident lies in the fact that the Japanese troops stationed at Liaoyang, Yinghow and Fenghwanecheng had, the day before the incident, received their orders to advance on Mukden at 3 p.m. on September 18. Seven hours before the alleged explosion they had already started towards their destination. By 4 a.m. of the 19th, only six hours after the alleged explosion, thousands of printed posters had already been pasted on the walls of Mukden and in these it was said that the Manchurian Government was discredited, since it had ordered an attack on the Japanese railway. The people were advised to remain calm. It would have been a physical impossibility to have ascertained the facts and then drafted, printed and distributed so many official notices in only six hours.

An ex-Russian General Glergé who had at one time been in the employ of Marshal Chang Tso-lin and had later been dismissed for having relations with the Soviet Government, which then took him into its employ, and ultimately dismissed him for having relations with the Japanese, had also on the 18th received a copy of the above-mentioned manifesto direct from the Japanese High Command with

an addition for the benefit of the Russians of Mukden, which he had been instructed to publish in the Russian newspaper of which at that time he was editor. These orders were duly carried out and the issue of September 19 carried this manifesto along the streets of Mukden at dawn.

A week before this, various Japanese engineers, electricians and mechanics had arrived in Mukden for the ostensible purpose of setting up some new electric plant. No such plant had ever been planned or would have served any useful purpose. These experts were on the spot to replace the Chinese staff of the Mukden arsenal who were shot while at their posts on the 19th. On the evening of that day the Japanese forces of the railway zone and others from Korea marched into Manchuria.

On February 5th, 1932, four months after these events at Mukden, Japanese troops entered Harbin, the principal city of North Manchuria.

Having been built by the Russians, Harbin was more like a European city. At the time of the Japanese occupation it contained about 100,000 Russians and some 200,000 Chinese inhabitants. It was the most important railway centre in Manchuria and was the junction of the Russian, Korean, Chinese and Manchurian lines.

Toward 10 a.m. of that day, the booming of cannon and the rattle of machine-guns could be heard getting louder and louder. Japanese planes flew over the Chinese barracks and mowed down the few disabled and unarmed Chinese soldiers who were trying to

escape to safety. During the two previous weeks all business had come to a standstill and the streets had been deserted ever since. Everybody remained indoors. There were over 100,000 refugees from other areas taken by the Japanese; they swelled the city's population and struck terror into all hearts with the tales of their sufferings.

By noon all firing suddenly stopped. At half-past two scores of motor-cycles with side-cars and machine-guns were entering from different directions, followed by cavalry, armoured trucks, infantry and tanks. As the machine-gun corps advanced through the streets, the Chinese policemen who had remained at their posts were disarmed and two Japanese soldiers put in their place. While this mopping up operation was going on thousands of Russian refugees came out in the streets carrying Japanese flags and shouting, "Banzai!" at the newcomers. Many young Russian girls were hired to meet the marching Japanese infantrymen and presented bouquets of flowers to the officers, with an accompanying kiss in some cases. Later in the day a procession of more than 10,000 Russian refugees marched through the streets of the city, acclaiming the Japanese and shouting maledictions and insults at the Chinese. Several of these were severely beaten, thus being repaid for the generous hospitality extended by Manchuria to the Russians, against whom the rest of the world had closed its doors.

Since the outbreak of the Russian revolution, hundreds of thousands of Russians had taken refuge

in Manchuria, where without exception they were greeted as friends. From 1917 to 1932 not a day passed without new contingents of Russian refugees arriving in Manchuria. Those with or without passports, the criminal and the law-abiding, all were given a warm reception, all were helped in getting established. There are some 30,000 White Russians living in Shanghai to-day, most of whom came from Harbin; they may testify to the truth of such facts. The Manchurian authorities did all in their power to alleviate the plight of the numerous victims of the Russian political upheaval. Thousands of them were placed in Government service, in the Army, in the Police Force, in the railroads, in the mines and in scores of other fields of service, often in preference to the Chinese. When the Russian refugees formed their various organizations, they did so not only with the approval of the Chinese authorities, but they were even subsidized by the Manchurian Government. The Russian emigrés were given the right of being represented in the municipal councils; they were accepted as members of the Chamber of Commerce, etc.

And now . . . they were turning against their Chinese hosts and shouting "Banzai!" at the invaders. What was the motive behind these abject hand-kissing demonstrations? Nothing less than the formation in Manchuria of a White Russian Government. Such had been their cherished dream; and the Japanese, in order to win the good-will of these 250,000 immigrants, had promised to help them realize their dream.

Poor, foolish, deluded people! Their "Banzai!" shouting was to be of very short duration. The awakening came promptly and rudely. Within a few weeks of the arrival of the Japanese invaders thousands of Russian refugees were fleeing from Manchuria; other thousands were thrown into jails, hundreds were shot and otherwise murdered. Literally, hundreds of young Russian girls were assaulted by Japanese soldiers. Money and property acquired when dealing with the Chinese, passed into the hands of the Japanese.

Wholesale confiscations, nearly always accompanied by arrests, imprisonment or death, were the order of the day. The Japanese army officers were becoming wealthy. It was thus that the Russian emigrés were rewarded for having so heartily greeted the victorious invaders. The floral tributes showered upon the barbarian hordes were being paid back in death and degradation.

All over Manchuria to-day, every Japanese who pretends to be somebody has one or two Russian concubines. Young Russian girls are forced to accept five Chinese dollars a month to serve in Japanese houses. Yes . . . poor deceived Russians, shout your "Banzai's!" to-day! To-morrow, you will curse yourselves for having thus acclaimed these monstrous beings totally devoid of human feelings.

For several days Japanese troops kept coming, and strange rumours began to spread around. People became alarmed and horrified. Secretly and in low voices they spoke of the hundreds of executions, the

thousands of outrages committed on the Russians and the Chinese. On the morning of February 10, 1932, I saw, a few steps from the barracks of the Japanese Cavalry, the dead bodies of two young Chinese girls who had been assaulted and strangled. A Chinese gentleman who had the courage to go to the police and report that he had seen Japanese soldiers carry the two girls out the night before, was arrested and was never seen again.

The evening of that same day, a Mrs. Salimen, a Russian woman, was attacked in the street by four Japanese soldiers who stripped her naked.

Day after day, the occurrence of dozens of such cases of barbarity formed the main topic of conversation. It was a reign of terror. Everyone feared for his safety, and to everyone came the thought of leaving Manchuria.

As for myself, I had nothing to fear. During the long years of secret service with the Chinese Government, the Japanese Military authorities, with whom I had often come in contact, had treated me with the utmost consideration. So I thought. Why, I asked myself, should I be afraid now?

Had I not been introduced to General Count Terauchi, Chief of Staff of the Japanese Army in Manchuria, who later became Minister of War and is now Commander of Japan's North China Garrison? . . . to General Suzuki, then Chief of the Japanese Intelligence Service in Manchuria? . . . and to many other prominent Japanese?

Was I not a very good friend of Colonel Tanaka,

Chief of the Japanese Intelligence Service in Tientsin, who had given me many letters of introduction to high Japanese officials? . . .

I even had a fine letter from the Japanese Ambassador in Rome. . . . Why should I allow myself to worry about my personal security now? The Japanese had always treated me with due respect and I supposed that they would continue to do so. Nothing I had heard or seen had given me cause to fear the Japanese. In fact I had frequently interceded for them with the Chinese. But I too was deceiving myself. I was soon to awaken from my pleasant dreams.

CHAPTER III

WOE BETIDE THE CHINESE!

MOST OF THE Chinese who were in the employ of the Manchurian Government were compelled by the Japanese invader to remain at their posts and to continue their functions. This was part of the Japanese scheme. The whole world and the League of Nations had to be made to believe that the formation of the State of Manchoukuo was the result of a revolution of the people of Manchuria with which the Japanese had nothing to do, and for which they could not possibly be held responsible.

The 150,000 Japanese soldiers, the 18,000 Japanese gendarmes, the 4,000 secret police had come to Manchuria at the invitation of the Government of Manchoukuo, in order to protect the people against the attacks of the Chinese Kuomintang, the Bolsheviks and the bandits.

It was also to protect the people against so many enemies that the Japanese established control of the entire administration of the State, assuming full power over everything and everybody. Officially, they were there only as "advisers", and there are 100,000 of them in Manchoukuo. Not a department, not an office, not one single employee but has one or more Japanese "advisers", who control everything, who

give orders to everybody and do exactly as they please.

And who are these "advisers"? The answer is quite staggering.

No sooner had the Japanese troops set foot on Manchurian soil than any sort of common Japanese who could jabber a little Chinese or Russian was made "adviser". And what were these Japanese doing in Northern Manchuria? Most of them were criminals. Crooks and adventurers; smugglers, sellers of narcotics, brothel-keepers. This underworld gentry constituted 95 per cent of the Japanese in Manchuria. Protected by their own flag and extra-territorial rights, they were beyond the reach of Chinese laws. For this reason, the Chinese authorities, eager to avoid "incidents" with the Japanese, had instructed the police to close their eyes to what was going on. Thus unrestrained, the Japanese stopped at nothing.

These were the precious rascals who formed the first contingent of Japanese "advisers" to the Government of Manchoukuo.

Those who yesterday were the scum of the earth, despised and hated by everybody, suddenly found themselves at the head of administrative departments; with full powers, even, in some instances, of life and death over the Chinese and Russians, whom they delighted in bullying relentlessly. One could not move without having to pay tribute to them. Had they been able to do so, they would have taxed everybody for the privilege of breathing the air. They

had been in the saddle but a few days in Harbin when the "adviser" to the Police Force gave orders for the arrest of rich Chinese and Russians in order to collect heavy ransoms for their release. It was the "advisers" to the courts of justice who gave decisions in lawsuits, and established the rights and wrongs of cases. Naturally the side that paid most was always the winning side, and the poor were always the losers.

In order to enable the reader to form a better idea of the Japanese "adviser" régime in Manchuria, I think it necessary to write a short biographical sketch of one of them. It is typical of the whole unholy tribe.

Konstantin Ivanovich Nakamura was a Japanese who, as his name indicates, had embraced the Russian Orthodox religion. This did not prevent him from remaining more Japanese than ever. He had lived in Manchuria and Korea more than twenty years. A barber by trade, he had a small shop at Nahaloika, a suburb of Harbin, a place which then had the worst kind of reputation with the police. But Nakamura did not like the handling of scissors and razors, and the shop was only a false front. His real business was dealing in morphine, heroin, opium; and conducting a house of prostitution a short distance from his barber shop.

In spite of the fact that the Chinese authorities, for the sake of peace, overlooked the sale of narcotics by the Japanese, and likewise the trade in women, they found themselves obliged to take action when the guilty party went far, too far. This explains why

the name of Nakamura figures three times in the police records of Harbin.

In 1923 Nakamura had contracted an illegitimate union with a Russian woman, a widow with an eleven-years-old daughter. After a few months he assaulted the little girl. As a result of a complaint by the mother the police arrested him and handed him over to the Japanese Consul. The Japanese Court could not find him guilty of having done anything wrong because, according to Japanese law, he had "bought" her when he "bought" the mother. The little girl had therefore become his own private property. That was that.

In 1926 the police had once more to deal with Nakamura. This time a Russian who had gone to his barber shop for a shave had been drugged and robbed of \$500. When he woke up and discovered his loss, he went to the police and made his complaint. As before, the Japanese Consul took a hand in the matter, declared that the Russian had not been drugged but was just plain drunk. Nakamura went scot-free.

In 1928, Nakamura was again denounced to the Japanese Consul for keeping a twelve-years-old girl in his house of ill-fame. Again he was absolved of all guilt.

These are facts to which I can personally testify.

To-day Nakamura is Chief "adviser" to the Japanese Gendarmerie; Chief "adviser" to the Russian Emigrés Bureau; Inspector of the Russian school; Honorary Vice-President of the Saint Vladimir

University, a bogus university without Faculty, put up by the Japanese for the Russians.

But the cup of bitterness which the people of Manchuria had to drink was not full yet. It was not enough to grind them under the iron heels of the ubiquitous "adviser" another calamity had to descend upon them. Thousands upon thousands of the most depraved criminals, some of them possibly released in Japan by a general amnesty of the Emperor, invaded Manchuria like a flock of bloodthirsty vampires. It is impossible to give an idea of the depths of degradation to which these human jackals descended. They challenge all description, guilty as they were of committing every imaginable crime against God, man and nature. The streets of the principal cities in Manchuria became unsafe at night and even in day-time. In full daylight Chinese businessmen were beaten and robbed by bands of so-called Ronins (Japanese toughs), without the least interference from the Japanese Police. There was no safety for white women anywhere. Scores of them were stripped naked and assaulted by these Japanese "sons of the gods". They spread terror everywhere.

Here is one case among thousands.

On February 27, 1932, Mrs. S. K. was walking on Torgovaia Street with her sixteen-years-old daughter. A band of Japanese toughs attacked them and took them into a small Japanese house where, after assaulting the mother, they compelled her to witness her daughter being subjected to the same fate by four of their number.

Once set free, the two women went to the *Japanese* Consular Gendarmerie station, a short distance away, and told of their horrible experience to a petty-officer who was on duty at the time with two gendarmes and an interpreter.

"What proof have you that your daughter has been assaulted?" asked the petty-officer in a sarcastic tone.

"I could show you the house. A doctor could make an examination."

"Good! I'll have her examined right now. Please step into this room both of you."

The women obeyed and went into an adjoining room. The two gendarmes took hold of the mother while the petty-officer and the interpreter (also a Japanese) assaulted the unconscious girl. After which the two women were arrested and put in a Chinese jail for practising prostitution without a licence.

It was almost a month later that the unhappy father learned, through Chinese agents, the fate of his wife and daughter. He was forced to pay \$500 for their release. The Japanese took the money. Five days later, on March 28, the Japanese Military Mission ordered the father to appear before them. He was told that if he spoke one more word against the Japanese he would be shot.

As soon as the Russian papers of Harbin began to publish the news of such incidents, the Military authorities issued a strict order, under penalty of suspension, to the effect that the word "*Japanese*"

should never be used in designating those who committed crimes. Always they must use the word "foreigner" when talking of the guilty party. Henceforth, therefore, all the crimes committed by the Japanese were ascribed to the "foreigners".

To all the proprietors of cafés, restaurants and bars, the Japanese Ronins were a constant nightmare. At any time of the day or night they would boisterously invade these establishments owned by Chinese or Russians, order the whole staff of waiters to drop everything and serve them huge quantities of food and drinks, and then walk out without paying one penny. This sort of robbery was also a matter of routine for the men and officers of the Japanese Gendarmerie. They were even worse than the Ronins; for not only did they compel the café owners to feed them free, but almost invariably, on their way out, they would grab anything which they fancied would decorate their barracks; gramophones, radios, and table covers, bottles of liquor, easy-chairs, etc., were carried away, especially objects in gold and silver. They had a particular penchant for clocks. It is the ambition of every Japanese gendarme to gather as much loot as possible during his time of service in Manchuria. All these "souvenirs" are taken along when they return to Japan.

I often witnessed regiments of soldiers embarking at Dairen on their way back to Japan. Practically all of them were loaded down with loot, among which I could always spot a wall-clock, a radio, or a gramophone.

The amount of suffering which the Chinese and Russians, especially the women, had to endure at the hands of the Japanese Ronins, the Japanese soldiers, the Japanese gendarmes, and the Japanese "advisers" is beyond imagination. No history of tribal invasion can possibly compare with the invasion of Manchuria in cruelty and inhumanity. The barbarians of old killed and ransacked and made short work of it . . . these Japanese savages do it slowly and methodically. They extract the blood of their victims, allow them to form a fresh supply and keep on repeating the operation.

What happened in the cities, horrid and dreadful as it was, pales in comparison with the depredations and degradations that went on in the country places; wherever the Japanese soldiers passed, they left nothing but death and ashes in their wake. They ransacked, killed and destroyed. All young girls were assaulted.

The nations of the world are committing a most terrible mistake in dealing with the Japanese as though they were a civilized people. It is a grievous error, and one likely to prove catastrophic in its consequences.

Only when Japan has shaken off its barbarian institutions and got rid of the inhuman military clique that rules it, from the Emperor down, will it be entitled to take its place among civilized nations. It is a horrible thing to contemplate these hordes of barbarians armed with modern implements of destruction, running wild and playing havoc among peaceful, defenceless people.

I MEET DOIHARA

On February 14, 1932, a Japanese lieutenant and Sergeant came to my house. Addressing me in English the former told me that the Chief of the Japanese Military Mission, Colonel Kenji Doihara, wished to have a talk with me. The strange manner in which the Lieutenant executed his three bows showed me that the invitation amounted to an order. However, I wished to make sure.

"If the Lieutenant will be so kind, please inform Colonel Doihara that as soon as I have eaten my lunch I shall call on him."

The Lieutenant bowed again, two or three times, then he made a sort of hissing noise, drawing his breath between his teeth, the traditional Japanese sign of respect, and said:

"The Colonel wants you to come right away. I have a car waiting, and I shall have the pleasure of accompanying you."

I was right. It was an order.

I took my hat and coat and we left.

At the headquarters of the Military Mission, after five minutes waiting, I was shown into the private office of Colonel Doihara.

I had known Colonel Doihara for many years and when I first met him in Mongolia, my impression was not unfavourable. I remembered a short, round-faced stoutish man, with a little black moustache. He had always gone out of his way to show me a

number of courtesies. Foreign journalists had referred to Colonel Doihara as the Japanese "Lawrence of Manchuria". I suspect, however, that if his sister had not been the concubine of a Japanese Imperial Prince most of his success would have been still in his own imagination. On this occasion as before he greeted me with a smile. I could not say whether it was sarcastic or mocking. We shook hands and he begged me to be seated. Speaking in Russian he said:

"I prefer the use of the Russian language. I speak English only when I absolutely must. I hate the confounded language, just as I have no use for the English and American people."

He kept silent for a few minutes and his eyes looked fixedly into mine.

"We know each other, Mr. Vespa, is it not so? Do you remember where we last met?"

"If I am not mistaken, it was in Tientsin."

"Very good. You have a good memory. I have been told that you are exceptionally intelligent, and that one never has to explain to you the same thing twice. We come to the point.

"Several times, in the past, the Japanese Military authorities have proposed that you should leave the Chinese Service and join ours. You have always refused. But to-day things have changed. I am not inviting you, I am telling you that from now on you are going to work for the Japanese. I know that if you want to, you can do much and do it well. On the other hand, if you do little and do it badly, it will

mean that you are not working willingly; and"—slowly and deliberately—"it is my habit to shoot those who give proof of ill-will."

Then he resumed in normal tones: "This is war-time, Mr. Vespa. It makes no difference if war has not been declared; any attempt at flight on your part will be treated as desertion, and we punish desertion with death. If you were alone, with all the friends you have in Manchuria and in Mongolia, I admit that it would be child's play for you to reach China proper. But you have a family. It is not an easy matter for a family of five to cross the vast steppes of Manchuria and Mongolia. You understand my insinuation. I therefore advise you to look more cheerful, make up your mind to do your best, and you will have no cause for regret."

I expressed surprise at his attitude and protested that, while I had no particular desire to work for the Japanese Intelligence, since I had saved a little money, and managed to buy an interest in one or two theatres, if I was offered sufficient inducement and not talked to in a threatening manner I might consider the position.

He scowled at me.

"I am making you no offers, Mr. Vespa. I am giving you orders and I have told you why. I don't need to labour the point, I think.

"To-morrow you are to come to my office at eleven; I shall introduce you to the Chief of the Japanese Intelligence Service in Manchuria. I am sure that you will get along nicely together, and that

when you get used to the Japanese and know them better, you will become convinced that they are a thousand times better than the Chinese, that they are far superior to the Americans or any other race on earth. Any European ought to be proud of being able to work for the Japanese. Be careful, watch your step, and don't forget what happened to your late friend Swineheart. You remember that, don't you? He died from drowning, did he not, Mr. Vespa?"

Swineheart was an American in the service of the Manchurian Government. He was killed by the Japanese in Japan and then thrown into the sea, the Tokyo newspapers reporting that he had been accidentally drowned.

CHAPTER IV

JAPANESE POLICY ELUCIDATED

THE NEXT DAY, at eleven, I kept the appointment Colonel Doihara had made for me. As soon as the orderly announced me, the Colonel came out of his office and asked me to follow him. We went out, crossed a garden and entered a large palace adjoining the Military Mission building.

This palace had belonged to a rich Pole by the name of Kavalsky. The Japanese took it, tore down the wall which divided the two properties, and built a garden court between them.

We entered through a door on the left, which opened into a large room where five Japanese were seated behind writing tables. Doihara said something in Japanese to one and after an exchange of questions and answers, the latter bowed and went through a heavily draped door. In a few seconds he returned and requested us both to go in.

We found ourselves in a large office. In one corner, a Japanese was seated at a very large desk. A pleasant-looking man of about 45, he wore civilian clothes, and his eyes betrayed unusual intelligence.

During the whole of my service under this remarkable man, I never discovered his name or his true identity. Never have I met him at any function, at any party, or at anyone else's house. He always had

at his disposal an aeroplane which he reached by private car when he went on his own mysterious journeys. It was as much as my life was worth to attempt to ask any questions, either inside or outside his office. I knew better than to imagine that I myself was not watched, and that any suspicious move on my part would not be reported to him. The result would be immediate execution or worse.

On one occasion when I had reason to point out to him that Jews, after all, were not all bad, he nearly shot me on the spot, but during my first meeting with him he showed himself a suave, perfect gentleman, speaking absolutely fluent English and showing consideration for those with whom he came in contact.

Doihara addressed him in Japanese. Then he turned to me and said in English:

"Mr. Vespa, this gentleman is your new Chief. From this moment on you must forget my face or that you ever saw me. If we should ever meet again, no matter where, you must act as though you did not know me at all. I wish you good luck." He then made a few bows to the Chief and left the room.

I was now alone with my new Chief, who was eyeing me carefully.

"Please be seated," he said.

His English, a rare thing among the Japanese, was almost perfect, leading me to believe that he must have lived many years abroad, possibly in America. The first meeting with him made a vivid impression on me, and I remember almost every word he said.

“Mr. Vespa, I do not have to ask you who you are. I have here a whole file containing a record of all your activities from the moment you set foot in China in 1912 to the present time. The Japanese Intelligence Service has followed you in China, in Manchuria, in Mongolia, in Siberia, in Russia; many Japanese officers, among them Colonel Tanaka and General Terauchi, entertain a very high opinion of you; that is why our military authorities do not think you anti-Japanese. Some even believe that you are pro-Japanese. At all events, I hope that we shall understand each other and that you will not regret working with us. If Colonel Doihara has told you anything unpleasant, please pay no attention to it. Since, in other countries, they call him the Japanese Lawrence, he delights in showing his greatness by his hectoring manner. He has worked under me for many years, however, and I have no hesitation in saying that he is much less of a Lawrence than he thinks he is. Of course, no one can deny that he has done well in many of his undertakings, but the fact remains that he has many failures to his discredit, so much so that one would imagine they were the mistakes of a simple corporal rather than a colonel¹ in the Japanese Intelligence Service. For instance, do you think that the death of Marshal Chang Tso-lin was a master stroke?”

I did not know what to answer. I had heard that there existed bitter animosity and tremendous jealousy but I had always surmised that such rumours were the

¹ Doihara is now a Major-General.

result of propaganda against the army. In spite of myself, on this very first day of my contact with them, I was forced to admit that the rumours were correct. For how else could I explain the fact that the Chief openly admitted that Chang Tso-lin had been killed on the orders of the Japanese General Staff, and implied that Doihara had executed the order?

I was astounded but I remained silent.

"I understand," the Chief continued. "You wonder why I should speak to you like this. I admit that the Japanese are trying to make the world and the League of Nations believe that Manchurian independence is the result of a popular revolution against the old régime, and that the Japanese are here in Manchuria only in the capacity of advisers to the new government, but that the facts are quite otherwise. You know too much for me to try to deceive you. Since you and I are going to work together I must be frank with you and acquaint you with our programme. I am fully aware of your ability and experience; you have spent 20 years in Manchuria, you know the Manchurian people so well, their most intimate habits, their manners, customs and aspirations. If I should fill you up with the stuff which our Japanese representatives are telling the League of Nations, you would laugh in my face."

He looked at his watch.

"It is almost twelve. You may go to lunch and return at two. I shall then outline the work to be done; we have a big task to accomplish. So long."

When I returned at two, my new Japanese Chief began by giving me a lesson in history and on the ethics of foreigners. This is more or less what he said:

“Look at the English,” he said, “consider how they have added nearly half of the earth to their Empire, and how they always managed to make conquered countries pay for the cost of conquest. India has always paid the expenses of the invader, so did South Africa; so did America; so long as she remained an English Colony she had to pay for the maintenance of the British army which kept her subjugated. The same can be said of France, and of the United States. Cuba and the Philippines are still paying the price of having been freed from Spain. We Japanese are a very poor people, and we could not afford the luxury of paying the expenses incidental to our occupation of Manchuria. In one way or another, therefore, the Chinese of Manchuria must foot the whole bill. That is our principal task.

“However, there are serious difficulties in the way. How can we make them pay without hurting the sensibilities of other people and of the League of Nations? If we had openly declared that we officially occupied Manchuria, the thing would be easier and no one would have a word to say about it. But we have officially declared for our own good reasons that the new Manchurian State was formed as the result of a revolution of the people themselves, and that the Japanese are here only as advisers. Hence we must see to it that the Manchurians pay us, but it must be done in such a way that no one will be able

to accuse us of *making* them pay or of receiving any money.

“In war all means to an end are good. The method which we have used in Mukden and in other towns occupied by us is the one which we are going to put in operation here in Harbin and in the rest of North Manchuria.

“Our system consists, first, in secretly granting monopolies to trustworthy individuals; second, in compelling, indirectly, the rich Chinese and Russians—and especially the rich Jews—to part with considerable portions of their wealth and . . . this must be done so cleverly that they will never know that it is the Japanese who do the compelling and get the fruits of it.

“The principal monopolies are the free transportation of goods on the Chinese Eastern Railway¹ under the guise of Japanese military supplies; the monopoly of opium smoking dens; the sale of narcotics; the culture of poppies; the importation of Japanese prostitutes; gambling houses, and a dozen other devices.

“Those who have been granted monopoly concessions have to pay very heavy sums. All are entitled to our protection. You must know that every Japanese officer who comes to Manchuria expects to return to Japan after two or three years with from 50,000 to 100,000 dollars in his pockets. We must watch them; particularly the Gendarmerie officers, for whatever money we manage to extract from the Manchurians

¹The Railway administration was then under Sino-Russian ownership.

must go to the Japanese Government, *not* to the Japanese officers.

"These officers will try by all means possible to make all the money they can. It will not be easy to prevent them. Especially the officers of the Gendarmerie. The Gendarmerie of Japan has a bad reputation; its officers are despised, no one wants to associate with them. Even the army officers shun them and keep away from them. In Korea and South Manchuria, these Gendarmerie officers practically control the entire administration of justice and have power of life and death over all the people. When a Gendarmerie officer is ready to retire he usually has from 100,000 to 200,000 yen in the bank; whereas the average army officer might have scarcely enough with which to buy his rice. There is little that we can do against these Gendarmerie officers; they are all members of the Young Officers' Party whose aim is to restore all civil and military powers to the Emperor. It is a most powerful party. They hesitate at nothing; they stop at nothing. A number of Ministers and Generals who have tried to oppose them have paid with their lives. We must be exceedingly careful in dealing with them. We must not strike at them directly, but rather we must isolate them by striking at the confederates who work with them."

I sat amazed by the frankness of these declarations, while the Chief lit a cigarette and inhaled a few puffs, looking at the sky through the large window. He threw the cigarette away and continued:

“Within a few days, some 50 Chinese bandits known to us will arrive from Mukden. They will enlist local gangsters until we have in North Manchuria a force of from 1,000 to 1,500 men willing and ready to execute any orders we give them. We must find in Harbin about 20 strong Russians capable of tackling any sort of ‘job’; they must know how to handle their knives and revolvers well, and how to keep their mouths shut. Finally, we need about a dozen expert pickpockets; intelligent, and good dressers, who know how to meet the best people.

“The bandits are useful in many ways; for certain large-scale operations they are indispensable to us. For example: one of the first tasks to be accomplished, as soon as we are organized, will be to interfere with the running of the Harbin-Vladivostock Railway, and stop it altogether. The Soviet ship all their merchandise and a large quantity of soya-beans to the port of Vladivostock. This is bad for our port at Dairen. That Russian railway is going to be attacked by our bandits close to the Russian border. There are going to be many wrecks, one wreck after another, until the Russians find themselves obliged to ship their goods over our line to Dairen. There are also going to be frequent wrecks on the other railway lines controlled by the Soviet and . . . sometimes too . . . for the sake of appearances, on the Japanese line. Furthermore, our bandits will perform valuable service in creating incidents along the Russian border; incidents in the other parts of Manchuria; in kidnapping rich people whose relatives will pay heavy

ransoms to buy their safe return; in attacking Chinese villages and then taking flight upon the arrival of Japanese troops, so that we may thus gain the gratitude of the Chinese; in staging fake attacks upon Japanese soldiers, giving us pretexts for punitive expeditions and for withdrawing the inhabitants of those areas we wish to give to Japanese colonists; . . . and in all sorts of other useful purposes.

“As to our corps of hired pickpockets, we shall use them to rob the foreigners who live in Manchuria, especially those who come as tourists. They will steal documents and letters out of their pockets. It is not easy to search foreigners, and if we do search them, they pester the life out of us with their endless protests. Whereas, if a Russian thief steals their pocket-books or their baggage, they cannot blame the Japanese, can they?

“There are many Russian Emigré Societies in Harbin, in Tsitsihar, in Hailar and other parts of Northern Manchuria. These organizations are mostly anti-Soviet in character. At least, so I am told. You, Mr. Vespa, who for so many years have been a high officer in the Manchurian Secret Police; you, who know the languages and the customs of the different people living in Manchuria, should know very well the many aspects of Russian immigration and what their organizations are all about. I am therefore asking you to prepare me a detailed report on the character, scope, programme and activities of each and every organization together with a short biography of the chief organizers.

"I propose to eliminate every organization or society which is not sincerely friendly to the Japanese. There is also another troublesome problem for us; the so-called people of culture. They are in the way. They interfere with our plans. What are we to do with all those generals, colonels, professors and aristocrats of Old Russia? They are a nuisance. What we want is young men of fair intelligence who will be proud to accept some sort of rank and who will be disposed to do what we want. We need Russian names to cover up our activities—men who are not necessarily thinkers. We need men who are not necessarily over-intelligent, who possess ambition, and whose vanity will make them happy to see themselves at the head of some organization. It will be part of your job to pick out such individuals from among the Russian refugee organizations. You must select them for their greed and their lack of patriotism. When your list is made bring it to me."

THE CHIEF'S INSTRUCTIONS

While the Chief of the Intelligence Service in Manchuria was thus giving me an outline of the Japanese policy I made notes of my various assignments.

"When these Russian organizations have been reformed, with a man of our choice at the head of each one, we shall arrange for the establishment of branches all over Northern Manchuria. In every section a Russian-speaking Japanese will be the chief

controller; the chief adviser without whose permission it will be impossible to do any business. Our reformed organizations will be particularly useful against the Soviets, especially those who live near the railway zones.

"Every day we shall have to provoke an incident with some Soviet citizen or other. The Second Department of the Japanese Military Mission will supply us with all the materials we want to provoke and arrest any Soviet citizen. Communist or non-Communist. We shall need all sorts of documents for the purpose, and we shall need for our work men without any scruple. You must never forget that Bolsheviki are like beasts and must be treated accordingly.

"Remember that I never appear on the scene; I am never in evidence, except in matters strictly and intimately Japanese. Your main capacity is to act as my intermediary. Orders to you will always come directly from me, from no one else. Orders which are meant for others, you yourself will relay to the parties in question. No Russian or European will be permitted to enter my office or communicate with me directly. From this rule I except three whom I have known for years and whom I can trust. You are the only person to whom I give the right to walk straight into my office without asking permission or being announced. I do not give you this privilege because I trust you, but because you are a naturalized Chinese citizen, and as such I can have you shot at any time. Besides, we hold your family as guaranty that you will perform your duty faithfully."

All the while I had been listening with due attention and jotting down an aide-memoire now and then. No matter what this Chief of the Japanese Intelligence Service in Manchuria said, or how he said it, I maintained the impassive exterior which befitted an assistant to such a man. However, as I became more and more aware of the nature of my duties and of the abominable work which I must carry out, I felt rising within me a strong desire to choke him. I realized when he spoke to me with such candour that he was convinced that I would from now on never be free from his power. He was coldly and deliberately planning suffering and misery for thousands of harmless, innocent human beings. But I was fully conscious of the futility of resistance, of even sacrificing myself and my family. The Japanese steam-roller would move on just the same. I remained placid, and listened to the end with undisturbed composure.

The Chief went on:

“One last instruction. Here in Harbin, there live many foreigners, Americans, English, French, Italians, etc., who still enjoy the rights of extra-territoriality; we shall have to keep an eye on them. Many are Soviet spies; others are American or British spies. These Americans and English will require constant watching. They believe that their countries have special rights in the Far East. Every time Japan tries to move a step they try to find some foolish reason for interfering. We Japanese do not recognize such rights. America has its Monroe Doctrine; we,

“too, have ours. The whole Orient is our sphere of influence and must fall under our control. Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia and before long China and Siberia as far as Irkutsk will all form one single Empire, the Empire of Japan, governed by our great Emperor; the only Emperor who can truly be called heavenly, since he is a descendant of the Sun Goddess and all the Japanese are sons of Gods. The Japanese are the only divine people on earth; that is the reason why they never try to mix with other people. Our culture is sacred, and likewise sacred is everything Japanese. We have no intention of imparting our civilization to the people whom we have conquered or shall conquer. They will simply disappear. The Koreans will be eaten by vices; the Chinese will be the victims of opium and other narcotics; the Russians will be ruined by vodka. They will all be annihilated. Alone the descendants of Amaterasu-O-Mi-Kami, the Sun Goddess, will people our Empire. And this is but the first part of the programme of the tasks which the Gods have given to our people. The second phase calls for the conquest of India and of all the islands in the Pacific; also Siberia as far as the Ural region. Do not smile at these declarations. The Gods do not lie. The destiny of Japan has been outlined by the Gods. Nothing can stop Japan from becoming the greatest Empire on earth!”

“Let not the world be deceived by our internal strife, our political assassinations, our economic problems. These things are not signs of corruption; on the contrary, they are signs of patriotism. Do not

allow yourself to be deceived if at times I ask you to keep your eyes on Japanese officers who try to get rich quick. It is not that they are guilty of any offence, for they get their money from an inferior race destined to disappear; and that money eventually finds its way to Japan and to the State. No, our interest is to see that the money reaches the State by shorter and more direct avenues. Foreigners wonder why Japanese judges refuse to compel the Japanese to pay their debts, their house rent, or other obligations. This is because they are not capable of understanding the fundamentals of Japanese philosophy. How could a Japanese judge, who knows that he is a son of God, oblige another son of God to pay money to a member of a barbarian race, a race destined to disappear? Such a thing is inconceivable to a Japanese!"

"So deska?" I said. (Is that so?)

"No, no! Do not speak Japanese, even though you know the language; it fills me with a sort of contempt. We Japanese do not like to hear foreigners speak our language. It sounds sacreligious. The Japanese language is reserved for the Sons of the Gods, it is the language of our Tenno, the language of Amaterasu-O-Mi-Kami, the Goddess of the Sun. Every time I have to listen to a foreigner speaking Japanese, I¹¹ feel a strong desire to strangle him. Let us speak English. No one will mind. Everybody speaks it. It is the proper language when speaking of things unpleasant and disagreeable. Whenever I have to swear at anyone I always prefer to do it in English.

"There is still another matter which I came near to forgetting. There are more than 40,000 Soviet citizens living in Manchuria. About 22,000 of them are employees of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The rest are small merchants or workers in different factories. Most of them are Communists and engaged in propaganda work. Since, naturally, this is contrary to Japanese policy, we shall make it our duty to harass them in every possible way. We must show no mercy, no weakness. We must work on the principle that it is better to punish 1,000 innocent than to allow one single propagandist to remain at large. If the Soviet Government refuse to sell us their rights to the railroad, then the Japanese will take it and every confounded barbarian of them will be deported! Those who remain and whom we cannot deport will be forced to leave the country, for we intend to make their lives so miserable that they will be glad to be allowed to go. We must not give them one minute of peace.

"Let it be understood that the White Russians have full liberty to deal with the Reds in any manner they see fit. Every day the houses of the Reds will be searched, their necessary household goods will be thrown out, they will be abused and humiliated so persistently that they will become desperate and get out of Manchuria.

"Besides these Russian Reds, there are some 7,000 Jews in North Manchuria. Our task in dealing with them will be more difficult. In spite of the fact that they are all of Russian origin, many of

them have been able, more or less legally, to become naturalized citizens of other countries. Some are English, Americans, French; others are Turks, Italians, Germans, Poles, etc., Most of the foreign firms in Manchuria are represented by them; so much so, that wherever you see a foreign flag in front of an establishment you may rest assured that it hides one or more Jews. Of course, we cannot attack them directly and openly, especially those who belong to a nationality with extra-territorial rights. But indirectly we will have to make things tough for them.. If we cannot touch them on account of extra-territoriality, we can very well touch all those who seek to do business with them. Any Russians or Chinese caught doing business with foreign firms will be arrested on some pretext or other, until they all quit. And this will not take long, for the Russians and Chinese will soon find out that it is dangerous to deal with foreign firms.

“These instructions which I am giving you, I have given also to all the other heads of the Japanese Intelligence Service in Northern Manchuria. I am the only one who can give you orders, and you have no one to report to but me. None of your subordinates must ever know, or even suspect, that you work for me, that I am your Chief. And you will never know whom I take my orders from. The same applies to your chief-assistants; they must never tell their agents who is their Chief or from whom the orders come. Our Intelligence Service must not be anything like a chain. One link must not lead to

another link. Rather it must be a succession of points which work in harmony but without any immediate contact. And so, if the enemy catch one man, it won't help them to find the others.

"I see you have been making notes. It is a bad practice. A notebook can easily get lost, or stolen. It is much better to trust to your memory. I am told that you have a good memory. That is one of your virtues. Now you may go. To-morrow you start work."

"Pardon me," I said, "you have mentioned something about agents, my chief assistants, who and where are they?"

"Don't worry about that. In due time you will know them. I cannot as yet tell you where and when. For the time being prepare me that report on the White Russian organizations." So saying he extended his hand, which I shook, and walked out.

On my way home, I felt as in a dream. I was dazed and stunned by what I had just heard. All seemed so utterly incredible, and the most incredible was that he had told me so much. Now I knew that all the stories which I had heard about the Japanese atrocities in Korea and which I had never credited must have been true, as also the tales of the reign of terror established in Manchuria these last four months. I, who had thought that the Japanese were chivalrous, that they were a noble and generous people, now saw that this had been a mirage and it had vanished into nothingness. I was face to face with the frightful reality. The wolf had shed his sheepskin; the mask had fallen, revealing the Japanese

as they really are; a savage people, cruel and without feeling. A people totally devoid of morality, diabolically indifferent to the sufferings of others; a people that undertook the destruction and annihilation of millions of human beings without one atom of compunction, a horde of barbarians whom the world had helped to arm. And their incredible arrogance in calling themselves "Sons of the Gods"!

Here I was, compelled, like thousands of Chinese, to work for them, to be an accessory to their infamy. A storm of rebellion raged within me. I was tempted to join the bands of unfortunate Chinese who, though poorly armed and equipped, had courageously resolved to fight back, to go "monkey-hunting", as they used to say, rather than to submit themselves to them. But the thought of my wife and children calmed my boiling spirit and brought me back within the bounds of reason. What would become of my family, if I allowed myself to follow my impulse? My brave wife, my dear daughter and son, my old mother-in-law? What would be their fate, in the hands of these merciless vandals? No, I must, willy-nilly, play my part, be patient, wait for the opportune moment which some day was bound to come. Some day . . . soon . . . I hoped. Had I been told, that night, that my day of deliverance was far away I might have resolved to resort to extreme measures, but I was ignorant of the fate in store for me and mine. For nearly five years I kept waiting for an opportunity to leave Manchuria. The hope for my freedom enabled me to endure the horrors which I

had to witness, to bear the humiliations to which the ignorant, fanatical and arrogant Japanese authorities delight to submit those who cannot defend themselves and who are completely at their mercy.

MY FIRST ASSIGNMENT

The following day I began my work in the service of my new Japanese masters.

As will be recalled, I had to prepare a report on the organizations of White Russians in Northern Manchuria. There were various associations and they all had their headquarters in Harbin, and branches at different points in Manchuria.

The main ones were:

1. The Committee of Refugees; President, Kolokolniokof.
2. The Russian Social Committee; President, Koroboff.
3. The Union of Ex-Servicemen; President, Verzbitki.
4. The Legitimists; President, General Kislitzin.
5. Fascists; President, General Kosmin.
6. Society of Real Estate Owners; President, Gandatti.
7. Stock Exchange Committee; President, Kabalkin.

There were also various organizations of Cossacks and other associations of minor importance or no importance at all.

It is easy to understand that of these different Presidents, there were only two whom the Japanese

wished to keep in their posts. They were: Koroboff, of the Russian Social Committee, and Kislitzin, head of the Legitimists.

Koroboff had a great point of merit in his favour: he had reached the age of 54 without ever having done a day's work. His profession consisted in acting as President or Secretary-Treasurer of some Russian society or other . . . and to contract debts. He had no ideal except in connection with his stomach. His only happiness was to sit at a table well supplied with *zakuska* (all sorts of Russian hors-d'œuvres, appetizers, etc.). So great was his reputation in that respect, that when the Russians used to discuss his political leanings they settled the question by calling him "Zakuskist". He never missed a single banquet, whether it was organized by the Fascists, Anarchists, Monarchists, or any group at all. The unlimited elasticity of his ideology, combined with his epicurean versatility, made him an ideal man for the Japanese.

Kislitzin, the head of the Legitimists, an association of Monarchists who wanted to see Grand Duke Cyril on the throne of Russia, was an empty-headed, vainglorious parasite. From Paris, the Grand Duke and pretender sent all sorts of medals and decorations to his followers in Manchuria; Knight of the Order of this, that and the other; Grand Officer of the Legion of this, that and the other; promotions to so-and-so, etc. Kislitzin himself, on whose chest hung 14 flashy decorations, who, at the end of the world War, had received his discharge with the rank of Captain, had been promoted Lieutenant-General of

Cavalry by the Grand Duke. For that matter most of the members of this association of Monarchists had been made Generals and were covered with all kinds of Russian medals.

Kislitzin's motto was identical with that of George I: punch and fat women, only he used vodka, with which the Japanese always kept him abundantly supplied. He was just the man for the Japanese, who, not to be outdone by the Grand Duke, had made him Commander-in-Chief of the White Army of Manchuria.

Be it said, in truth and justice, that Kislitzin was one of the few ex-officers of the Russian Army who were willing to be employed by the Japanese. The large majority preferred persecution, hunger, even imprisonment, to the disgrace of being made tools.

It took but a few days for the Russians, who had given the invaders such a warm welcome, to find out what they really were like. Received as liberators, the Japanese lost no time in appearing under their true colours.

Nikolai Medi, the son of General Medi, and who, for four years was compelled, like myself, to stay in Harbin in the service of the Japanese, told me one day that "no Communist had ever been as good a propagandist for the Soviet cause as the Japanese in Manchuria". This statement is supported by the fact that every month thousands of Russian refugees, who had fled persecution at home and had come to Manchuria to find peace and security, called on the Soviet Consul and begged for a Soviet passport to go

back to the U.S.S.R., rather than stay in Manchuria where Japanese persecution had become unbearable. They preferred to give up their White Russian convictions and become Bolsheviks. Faced with the alternatives of two forms of oppression, they chose the Red as against the Yellow. There is not one Russian refugee to-day, whether among those who took refuge in China proper or those who remained in Manchuria, who does not curse and damn the Japanese. The only exceptions to this were the Russian criminals whom the Japanese released from jail after the invasion. They had to keep up their "Banzai" or else go back to prison.

Not a single self-respecting Russian wanted to have anything to do with the Japanese. So true is this that, when the Japanese named General Kislitzin Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the White Russian refugees, they could not find a single Russian ex-General willing to accept the rank of Chief of Staff. They had to resort to dressing up a dummy. A poor sick fellow who, for years, had been begging in front of Tchurin's Department Store in Harbin, was chosen for the part; he had formerly been a General of Ataman Semeonoff's Cossacks in Siberia. This wretched wreck, tubercular and syphilitic, was bathed and clad in new clothes. A few days later the Official Gazette announced that Major-General Salnikoff had been made Chief of Staff.

The other Presidents of Russian organizations, to whom the Japanese had served notice that their resignations would be welcome, all refused as one

man. There ensued a bitter war against the "rebels", as the Japanese called them. Some of these gave in, after a few months of intense persecution; others, like Gandatti and Kabalkin, held on for four years in spite of threats, arrests and endless harassing. It was only in the early part of 1936 that they had to give up their positions through irresistible Japanese pressure.

Ex-Governor Gandatti was a man of indomitable spirit, in spite of his 84 years. When an officer of the Japanese Gendarmerie came to his house with an order for his arrest, the old gentleman presented himself before him with his chest bearing the highest decoration which the Emperor of Japan could bestow on a foreigner, given to him at the time when he was Governor of the Amur Province. Such high Japanese decorations gave their bearer immunity from arrest. The officer bowed and withdrew in confusion. From that day on, whenever the ex-Governor was called before the courts of "Manchoukuo" to answer to some absurd charges proffered against him by White Russian renegades in the pay of the Japanese, he never failed to wear the Imperial Medal and to come without an escort.

On one of these occasions, two young Russian ruffians accused Gandatti of having appropriated the funds of a private school of which he, Gandatti, had been proprietor and director for 20 years. The two hoodlums, knowing that they were backed by the Japanese, showered on Gandatti the basest insults in the vilest language, notwithstanding the fact that the

Chinese judge had first requested, then ordered them, not to use indecent language. At the conclusion of the perjured testimony of the two renegades the presiding judge asked the ex-Governor if he wished to say anything in his own defence. Gandatti stood up and very quietly said:

"I refuse to answer the accusations of these two worthless scoundrels. It pains me to see two young Russians who for the sake of a miserable \$35.00 a month can fall so low as to sell their honour to the Japanese. That is all I have to say."

When Gandatti left the court-room the judge accompanied him to the door and excused himself for having summoned him, repeating the oft-said sentence: "It is not we Chinese who are responsible for these outrages."

CHAPTER V

YING, THE BANDIT

ON FEBRUARY 25, 1932, I was ordered by my Chief to call at the Japanese Military Command situated on Bolshoi Prospect, the main street of the New Town, where someone would be waiting for me.

When I arrived I was surprised to be received by a Chinese who spoke very good Russian and who did me the honours of the place as if it were his own home.

We sat down. A servant brought tea and cigarettes and then began the exchange of polite questions about the state of health of our respective families, etc. etc., the usual prelude, according to Chinese etiquette, before coming to the point. Once the formalities were completed, he said, point blank:

“Mr. Vespa, you are going to meet an old acquaintance of yours.”

“I have no objection to meeting anyone whom my Chief wishes me to meet.”

“Very well; but the party whom you are going to meet has nothing to do with the Chief, he does not even know him, and he must never know him. He will work and will receive his orders from you. You will pay him the money he may need in order to execute those orders. The rest must not interest him.”

“Very well! when do I meet the gentleman?”

"We are going to meet him now. Please let us go."

"Remember! not a word about our Chief or of the Japanese," was his last warning.

We went out; a large sedan car such as is usually used by the Japanese military was waiting at the door.

As soon as we were seated, the car started, passed along the Bolshoi Prospect, and then turned to the left.

The chauffeur spoke a few words to a man seated next to him.

I observed that they were both Russians.

After about ten minutes' driving, the car stopped in front of a large one-storied house.

We were evidently expected, for the door opened as we approached.

As we walked into the reception room, I noticed four Chinese armed with Mauser automatics. Before I could study them, a door opened and a stocky-looking Chinese came to meet me, smiling.

I looked at him, surprised.

There stood, in front of me, the famous Wang Chien-chi, alias Lin Pin-chi, alias Ma Tsu-chi, alias twenty other names; one of the many bandit chiefs who roam around Manchuria.

My guide was right, Wang Chien-chi was an old acquaintance of mine. The last time we had met was in the mountains of Little Khingan, on the Korean-Manchurian border, near a village called Wangtangtai. The graves of three of my agents and of nine bandits are still there to mark the place of our pleasant

encounter. Wang Chien-chi himself received a bullet in the chest and one in the right leg. I had arrested him and carried him to a hospital, dying—at least according to the Chinese doctor who examined him. But death, natural or violent, had not claimed him yet. Big-shot bandits in China always have plenty of money and influence.

Four months later Wang Chien-chi, more alive than ever, had escaped from prison and gone back to his favourite occupation.

And now here he was smiling at me.

He put out his hand and we shook.

Wang was brave and frank. He was never afraid of declaring openly who he was and what he did for a living. How wonderful it would have been if the Japanese had been as frank and open! They would at least have commanded a measure of respect instead of earning universal moral condemnation and contempt.

“I am glad to meet you again, Mr. Vespa,” he said. “Really delighted, especially when I think that we are going to work together. I wish to tell you that I have forgotten the past. We must both forget that we have been enemies. From to-day on, a new life begins.”

Turning towards the four armed Chinese who, until then, had kept at a distance:

“Eh, you fellows, step forward! This gentleman is the Mr. Vespa whom I told you about. From now on he is my dearest friend; and, as my friend, he is entitled to all your respect and obedience. Woe to

him who dares pronounce one disrespectful word in his presence. Tell this to your men. Remember what I am telling you; these are my orders. He who lacks respect toward Mr. Vespa, lacks respect towards me, and you know that that means death to the fool who thus forgets his manners."

"Mr. Vespa, these are my four lieutenants. Strong hearts and nerves of steel."

The four men bowed and we all shook hands.

For the last 20 days I had been shaking the hands of Japanese bandits who called themselves army officers, gendarmes and intelligence men. I experienced a sort of joy and relief in shaking hands with men who were not afraid to admit that they were bandits.

The Chinese who had accompanied me had kept silent so far. I wondered what he was. Surely not a bandit. His skin was almost white and of a smooth delicate texture; his finger-nails were well kept and very long, indicating a man who never does any manual labour. Surely a resident of the city. On introducing himself, instead of stating his name, he had simply said: "I am honoured with the confidence of our Chief."

At a sign from Wang Chien-chi, a door opened and our eyes fell on a large table richly set and laden to profusion with Chinese delicacies and Russian *zakuska*.

"I thought," said the chief bandit, "that it would be most appropriate that we should celebrate our meeting again with a little humble repast. Will you

do me the honour of partaking of my miserable food and drinks?"

We all sat at table and the first thing which I noticed was that the servants, all wearing Chinese dress, were Japanese. He who has lived many years in the Orient can always tell the difference between the two races.

Conversation became lively. The bandit chief took pleasure in recounting the incidents of our various encounters on opposite sides of the law. He spoke of Marshal Chang Tso-lin; of other prominent Chinese personages, some of whom had been his victims; of politics in Japan, in China and Europe.

My respect and admiration for him increased as I listened. He was remarkably well informed, this chief of bandits. I could now see him in a different light.

One of the servants approached the man who had accompanied me and who had, so far, abstained from joining in the conversation, and spoke something in his ear in Japanese. The latter turned to me and told me in Russian that I was wanted on the phone.

"Hello!"

"Hello! Mr. Vespa? This is the Chief of the Intelligence Service. As soon as you have finished eating come over, I shall be waiting for you."

"Very well, sir, I shall be there presently."

I returned to the dining-room. My Chinese companion excused himself, saying that he had urgent business elsewhere, and left. I accompanied him to the door and as we parted I said: "I hope we shall meet again."

"I am afraid not. This very night I am leaving for the South."

Since my Chief had given me instructions never to ask questions of other agents or of anyone connected with the Service, I said no more.

Back at table, Wang Chien-chi ordered one of the boys to bring champagne. The vodka and wine had by this time made everybody quite merry and Wang was in high spirits.

He kept repeating how glad he was to have met me again and how great it was going to be to work together.

"I am going to stick to my profession five years and then I shall be rich enough to retire. I want to go and live in one of the Foreign Concessions in China proper, where I have many friends and former companions. Perhaps I shall take a trip abroad. Now, I must work and make money. It will be a pleasure to take orders from you. To-day marks the beginning of a new life and I must assume a new name. Henceforth I shall be called Ying.¹ And you too, Mr. Vespa, you should get a new name for yourself."

"No, thanks, I'll stick to the one I have."

"All right! I am told that Vespa in Italian is the name of a little animal that stings. We call it 'feng'² in Chinese. So we are to call you Feng. . . . Here, boy, fill up our glasses, we are going to drink to the health of Feng and Ying."

We drank to our health. Then I said that I had to

¹ Meaning "shadow"; the accent is dragged on the last letter.
² "Wasp."

go. Immediately one of the boys informed me that my car was waiting at the door.

Ying insisted on accompanying me to the street, urging me to let him know as soon as possible what kind of work we were going to do together.

We said good-bye.

I got in the car, noticing that the same two Russians were in the front seat.

THE CHIEF GOES BERSERK

A few minutes later I was with the Chief. Smiling, he said:

"Well, you had a good time at Wang's?"

"I beg your pardon, Wang is dead. He is Ying now."

"Yes, I know. And you are Feng."

"The Japanese boy has already telephoned our conversation to you."

He smiled again. This is the gist of what he then said:

"Now listen. Ying, as we shall henceforth call him, has been working for us for twenty years; but he can never say that he has ever received orders or instructions or money from the Japanese. Whether or not he knows that he works for us does not interest us. The fact remains that he has never been spoken to by any Japanese official. Now to the real business. . . . Ying has brought 36 men with him. Every one of them tried, proven and trustworthy. It will take five or six weeks to pick out from among the local

bandits some 1,500 men whom we need to execute our programme. They will receive their instructions from you, you alone will contact them. Remember that. Never a word about me or about the Japanese. Bear in mind that his men are absolutely sure that they are working for the Soviet Government. Some of them believe that they are working for the Americans. Any way, it will be up to you to make them suspect, by clever insinuations, that they are in the pay of Europeans. That is part of your job as my go-between. In about ten days Ying will have gathered enough men together to enable us to get things started.

“I have given instructions to the Commander of the Gendarmerie to recruit a certain number of Russians who are not afraid of anything: men who can shoot straight, men with strong nerves, who can keep their mouths shut and not let their conscience bother them. I had intended to have them directly under my command, but I realized that that would be impossible. So I decided to turn them over to the Gendarmerie.

“The reason for that is that I wish to avoid all direct contact with Europeans. It is true that you are a European, but you are a Chinese citizen. If ever I have you shot, I won't have to give explanations to anybody. Not that I intend to do such a thing; on the contrary, I believe that we shall get along very well, and that before long I shall be able to have full confidence in you.

“Here is the list of the Russians selected by the Gendarmerie. Look them all up and prepare me a

report which I wish to compare with the Gendarmerie's report. I trust nobody, Mr. Vespa, every report that comes to me is always checked up and double-checked. *The truth* is what I must have.

"These Russian toughs will help us in putting the screws on certain rich Jews and Russians whom we do not like. I want to take their fortunes away from them and kick them out of Manchuria. When they leave, it will be with empty pockets."

"All Jews are not bad," I dared say, "I know many Jews in Manchuria who are perfect gentlemen, who conduct their business honestly, who are glad to see the Japanese in Manchuria."

The Chief jumped up and rushed at me as though he wished to grab me by the throat.

"How dare you talk that way to me? How dare you defend the Jews? One more word like this and I choke you! The Jews are all swine! All Europeans are dogs. That's why we shall throw them all out of China and the Pacific. But the Jews are still worse. You dare say that you don't find them bad? You tell me that there are gentlemen among them? Do you know what the word 'gentleman' means? The English have invented it. When an Englishman robs someone, he becomes a 'gentleman'; if he robs a lot of people, he is made a 'Sir.' In that sense the Jews are all 'gentlemen' and 'Sirs', because they do nothing but rob everybody they do business with. The Japanese are the only ones whom the Jews cannot rob. But I want to do more than that, here in Manchuria; it is we Japanese who are going to

skin the Jews. The Russians whose names I have given you are the ones who are going to do the dirty work for us. We Japanese do not want to soil our hands. Why don't you take a look at the list I gave you?"

I looked at the list; it contained ten names.

"Do you know any of them?"

"I know almost all of them. They are hardened criminals with many convictions to their credit," I answered.

"They are just the kind of men I need to squeeze the Jews. Do you think that we ought to hire school-teachers or Protestant ministers to do that sort of work?"

Looking at me with half-shut eyes and smiling sarcastically, he continued:

"You know . . . I am quite surprised at you. I have been told that you were a regular devil; instead of that, I find you full of scruples and moral rectitudes. What were you doing during all the time that you worked for Chang Tso-lin and with his Chief of Staff, Yang Yu-ting, whose favourite you were? Marshal Chang Tso-lin was a bandit, and you worked for him for over ten years . . . this ought to make you a first-class bandit. Answer me."

I replied "There are all sorts of stories and legends on the origin and on the past of Marshal Chang Tso-lin; so many, in fact, that it is very difficult to form an opinion. When I had the pleasure of knowing the Marshal he was the autocratic Governor of the three provinces which form Manchuria. It was under his administration that Manchuria became what it is

to-day—one of the most progressive and best developed regions in China. That is proved by the fact that millions and millions of Chinese from other provinces have migrated to Manchuria during the last 20 years and have all settled here for good. During all the years that I was in the service of Chang Tso-lin I never knew him personally to squeeze any Chinese, Russians or Jews. Not only that, but whenever he could prove that any Government employee had been practising squeeze, that fellow's head did not stay long on his shoulders. Neither Chang Tso-lin, nor Yang Yu-ting ever ordered me to do anything I might be ashamed of. Furthermore, if you do not think me fit for this work, if you find me too scrupulous, why do you force me to work? Nothing would please me more than to go back to China with my family."

"You and your family are going to stay here," he declared firmly: "No Chinese citizen who occupies a position of importance will be allowed to go to China proper. They have to choose one of three things; to work for us, to enter a buddhist monastery or to face a firing squad. In your case, since you are a European you cannot become a buddhist monk; you have two alternatives left: to work for us and become a good citizen of Manchukuo, or to be shot. You have lived 29 years in Manchuria, Mongolia and Siberia; you know every foot of the country; you know the people, their language and customs; you know who the good ones and the bad ones are, you have performed valuable services for Chang Tso-lin, and you will do the

same for us. To tell you the truth, if you were alone, I should have you shot, I could not trust you. If you were alone, I believe that by now you would be the chief of a band of bandits and would give us no end of trouble. But you have a family to which you are devoted, I am sure that as long as we keep a watch on your family, you will be on your best behaviour and serve us faithfully. You know what would happen to your wife, daughter and son and mother-in-law if you should become rebellious. Don't talk to me about going to China any more. From now on, there is only one thing for you to do; execute our orders and pay no attention to your conscience. Leave the question of scruples to us. We are responsible. I relieve you of all moral responsibility. What is your religion?"

"Catholic, Sir."

"Catholic? From the way you praised the Jews I thought you were one of them. Well, let us drop that subject and get back to business. The Japanese Shipping Agency, Kokusai Unio, has obtained the monopoly of transporting free of charge, on the Chinese Eastern Railway, any merchandise under the heading of Military Supplies for the Japanese Army. The Kokusai Unio has paid a large sum of money for that monopoly, and it is but just that the Japanese Military Command, who received the money, should give them all the protection they need. Any business firm wishing to ship merchandise at reduced rates will have to apply to the Kokusai Unio.

"Now, we know that Gendarmerie officers and even Army officers often make deals with private concerns to ship their goods at reduced rates and put the money in their own pockets. That must not be. The money which we make by not paying freight to the Soviet Railway should go into the Japanese Army's coffers; not into the pockets of officers. Of course, we cannot touch these officers. Whenever you find any irregularity you will have to devise ways and means of punishing the owners of the goods, but not the Japanese officers. Your agents will always have to be on the look out to find out who are those who ship goods otherwise than through the monopoly. Naturally, the Kokusai Unio will facilitate your task by supplying you with whatever information they have."

I ventured to remark:

"But what will the Soviet Administration say when they see large quantities of merchandise being shipped without paying freight rates?"

"They won't say anything. What can they say? The railway is in our hands; in the hands of the Japanese Army. It would be a shame if the Japanese should pay anything to the Soviet Government. Besides, before long the Chinese Eastern Railway will belong to us. We are going to buy it at our own price or take it by force. What is the Soviet Government, anyway? . . . A bunch of bluffers. The Soviet Army is a bluff. Their Navy is a bluff. To-day we take Manchuria, to-morrow North China, then Mongolia. After that we shall show to the world

what big bluffers the rulers of the Soviet Union are. If we are willing to give them a few millions for this Manchuria Railway, we intend to get the Trans-Siberian without paying a cent . . . and Siberia with it. Once we have China and Siberia, we shall bring our powerful Navy into play and start our march to the South: the Philippines, Indo-China, Borneo, Sumatra, New Guinea, Australia, India. . . .”

The Chief of the Japanese Intelligence Service in Manchuria had grown so excited in thus outlining the Japanese programme of conquest that his face flushed as if he were about to have an apoplectic fit.

There was a minute's pause; then more calmly he went on:

“To-morrow afternoon, at six, you will go to the headquarters of the Military Command on Bolshoi Prospect and ask for Tsai Tsen-chi who will present to you five agents who will work directly under you. Each one of these agents has a dozen or so sub-agents under his orders. Not one of them must know that they work for you, and the five agents do not know that you work for me. After getting acquainted with these men you will return here and I shall give you other instructions.

I MEET MY ASSISTANTS

At 6 p.m. on the following day, I presented myself to the Military Command and asked for Tsai Tsen-chi. A Japanese sergeant led me across a court into a

large room almost bare of furniture, and left me there alone. After a few minutes, a Chinese about 40 years of age, wearing European clothes, came in and asked me if I was Mr. Vespa.

"I am."

"Glad to meet you."

We shook hands.

"Please be seated and wait a few minutes."

A Japanese sergeant brought tea and cigarettes.

We sat down and after a short exchange of polite remarks, we heard an automobile stopping at the door.

Then the same Japanese sergeant came in to announce that the Russians had arrived.

"Bring them in," said Tsai Tsen-chi.

As they entered, I recognized three of them as ex-officers of the Russian Army.

The brief introduction over, the Chinese addressed the five agents: "This is your Chief, you owe him blind obedience. Whatever order he gives you must be faithfully executed by yourselves and the men under you. Your instructions and your pay will come from him. You are not to receive orders or communications from anyone else."

Then addressing me:

"These men are your sub-chiefs. They are numbered 1 to 5. No one is to know their real names. Now I leave you."

Tsai Tsen-chi took his leave.

Left alone with my five new sub-chiefs, I said to them: "The only instruction I have for you for the

present is to see that all goods shipped free on the Chinese Eastern Railway as Military Merchandise are shipped through the Kokusai Unio and through no one else."

Then I told them to report at 1 a.m. at the room which the Japanese had assigned to me; it was in the same building as the Second Japanese Military Mission, and I was obliged to live in it.

We parted, and I went straight to the Chief.

"What do you think of your sub-agents?" he said, as soon as I came in.

"I know three of them, ex-army officers; the other two I do not know. They look military."

"You have a good eye, they are all ex-officers of the Russian Army, intelligent men and not criminals. Theirs will be brain work only, no strong-arm methods. You will see that you will be pleased with them.

"The monopoly for the sale of narcotics has been granted to a Japanese-Korean Syndicate, represented here, in Harbin, by a lawyer named Takeuchi. This syndicate has the sole right to open and operate opium, heroin, morphine and cocaine shops throughout Manchuria; it has the sole power to authorize the Chinese to run opium-smoking establishments. I am told that the syndicate has paid several millions to the Military Command for this monopoly. It is now up to our department to safeguard their interests and give them the protection they have paid for.

"Here again, the Japanese Gendarmerie . . .

will try to cut in. They will make separate deals with narcotic dealers and opium-den operators, promising them their own protection. The city police will not dare close those shops when they find out that they are protected by Army officers. This will complicate our task, which is to see that the money from the monopoly goes to the Staff of the Japanese Army and not into the private pockets of Gendarmerie officers. You must instruct your agents to that effect. Now we come to gambling.

“The gambling monopoly covering all the towns and cities along the Chinese Eastern Railway, with the exception of Harbin, has been sold to a Korean-Armenian Syndicate called Kim-Ambarian and Company.

“The company has the right to operate a maximum of twenty gambling-houses anywhere on the railway line. In Harbin there will be one gambling-house, under our control, and the profit from it will be apportioned between us and a few Russian organizations that have been friendly to us. Even here in Harbin we shall have to safeguard the interest of the Monopoly Syndicate.

“The prostitute, geisha and dancing-girl monopoly along the Chinese Eastern Railway has been sold to a Japanese Syndicate whose Harbin representative is a notary by the name of Kirata. They have the sole right to import Japanese girls from Tokyo, Osaka and other distribution centres. Once more the Gendarmerie officers will try to promote some business of their own outside of the monopoly. We shall

have to establish a check-up system whereby no house will be allowed to have Japanese girls that have not been contracted for through the Monopoly Syndicate.

"Next comes the monopoly for exporting goods to China duty free and without danger, under the protection of the Japanese Military who sold the sole right to the South Manchurian Railway, represented here by the Kokusai Unio. They are the only ones who can ship goods to China without paying duty or transportation. The matter of full control is going to be more difficult. Hundreds of officials and officers along the border are making a fortune by helping and protecting smugglers. We shall have to be very alert, and anyone caught doing this kind of business with any officers must be arrested.

"We now come to the Soviet citizens. There are many thousands of them in Manchuria. We must leave them no peace. They are an abominable pest which must be either destroyed or forced to leave through a relentless system of searches, arrests and persecution."

"If we arrest them without cause, we shall have no end of trouble," I observed.

"Without cause . . . ? A chief agent of the Intelligence Service must always know how to find a cause. For instance . . . every time a Soviet home is searched you will have to have a reason, and if you have none, find one just the same. As I have told you already, the Second Japanese Mission, which occupies

the house you live in, has been ordered to supply you with all the material you need, such as Communist propaganda pamphlets, all sorts of letters from Russia, America or any other country, with the stamps and seals of those countries, so as to prove where they came from, a complete collection of false documents with which you can make any kind of arrest anywhere, at any time. You will also be provided with all sorts of incriminating Communist propaganda literature in the Chinese language. We must not let the Chinese alone, especially those who have money. Japan is poor; the Japanese army in Manchuria costs millions every day. It is our duty to do all in our power to lighten the burden. There are thousands of rich Chinese who have amassed fortunes as bandits, generals, or in some other way. It is only just that we should take their ill-gotten wealth away from them. The same applies to the Jews who all got rich by cheating other people in every imaginable way. It is going to be their turn to sweat and get squeezed.

“Give instructions to your agents to investigate and report who are the richest Jews. Find out about their bank accounts and whether or not they own property that can be readily sold for cash. Make sure that all the reports are correct, or otherwise, woe be to him who turns in false information. I have three other agents like you. I use them to check up on other reports; and when I discover any inaccuracy it goes hard on the guilty party.

“Once the service is organized the way I want it,

we shall launch our campaign. If all goes well it will be all right for everybody; if not, there is going to be trouble. I tolerate no mistakes, no half-measures. Remember that!"

"I shall not forget."

"Where are you to meet your assistants?"

"I made an appointment to meet them at one o'clock in the morning, in the room assigned to me by the Second Japanese Military Mission."

"Very good! You must give them exact instructions concerning the protection of the monopolies, and also about how best to deal with Soviet citizens and the Jews.

"Listen carefully. To-morrow at 9 p.m. two Russians by the name of Krupenin and Zabiello will go to the Daimagou Station to board the train. Give orders to one of your agents to have them both killed. They have played double with the Japanese, and that means death. Now you may go."

I went to meet my five assistants, gave them their orders regarding the protection we had to give to the monopolies, and then I asked if any of them knew Krupenin or Zabiello.

My No. 2 man, whose name was Pastukin (though he was not aware that I knew him), answered that he knew them, stating further that Zabiello was a Pole, not a Russian.

"Never mind about that, what I want is to have those two double-crossers killed when they go to catch the train to-morrow evening at the Daimagou

Station. As long as you know them, go ahead and do what I tell. Pick out men who are thoroughly competent for the job."

Krupenin was killed as planned, but Zobiello managed to escape without a wound.

CHAPTER VI

OFFICIAL PROSTITUTION MONOPOLY

A WOMAN'S LIFE IN Japan is slavery from the cradle to the grave. She is born only to serve man: her father, her husband, her son—or the owner of a factory or a house of prostitution. One of the first lessons taught the Japanese women is that:

“Man is as high as heaven, woman is as low as the earth.”

It is owing to this arrogant conviction that he is as high as heaven that the Japanese man treats his woman like a servant and a machine. This applies to all classes, poor and rich, low and high, common and aristocratic. Exceptions, few and far between, are those Japanese who have acquired a veneer of Western culture, and (more to save their own face than out of genuine respect) treat their wives with some consideration in the presence of foreigners. The wife of a Japanese nobleman will always be the first to bow before a manservant, for she knows that in spite of her noble rank and the man's humble position, she is “low as the earth, he as high as heaven”.

A Japanese husband of no matter what class, will never treat his wife as an equal, as a pal, as a confidante, be she ten times his superior in intellect and culture.

In the apartment next to mine, in Harbin, there lived a young Japanese couple, Kinoe Tanaue and his wife Chisuko. Tanaue was an "adviser" (no Japanese in Manchuria is ever called "employee", they are all "advisers" to some organization or other) in the Ministry of Finance of Manchoukuo; small, weak physically and mentally, with a very slight knowledge of English. Chisuko was the daughter of an Admiral, a graduate of a Tokyo college, and besides having a perfect command of English, French and German, could play the piano well, paint and give a good account of herself at golf and tennis. Briefly, a refined, accomplished woman, and very good-looking.

And yet Tanaue was not only indifferent toward her, but he treated her as if she were nothing. Rarely would he address her, and never in a gentle tone. Not having any servants she did all the housework, cooking, washing, cleaning, from morning till night—all in order to please the husband. When he came home from the office, she would remove his shoes, wash his feet, get his house-slippers. Then she would set the table, and while he sat and ate alone she would run back and forth to the kitchen and wait upon him.

When he had eaten his fill, she would sit at the corner of the table and modestly eat what was left.

After dinner, almost every night, Tanaue went to some tea house or other to spend the evening with the geishas. At two or three o'clock in the morning, when he came home, Chisuko, tired and sleepy, had

to be up to receive him; for a Japanese woman should never go to bed before the lord and master of the house.

What did it matter to Tanaue if his beautiful young wife was ten times his superior in every respect? Was he not "as high as heaven" and she, "as low as the earth"?

Professor T. O'Conroy spent most of his life in Japan, where he taught in the Military College of Tokyo and several other universities. Married to an aristocratic Japanese lady, he had a thorough knowledge of the Japanese language and customs.

In his splendid book *The Menace of Japan*, he writes the following on the subject of women in Japan:

"Although the law of fidelity for the wife is of such an uncompromising nature and gives no latitude to the woman taken in sin, the male is entirely free to follow his every whim in this matter. In fact the wife almost comes to expect the husband to have his affairs.

"The state of immorality would not matter were the Japanese woman merely primitive; but I have already said that basically she is much more intelligent than the average man. She is subject to all the jealousies and humiliations of the woman from the West. She is equally refined and delicate, and only her sense of inferiority forces her to make no protest. Her tragedy is the coarseness inherent in all the men of Japan.

"The Japanese man's ego knows no bounds, either

of logic or reason. He may bring a geisha or a joro (prostitute) into the very home where his wife is slaving for his every comfort. He will demand that she wait on his guest. He may even order her to prepare a bed for himself and his inamorata of the moment and have his wife stand by for any call or hand-clapping. She will be told to heat up another bottle of rice wine and bring it to the bedside, knowing that its only purpose is to revive the lascivious appetite of her man.

“Disobedience may spell divorce. Her husband has the power to divorce her by merely telling her to go; although usually it is achieved by giving her the appropriate three lines of vertical script. For a woman no disgrace can be greater.

“I can never forget the first time I witnessed the spectacle of a newly-married girl waiting outside the bedroom door for the clap of the husband’s hands. She was just sixteen. She had only been married a week when the husband brought home a prostitute. He had ordered his young wife to prepare the bed and wait outside. When I saw her, she was kneeling on a little rice-straw mat, swaying backward and forward. Her hands were tightly clenched, and each time she swayed forward she knocked her head against the floor three times. It seemed to me that she was trying to beat the thoughts out of her head. Suddenly, boiling, blistering tears welled up in her eyes and poured down her cheeks. She bit her lips to force them back, and blood trickled down the corners of her mouth. She caught hold of the

end of her kimono and twisted it feverishly. Then she pushed it in her trembling mouth to stifle a scream of agony. . . . My presence apparently caused some offence to the husband, and I did not venture to call again for over half a year. When I did so, by some trick of fate, the same thing was happening. This time she was quietly reading a paper, and, seeing me, after the formal bowing, she got up and ran forward, smiling to welcome me. . . . She had learned that her duty was to obey."

Professor Kitazawa, of Waseda University, wrote to the *Japan Times*, June, 1934: "While a Japanese woman or child is practically helpless before the power of the male, it can be imagined that in the case of millions who are not of the race the result is even more terrible. The young Korean girls and those of Formosa are absolutely beyond help."

In Formosa the principal cause of rebellion was the kidnapping of the Formosans' young women and misappropriations of their wages by the Japanese police. If any girl refused to accept the advances of a policeman, she was punished into obedience either by being locked up in jail or by being forced to pay a heavy fine on some framed-up charge.

There are Japanese female joint-stock companies in Korea dealing purely in female flesh. Here again cruelty is the background for the training of the prostitute. If there are no new clients the girls are beaten or forced to remain awake all night as punishment. The debts of the girl to the brothel-keeper are

forever chains around her neck. The kimonos are sold to her at a profit of from 400 to 1,000 per cent and are sold again and again to different girls. And it is no other than the Japanese who have introduced the system of licensed prostitution into Korea, and again it is the Japanese who are forcing the native girls into a position of slavery.

As might have been expected, during the first week in April, 1932, hundreds and hundreds of Japanese girls began to arrive, imported from Japan into Manchuria by the Monopoly Syndicate, to supply brothels, tea-houses, cabarets, dance-halls, and Japanese restaurants. The traffic in women being neither dishonourable nor disgraceful in the eyes of the Japanese, there is nothing shameful in their eyes about introducing it into Manchuria.

This traffic is considered a business just like any other kind of business; it is thus looked upon by the large Japanese business houses and banks, which have vast sums of money invested in this disreputable commerce.

In Harbin, the Monopoly which controlled the importation of Japanese girls had opened its offices in an eleven-room suite on Torgovaya Street. There was a Director, a Vice-Director, a Secretary and some 20 employees.

These offices were at the disposal of everybody without any distinction of race or nationality. One could leave an order for 100 girls or for one only. One could order girls for the *Mahiyai*, or high-class prostitute establishments; or for the ordinary *Jaroya*

of the common people; or geishas for the cafés, cabarets, etc. etc.

The entrance to the Monopoly offices is guarded by Japanese gendarmes. As a prospective customer enters, he is received by a neatly-dressed secretary who leads him to one of the several rooms, elegantly furnished in semi-European style. Here the client expresses his wishes as to how many girls he wants, and for what kind of establishment. He is then taken to a large room where he is shown large albums containing photographs and descriptive notes of the girls, such as: virgin or not, tall or short, thin or fat, education, accomplishments, singing, playing, dancing, etc. Once the selections have been made the bargaining begins and goes on until an agreement is arrived at as to price and duration of contract. This done, the client pays 25 per cent on account.

Fifteen or twenty days later the client receives notice from a bank that the girls have arrived and are ready to be delivered upon payment of the 75 per cent balance.

Thereupon Mr. Pimp goes to the bank to make his final payment and get his papers, which he then presents at the Monopoly office, whence an employee accompanies him to a Japanese hotel where the girls are kept pending delivery.

From that moment on the girls are the absolute and indisputable property of the contract-holder who can do anything he wishes with them and exploit them as he sees fit.

Most of the contracts are for a term of five years. When their time expires the girls sometimes return home, get married and try to raise children for the Mikado.

One often hears them make remarks like this: "Eighteen months from now my contract is over, then I go back to my village and marry the fiancé whom my family has chosen for me."

There is no law to protect these unfortunate women. They are at the mercy of the brothel and tea-house owners. These latter establishments are but another name for the former.

Should a girl run away, as often happens, the police make it their business to hunt for her as though she were an escaped convict. Caught, she is taken back to her owner, who does not fail to administer the sort of punishment which cures her for ever of the notion of running away.

It is a common practice in Harbin when a house receives a new shipment of girls to dress them up in gorgeous silk kimonos, put them in bedecked automobiles and parade them through the streets with placards advertising the merit of the newly arrived, and, of course, the address of the brothel.

The bestial character of the Japanese pimps and *maquereaux* is proverbial all through the Far East. The girls whom they hold in their clutches are treated as slaves, chunks of flesh only fit for degradation and abuse, beating and frequently killing.

The *Japan Weekly Chronicle* once remarked apropos of the importation of Japanese prostitutes into

Manchuria: "It might have been supposed that this sort of thing would be avoided as far as possible if only because it does not increase in the Chinese eyes the respect in which they hold Japan. But it does not appear to disturb the authorities in the least, and the enterprising persons who make haste to turn new conquest to advantage know that they can make more money out of taking women into the wilds than out of taking men."

The Japanese Gendarmerie never missed an opportunity to profit from the exploitation of vice and soon also became very active in the field of prostitution, opium smoking-dens and gambling-houses. Many brothels, clubs and tea-houses began to spring up in different localities, without having secured permission from the monopolies. The heads of the Syndicate filed their protest with the High Military Authorities who in turn passed on the complaint to the authorities of Harbin.

My agents were beginning to turn in reports against officers of the Gendarmerie who had a finger in such business, and the Chief admitted that we had a problem on our hands. He did not know what to do. If he closed those non-monopoly places, the Gendarmerie officers would rise against any authority that dared oppose itself to them; and he did not want to engage in open opposition against the all-powerful Gendarmerie.

At last, after studying the matter for a few days, he instructed me to order Ying to have his bandits make raids on the non-monopoly clubs,

tea-houses, and opium-dens, to carry away everything of value, and if the owners tried to resist . . . kill them.

I discussed the matter with Ying, and we decided to make the first attack against a sort of club-tea-house recently opened in Madiagou, a suburb five minutes distant from Harbin by tramway. In this club-tea-house, which we knew was controlled by the Gendarmerie, there were 40 Japanese girls, gambling-rooms, opium-dens and a narcotics dispensary.

Ying gave orders to 20 of his men to attack the place, carry away anything they wanted and set fire to the club.

It happened, however, that the Gendarmerie, either as a measure of precaution or as the result of a warning, had stationed several guards around the club. Unaware, the bandit-raiders approached and were greeted with machine-gun fire which killed two of them and wounded seven. The rest had no choice but to run away.

Ying became furious and swore he would get his revenge. Two nights later, groups of bandits raided two opium-dens and one gambling-house kept by the Gendarmerie, killed three Koreans, gave a good beating to every smoker and gambler on the premises and carried away all valuables. The night after, the same treatment was administered to another joint on Kazachkaya Street where two of the smokers who tried to resist were killed together with the two Korean owners.

To this declaration of war the highly indignant Gendarmerie lost no time in replying. Three days later, several of the Monopoly's houses of prostitution, gambling and opium-dens were searched by the Gendarmerie and about fifty customers were arrested on the pretext that they were Communists. The Monopoly became alarmed at the seriousness of the situation. Things could not go on like this; a solution had to be found, a compromise had to be arranged.

A meeting took place between members of the Monopoly and Officers of the Gendarmerie, at which peace was made. It was agreed that the Gendarmerie could have five brothels, five opium-dens, one gambling-house and one narcotics shop. A small number, when one considers that in Harbin alone, in 1936, there were 172 brothels, 56 opium-dens and 194 narcotics shops. In the provinces of Heliungkiang and Kirin there were 550 licensed brothels with 70,000 Japanese girls.

DRUGS AND DEGRADATION

Dreadful though it may be to contemplate the systematic spreading of prostitution all over Manchuria by the Japanese Monopoly Syndicate, the work of the Japanese Narcotics Monopoly is infinitely more diabolical.

Within a few months after the Japanese invasion, the whole of Manchuria, especially the large cities, was infested with this abominable evil. In Mukden, in Harbin, in Kirin, etc., one cannot find a street

where there are no opium-smoking dens or narcotic shops. In many streets the Japanese and Korean dealers have established a very simple and effective system. The morphine, cocaine or heroin addict does not have to enter the place if he is poor. He simply knocks at the door, a small peep-hole opens, through which he thrusts his bare arm and hand with 20 cents in it. The owner of the joint takes the money and gives the victim a shot in the arm.

A League of Nations Report on narcotics, contrasting the state of affairs prevailing before and after the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, paints an alarming picture of how that territory is to-day being turned as a result of Japan's deliberate policy into a source of supply of the deadly narcotics to the entire human race.

As Russell Pasha recently indicated, it is no secret that drug-peddling is carried on with great profit as a side-line by many big business houses in Japan, as also by other smaller fry. The transfer of these sinister activities from Japan to 'Manchoukuo', whose administration is ever ready and willing to shoulder the blame for Japanese guilt, would naturally pave the way for more open activities by the Japanese narcotic 'ring'.

In Harbin, where there are tens of thousands of Russians, the number of victims of narcotics grew to enormous proportions after the arrival of the Japanese. Thousands of boys and girls became confirmed addicts. Every day, the dead bodies of some of them were found on the streets. Protests made by the Consular Corps

and by foreign, Russian and Chinese associations fell on deaf ears. Japanese dope-peddlers invaded the Russian elementary schools and gymnasiums. The Japanese owners of narcotic shops offered premiums to young addicts who brought a new convert with them, a prospective slave.

Thousands of farmers were advised by Japanese agents to stop planting soya-beans and to grow poppies instead. Travelling over any of the big Manchurian railways one does not see so many poppy fields, but away from the tourist's eye there are countless acres planted with them. The production of opium has reached such proportions that the Japanese now export millions of dollars worth to China every year, and it is a settled part of Japanese technique of conquest to drug its new subjects as quickly as possible, for a dope addict soon loses all thought of "resistance".

On Uchatscovaya Street, in Harbin, are located the offices of a Japanese firm which specializes in the exportation of opium to China. Labelled as "Japanese military supplies", the opium is shipped on Japanese boats to Tientsin, Peking, Hankow and other ports. The Director of this office is an officer of the Japanese Army, as also are the chief employees; all are dressed in civilian clothes so as to look like ordinary merchants.

Shipments of opium to China are made every day under the guise of Japanese military supplies and addressed to the Japanese Military Command wherever there is one, such as in Tientsin, Peking, Hankow, etc. In places where there is no

Military Command the opium thus shipped is addressed to the Japanese Consulate. Japanese warships transport opium along the Chinese coast, and Japanese gunboats perform the same service on all the large rivers of China.

In Dairen, in Mukden, in Harbin, in Kirin, in Tientsin and other cities the Japanese have factories for the manufacture of morphine, heroin, cocaine, and other narcotic drugs. The production amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars worth a year.

Geneva and the rest of the world are struggling to curb the narcotics evil, but there is very little hope of any appreciable result until the Japanese octopus has been destroyed. It is unquestionably a part of the Japanese policy to poison the whole world. The more Japan can undermine other nations through these body-and-soul-destroying drugs, the easier it is going to be to conquer them. The logic of the programme is irrefutable. The conception and execution are possible only to sons of the Sun-Goddess.

Writing in *The Saturday Evening Post*, February 24, 1934, Mr. Edgar Snow thus described the present conditions of the drug traffic in Manchuria:

“The recent statement by Stuart Fuller, sent by President Roosevelt to deliver a protest against the ‘Manchoukuo’ Opium Monopoly before the League of Nations Opium Commission, was a mild description of the drug peril here. In Harbin alone there are more than 200 licensed shops for the sale of opium, heroin, and morphine. ‘The shops are licensed mostly by Koreans and Japanese’, a foreign consular official informed me. ‘But anybody can buy; no licence

required.' Testing out his statement I asked a Chinese to take me to the nearest drug station. There I was offered a shot of heroin for 20 coppers. . . .

"Theoretically created to procure complete extermination, in practice, the monopoly has vastly stimulated both production and consumption. One authority assures me that 'no less than 20 per cent of the Japanese and Korean subjects in Manchoukuo are directly involved in the narcotics trade'."

To kill people with bullets, bombs and shells, costs money: but to kill them with drugs, and to reap large profits thereby, is not only good business but also brilliant military strategy.

Thus Japan reasons.

For, indeed, Japan does not limit its narcotics trade to China; enormous quantities are sent to both the Northern and Southern American continents, to the Philippines, to the entire Malay Peninsula, to Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Australia and New Zealand.

For this reason alone, if for no other, a universal boycott of Japan is required to put a stop to this most destructive of all evils; an evil which is spreading most alarmingly.

What do the police of any country do when they catch a dope peddler? He is arrested and the law demands his imprisonment.

How is Japan going to be curbed in its world trade of narcotics?

Has the League of Nations achieved anything through its Conferences and Committees? Nothing.

Nothing, as long as Japan can get away with its barrage of lies and hypocrisy.

It cannot be borne in mind too firmly that, whereas Japan is making a business and a policy of stupefying the rest of the world, of promoting gambling and other vices among other people, it forbids its own nationals from using habit-forming drugs and patronizing gambling-houses. In Manchuria, a Japanese who is found in a gambling-house is sure of being deported to Japan. A Japanese convicted of smoking opium or of addiction to habit-forming drugs is given a five-year sentence.

In a small booklet which the Japanese Military Command distributes to all Japanese soldiers in service in Manchuria, the following regulation can be read:

"Paragraph 15 : The use of narcotics is unworthy of a superior race like the Japanese. Only inferior races, races that are decadent like the Chinese, the Europeans, and the East Indians, are addicted to the use of narcotics. This is why they are destined to become our servants and eventually disappear.

"A Japanese soldier who is guilty of using narcotics becomes unworthy of wearing the uniform of the Imperial Japanese Army and of venerating our divine Emperor."

In this, though, as in all things, exceptions are to be found, and in spite of these orders, many Japanese army officers in Manchuria have fallen victims to the drug-habit; caught in their own trap, so to speak.

So serious was the situation that General Muto, then Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese forces in Manchuria, and first Japanese "Ambassador Extraordinary to Manchoukuo", became greatly alarmed, and addressed a secret circular letter, dated May 3, 1933, in which he called my Chief's attention to the fact that: "It has come to the knowledge of the High Military Command that many Japanese officers frequent gambling-houses and, worse still, opium-smoking establishments. They have become addicts to the use of narcotics. This Command calls this matter to your attention and wishes to remind you that it is part of the duty of the Intelligence Service to control the private life of officers, especially the young ones, and immediately to inform this Command of any fact with regard to their conduct which brings discredit on the Imperial Army and for which the guilty parties should be immediately repatriated."

General Muto stood almost alone in his class; he was a gentleman to the very core. His refined nature made him rebel against the policy of looting and debauchery of the populace; he tried to check the cancer of Militarism and mitigate its ruthless methods. With heroic courage he addressed a protest to Tokyo in which he described the infamies committed by the Japanese Military on the oppressed Chinese, and begged that the emigration of Japanese criminals to Manchuria be stopped, that the unlimited powers exercised by the Gendarmerie be curtailed. He did all in his power to alleviate the sufferings of the people of Manchuria and to put a stop to the injustices

committed against them. True to his fine character, he kept up his lone-handed crusade until he became convinced that he was crying in the wilderness and that his voice found no echo from Tokyo. Disheartened and overwhelmed, he wrote a noble letter to the Emperor in which he assured him of his desire to see the Japanese policy toward Manchuria changed and the power of the Military curbed; and ended by pleading for mercy toward the Chinese of Manchuria, whose only fault was that they had been conquered. He then committed suicide on July 27, 1933.

Always afraid that the truth will hurt them, the Japanese announced that General Muto had died of "paralysis of the heart". And this version deceived a good part of the world.

CHAPTER VII

THE JAPANESE MILITARY HOIST WITH THEIR OWN PETARD

THE CHIEF SENT for me on April 9, 1932. He had received information to the effect that the Soviet concerns were exporting large quantities of soya-beans to Vladivostock.

“We must put a stop to this Soviet business. I order you to instruct our bandits to blow up the freight trains when they arrive near Muling.”

I communicated this order to Ying, our bandit chief, who said that he would instruct his men who were stationed in the neighbourhood of Muling, and asked me to have 50 pounds of dynamite delivered to his assistants there. I entrusted my No. 2 man with this mission.

On April 11, at 5 p.m., Ying phoned that he had to see me right away. So I went.

“What do you make of this?” he asked me. “The train which should have brought your assistant with the 50 pounds of dynamite has arrived at Muling, but I just got a wire that he was not on board.”

I rushed to inform the Chief, who immediately told the Gendarmerie. Dozens of telegrams were sent to all stations on the line; dozens of

answers came stating that no one had seen my No. 2 man.

On the morning of the 12th, at five, I, a Captain Muto of the Gendarmerie, and an agent of the Gendarmerie flew over by aeroplane and, on our way, stopped at two places called Acheng and Weishaho to investigate. At two in the afternoon we arrived at Muling. No sign of my No. 2 or dynamite anywhere; they had disappeared. I informed the Chief of this by wire. He wired back for us to wait at Muling.

Around 6 p.m. while we were discussing what to do, a gendarme sub-officer informed us that the station-master had just received a telegram announcing that near Hengtaohotze, 100 miles west of Muling, the Japanese Military train had been mined at 5.30 and that there were hundreds of victims.

We rushed to the plane and told the pilot to fly fast to Hengtaohotze, which we reached after 7 p.m. An automobile took us to the scene of the catastrophe. A terrible sight greeted us. A small bridge across a deep creek had been blown up just as the engine was passing through. The locomotive had dragged seven coaches loaded with Japanese soldiers down to the bottom of the creek. Eleven other coaches had derailed and rolled down the embankment, where the whole train had caught fire and burned.

On the scene we found the commanding Major of the Japanese troops of Hengtaohotze, some twenty agents of the railroad company's police, and a large crew of Chinese workmen all busy removing the burnt bodies of the victims from the wreckage.

The Major to whom we addressed ourselves, curtly replied that the salvage job had to be done first and *that the inquest would take place afterwards.*

A few minutes later, a rescue train with 10 hospital coaches arrived. It was around two o'clock in the morning when the last of the horribly burned victims was extricated from the charred wreckage. Along the creek embankment were laid 192 dead. Two brakemen, a Russian and Pole, were among the 374 wounded, 60 of whom were serious cases.

The train with its load of wounded left for Harbin. The Japanese dead, as is the Japanese habit, were cremated and the ashes, put in small urns, were sent to the families in Japan. Those who could be identified were burned separately; while those who could not be identified were cremated in one pile and the ashes divided into so many portions, which were deposited into so many urns.

Towards morning another train arrived carrying railroad officials, a detachment of soldiers and a large number of Japanese, Chinese and Russian investigators, inspectors and detectives.

To find the spot of the explosion was not difficult. Under one of the steel beams which spanned the creek and which supported the ties and rails, a large foundation-stone had been removed and in the hole thus made the charge of dynamite had been placed. A fine wire, which was discovered not far from the bridge, led to a clump of brush on the edge of the bank 200 yards away, where it connected with a battery.

As I observed all these details my mind instinctively went back to another charge of dynamite which the Japanese had planted under a bridge near Mukden on June 4, 1928, and which had ended the career of Marshal Chang Tso-lin, Governor of Manchuria, and killed his closest companion, General Wu Shu-chen.

If at the sight of all these Japanese victims a sense of pity and even remorse invaded my soul, the thought of the death of the Marshal restored peace to my mind. The Chinese of Manchuria had been my people for 20 years; I had grown to love them and to hold them in high esteem for their sturdy qualities. To-day I saw them oppressed, murdered, tortured.

I could still match my brains against the primitive cunning of the Japanese. No quarter must be given, no mercy, no pity shown and above all no weakness in dealing with tormentors and murderers.

Having found out how the train had been blown up, they now had to search for the perpetrators of the deed. Police investigators, Japanese gendarmes, railroad inspectors and detectives started a house-to-house investigation in Hengtao, and over the whole country on both sides of the line.

By 1 p.m. on April 13 more than 400 Chinese and Russian refugees and Soviet citizens had been arrested. Nothing could be learned from them, however.

At 2 p.m. a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Japanese Gendarmerie arrived by plane from Tsitsihar to take

full charge of the investigations. To call him a beast and brute would be an insult to the animal kingdom. There was nothing human about this yellow bundle of evil on two legs. He was a Jap with a Chinese name; for, let it be known, in Manchoukuo and in Mongolia, hundreds of Japanese officers have assumed Chinese and Mongolian names, and wear the uniform of the army of Manchoukuo or of Mongolia. As in everything else, deception was the motive. *Time and again, when one reads that high officials of Mongolia or of Manchoukuo have conferred with the Japanese authorities, or have expressed sentiments of sympathy towards the Japanese, these self-same high officials are Japanese hiding their identity behind a Chinese name.*

The physique of the new arrival, whom I forthwith nicknamed with good reason Colonel Torquemada II, after the Grand Inquisitor, was in tune with his dwarfed, twisted soul. Ridiculously small, bow-legged, repulsive to look at, his teeth stuck out at an angle of 45 degrees through thick lips which he never stopped licking.

He knew a few words of Russian and spoke an atrocious English.

The first thing he said was that the assassins would have to be found even if he had to torture and massacre the entire population around the scene of the explosion.

Captain Muto, of the Gendarmerie, who had come with me on the plane, remarked to me that the Colonel was a mean bastard, and that he (Muto) would be glad to get back to Harbin. Since I was of

the same opinion, we decided to send a telegram to the Chief. We were instructed to stay where we were.

The 400 arrested suspects had been locked up in a large warehouse without even a thought of discrimination. Chinese, Russian beggars, and respectable citizens, rich and poor, men and women, were herded like a flock of sheep.

At least a 100 Japanese soldiers armed with guns and machine-guns guarded the building.

It was about 3.30 p.m. when Colonel Torquemada II sent for me to come immediately to the railroad station, two rooms of which he had taken over to use as office and living quarters.

The Colonel, who was seated at a large table with two other officers, said as I entered:

"I have been told that you are interpreter¹ for the General Staff in Harbin and that you are Italian. So much the better . . . I don't like the Russians . . . I hate them . . . I hate all Russians, White, Red, or Black, any colour. They are worthless people . . . just like the Chinese . . . they can only murder in the dark . . . they won't come out and fight in the open. Swine . . . swine all of them . . . 450 million Chinese . . . 160 million Russians . . . do you know what they all amount to? . . ."

I remained silent.

"You don't answer? . . . Well, I shall tell you. . . . 610 million pigs . . . pigs! . . . pigs!!! Now we will get down to the questioning."

¹As he could not state my official position, Captain Muto had introduced me as "interpreter".

The four of us repaired to the warehouse where the 400 suspects were kept prisoners. Twenty gendarmes escorted us, opened the large door, and, with the butt-ends of their guns, pounded upon the terrorized people who were trying to rush out, under the delusion that they were being released.

A space was cleared; a table and chairs were brought in; the Colonel and his two assistants sat down. The Japanese Court of Inquisition was now in session. Torquemada II presided at the bench; a wall of gendarmes armed with guns and machine-guns faced the prisoners. One of the gendarmes placed a bundle of documents in Russian and Japanese on the table. Torquemada II picked one out, glanced at it and handed it over to me.

"Call this man," he said.

I read the name and called: Feodor Vasilivich Astakin.

A typical Russian workman, about 45 years old, stepped forward, the gendarmes opening their ranks to let him pass.

Again addressing me the Colonel said:

"This fellow is the watchman who has charge of the section of the line where the bridge is located. He is a Soviet citizen, therefore a Communist. Since he is the watchman, he should know who placed the mine under the bridge. Tell him he must come out with the truth . . . if not I'll shoot him."

I translated the Colonel's words to Astakin.

"I know nothing; that's all I can answer. If they want to kill me, let them go ahead."

After I had translated the answer to Torquemada II, he jumped up like a wild gorilla:

"Ah! sssssssss . . . So? . . . you won't answer. . . . You are not afraid to die? . . . Maybe you think we cannot kill you I'll show you"

Saying this, yelling rather, he drew his revolver and struck the muzzle-end against Astakin's forehead. Then turning to me:

"Ask him the same question once more, and warn him that if he does not answer I'll kill him."

I executed the order, but the watchman unmoved, unafraid, calmly looked straight in my eyes, saying:

"I know nothing."

The inquisitor looked at me and howled:

"What did he say?"

I hesitated, but had to translate:

"He says he knows nothing."

The last word was scarcely out of my mouth when a shot caused the crowd to let out a cry of horror. The poor watchman fell without emitting a sound, his face covered with blood. Men were swearing, women were crying, the place became a bedlam of maddened human beings. A tall, powerfully-built Chinese, who could not control his furious indignation, broke through the cordon of soldiers and rushed at Torquemada II who put three bullets into him.

"You tell them," he howled, "that if they don't keep quiet I'll turn the machine-guns on them."

I climbed on the top of the table and managed, after much shouting and frantic gesticulating, to

obtain sufficient quiet to translate Torquemada II's threatening order.

' They all became quiet once more.

Two Japanese soldiers grabbed the dead bodies by the feet and dragged them outside.

Torquemada II resumed his inquisition. He was so much in his element with hundreds of armed soldiers ready to mow down the defenceless and innocent, that he must have been having the time of his life.

More than 50 men and women, Chinese and Russian, were sweated and bullied. No one knew anything about the explosion which had caused the wrecking of the Military train, nor about the perpetrators. The only vague information was given by a Chinese boy, who stated that, on the morning of the catastrophe, he had seen two Chinese and one Russian lying down not very far from the destroyed bridge. .

After each interrogation, the suspected witness was commanded to stand either to the right or to the left, in the space cleared between us and the crowd.

Toward ten o'clock in the evening, Torquemada II declared that he had had enough for the night. He gave orders that all the prisoners who had not been questioned should be kept locked in; that the group on the right be set free; and that the other group on the left be taken out and shot. There were four women among the latter: three were Russians, one was a Chinese.

By this time, with over 200 Japanese soldiers and gendarmes let loose in the countryside, an orgy of bestiality was spreading horror and terror everywhere

in the whole region. Not a home was spared. Every conceivable form of outrage was perpetrated. Hundreds of Chinese and Russians were massacred, their homes ransacked and set on fire; scores of young girls, some less than ten years old, five of whom died, were assaulted. Liquor shops were attacked, their owners killed and drunken Japanese soldiers careened over the countryside, being, if possible, more brutal than when they were sober.

On turning around the corner of the railway station, where Torquemada II had established his temporary residence, we met a group of drunken Japanese soldiers dragging along a number of Russian and Chinese girls some of whom were completely naked. The Colonel smiled at the sight and remarked to me: "I am sure that there are going to be no more train-wrecks around here. Only with terror can we teach these Russians and Chinese anything."

As we came to the door of his provisional home the Colonel invited me to stay and have dinner with him. Not wishing to arouse his suspicions, I accepted; we all went in.

At table there were five of us; Torquemada II with the two gendarme officers who had accompanied him on the trip, Captain Muto and myself.

An enormous quantity of provisions, with all sorts of wines and liquors, had been brought in from the ransacked shops and stores. The Colonel ate and drank, but he drank more than he ate.

Once drunk, he and his companions forgot all their foreign manners and reverted to type. They quit the

table and chairs, sat down on the floor, after having discarded most of their clothes, and then started serious drinking. Most of the time they spoke in Japanese; and occasionally would look at one another and burst into boisterous laughter.

Suddenly, the Colonel, as though struck with an inspiration said something to one of the soldier waiters, who left the room immediately.

Then all eyes turned toward me and they all laughed louder than ever.

"Drink!" shouted the Colonel. "Drink! I have been told that Italians don't like water, that they drink only wine . . . bathe in it . . . is that so?"

I said nothing.

"Why don't you speak? You have the honour of being in the company of four Japanese officers . . . this ought to make you proud and happy . . . instead of that you look sad. What is the matter?"

Then he made some more remarks in Japanese to his companions, who started laughing, laughing at me, looking at me and laughing.

One of the officers crawled aside and went to sleep, his mouth opened, showing his ugly set of teeth, and he was soon snoring like a fat pig.

Torquemada II was still drinking.

"What would you give to be a Japanese officer? Answer me at once!" he yelled thickly, looking more repulsive than ever. I made up my mind not to answer him. He babbled on.

“You would give your life . . . but even that would not make you a Japanese officer. In a few years you could become an American army officer, or English, or French, or Russian . . . but you could never have the honour of becoming a Japanese officer. To be an officer of the Japanese Army is the greatest honour one can receive.

“I remember when I used to walk around in the streets of Washington . . . wearing my uniform . . . everybody looked at me with envy . . . because they knew that with all their riches and their palaces and their fifty-story buildings and all their grandeur they could never deserve the honour of reaching the height of being a Japanese officer.

“The Japanese Army is the most perfect, the most glorious, the greatest organization in the world. It is the only army which has never lost a battle and which has defeated the largest empires in the world, China and Russia.

“And we are going to do it again. In a few years the Japanese Army will conquer China, Russia, America, England and France. The entire Pacific must be Japanese from the North Pole to the South Pole. Our glorious army will be victorious on land, our invincible navy will rule the sea. The world does not know yet how powerful we are. They will find out when we begin to move; they will all find out. America will pay dearly for having closed her doors against us; but we shall get in, and when we do it will be as conquerors and masters. They will be glad to shine our shoes. First we must conquer China and Russia;

then will begin our march of victory and we shall plant our flag on every coast on the Pacific. The world does not know what the Japanese Army can do and is going to do."

And he laughed and drank some more, and raved some more; not realizing that he was revealing what he had been taught in class by his ambitious masters, not aware that he was exposing the secret thoughts of the Japanese Samurai soul, preposterous and arrogant, nay ridiculous, though they might sound.

"Do you know how many divisions of the Japanese Army it would have taken to lick the German Army in 1914?"

"I have no idea." This brought a long outburst of which I recollect the following:

"You have no idea? Well . . . I'll tell you. We figured it all out. We could have defeated the German Army with 15 Japanese divisions: that's what the head of the War College in Tokyo told us, that's what the Japanese General Staff told us. One Japanese division is equal to 15 Russian divisions, 15 American divisions, 12 English divisions, 10 French divisions, and 6 German divisions.

"The Japanese Navy can lick all the navies of the world put together. . . . You laugh? All right . . . wait and see . . . within five years you will understand what I am telling you now. . . . Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, when we threatened him with serious measures, gave us to understand that back of him were the Chinese Kuomintang, the League of Nations, the Russian Army, the American and

English navies. . . . Did that scare us? . . . did that stop us? . . . Never, not a bit . . . we have now been six months in Manchuria . . . and here we stay . . . What has happened? . . . The Kuomintang . . . that is to say the Nanking Government, has refused to fight . . . the League of Nations has sent a Commission of old women whose main job is to swallow as many banquets as possible . . . there will be many big banquets in Harbin in honour of the Lytton Commission . . . the American and English navies could not be seen around . . . the Soviet Army . . . the much-advertised Soviet Army . . . where is it? . . . have you seen it anywhere around? . . . No . . . neither have we . . . and just to show how little scared we are of the Soviet Army, we are going to take their railroad and shoot as many Soviet citizens as we please . . . and you will see that they won't even have the courage to protest. . . . Here . . . a drink . . . another drink!"

Some time before the end of this tirade, the Japanese soldier whom the Colonel had sent out came in again and stood at attention. When the Colonel had finished his speech, the soldier stepped forward and spoke a few words to him.

"*So deska?*"¹ answered the Colonel, and with a kick he woke up the sleeping officer.

The door opened and in came five young Russian girls pushed forward by several Japanese soldiers who must have terrorized them, for the girls were crying. Three of them were dressed like

¹ "Is that so?"

country girls, the other two seemed to belong to a better class.

Torquemada II, laughing and yelling something in Japanese, tried to get up on his feet but he fell backwards on the still sleeping officer who woke up, rose on his elbows and looked at the Russian girls with sleepy eyes.

During the whole evening, Captain Muto and the other officer had drunk very moderately and kept silent . . . just listening and making signs of yes or no with their heads now and then.

The young girls were forced to sit on the floor beside the Colonel and the officer. Torquemada II tried to be gallant . . . offered beer to the girls, who refused. This displeased him, and, turning toward me, he said:

"You tell them that I am the Colonel and that I have power of life and death over everybody in this whole country . . . if they are nice girls with me and my officers everything will come out well for them . . . if not, it will be too bad, too bad. . . . Which one do you like best? . . . Choose . . . as my guest you have first choice . . . we Japanese always treat our guests with deference."

Seeing that I did not move or answer, he continued:

"Maybe you don't like Russian girls. . . . Do you want a Chinese? I'll have one brought in for you. . . ."

I was so utterly disgusted that I could stand the sight of him no more. I got up and begged to take

my leave on the ground that it was beginning to be very late and that I had to get a few hours' sleep; "Besides," I said, "girls do not interest me, I am a married man with children."

The Colonel looked at me fixedly; he did not like to be opposed: "You will leave here only when I give you permission."

"I shall leave with or without your permission," I answered coldly. "My duty is to act as interpreter for the Military Staff . . . when it comes to love affairs you may look for someone else."

So saying, I turned and walked away. On my way out I heard him ask some questions of Captain Muto, who did his best to calm him down.

The station-master had given me permission to sleep in a second-class coach which stood on the siding.

At eight o'clock I was up. Just as I left the coach, I met a ragged Chinese "beggar" who asked me for a few cents.

"I have a wife and three children, two boys and one girl."

While I was taking my time to search through my pockets, I asked him in a low voice:

"How far is it from here to your detachment?"

"Three days' march."

"Good! Try to make it in two, and tell your Chief to come at once . . . hundreds of Chinese and Russians are being massacred here. . . . What became of my No. 2?"

"We buried him."

"Do you need any money?"

"No."

"Good luck to you."

I put a five-cent coin in his hand and went on.

TORQUEMADA II BAFFLED

Torquemada II did not appear until two in the afternoon. Captain Muto told me that only two of the girls had had to submit to assault by him and the other officer, and that the other three had been sent home.

The inquest continued for several days, with wholesale shooting and outrages. Nearly a hundred more of the warehouse prisoners were tortured in a vain effort on the part of the authorities to discover who had set the mine that had blown up the bridge and wrecked the trainful of Japanese soldiers.

Some 20 Russians who "worked" for the Gendarmerie had arrived from Harbin. They represented every type of criminal among whom it was the Gendarmerie's policy to pick recruits.

The newcomers immediately set to work to finish what the Japanese had started. They arrested everyone who was suspected of having any money and did not release them until ransom was paid. A large share of the money thus collected went to the officers of the Gendarmerie, and the rest was kept by the Russian auxiliaries.

A Japanese Gendarmerie Captain frankly told me that in five days he had received \$6,500 and that

the other officers had shared in proportion to their rank. Torquemada II had received more than \$20,000.

In Japanese Gendarmerie circles it is not considered dishonest to appropriate what belongs to a subjected race. The same tyrannical principle holds good among army officers, though on a smaller scale. There are relatively few Japanese officers garrisoned in Manchuria who, when their time is up, return to Japan with less than \$40,000 or \$50,000. The countless victims of Japanese tyranny in Korea, Formosa and Manchuria could contribute an immense mass of evidence on how Japanese officers make their fortunes. No wonder that the Japanese Army Officers' Party refuses to be controlled by the Japanese Diet. There is too much money in the present Japanese Army Officers' racket; the Government must be kept out of it even if Japanese Premiers have to be assassinated.

Miss Yoshiko Kawashima, called the Japanese "Joan of Arc" of Manchuria, stated on the radio early in 1934: "The arrogance of the Japanese in Manchuria, especially of the officers of the Japanese Army, is developing an immeasurable hatred among all classes of the population. This is caused by the fact that the worst civil and military elements, whose one motive is to amass a fortune in the shortest time possible, and who resort to every method of oppression to attain their purpose, are sent to Manchuria. They extort money from the people and compel the farmers to plant poppies instead of soya beans."

Once more I wired the Chief requesting to be allowed to return to Harbin, and once more he wired back: "Stay where you are and observe what is happening." Evidently the Chief did not trust the Gendarmerie; he knew them too well.

On the evening of the 19th, Ying and two of his lieutenants arrived at Hengtao. Immediately upon alighting from the train the three of them were arrested as suspicious characters. One of Ying's bandits came to announce the news to me. I went to see the Colonel and told him that Ying was a friend of the Japanese, and that before taking any measures against him he should wire to Harbin.

"Whom should I wire to in Harbin? . . . To Colonel Doihara? . . . Do you think Doihara is a bigger man than I am? . . . I am a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Gendarmerie, and a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Gendarmerie is superior to a General in the Army. I propose to question these three arrested Chinese myself, and if they don't give me a satisfactory explanation of their presence here in Hengtao I'll have them shot. I am in command here, not Doihara."

I sought Captain Muto.

"We must do something to save Ying and his two lieutenants . . . otherwise there are going to be some very serious consequences. Several hundreds of Ying's bandits are stationed near here between Muling and Hengtao . . . and you must understand that if I have been told of this (by the bandit who brought me the news) Ying's bandits must know very well what

the position here is . . . and if so . . . they will not hesitate to attack the Japanese garrison in order to rescue their chief."

I did not want Ying's bandits to attack the Japanese garrison . . . I had other plans.

Captain Muto suggested sending a telegram to the General Staff in military code, stating that Ying had been arrested by the Gendarmes and requesting that measures be taken for his release.

At two o'clock in the morning a telegram came from the Japanese General Staff of the Manchurian Army, ordering Torquemada II immediately to set Ying and his two companions at liberty . . . an order that was executed without delay.

Six hours later, the Colonel sent for me. I found him alone in his improvised office.

Looking at me from head to foot, and with an ugly frown, he said: "Why did you send that telegram to the General Staff? . . . who is this Ying? . . . whom does he work for? . . . and who are you? . . . who is your boss? Answer my questions! . . . If you don't . . . I'll finish with you for good. . . . I think I'll shoot a bullet in that head of yours."

"I have pledged my word of honour to the Superior Japanese Authority never to say for whom I work and what I do . . . it is therefore impossible for me to answer your questions. If you want to know who employs me and what my work is, all you have to do is ask the General Staff."

"What I want to say now is that you have been sent here to spy on my work."

"You are mistaken, I came to Muling before the bridge was blown up."

"And why didn't you go away?"

"I stayed because I was ordered to do so by my superiors. As soon as I receive orders to that effect, I shall be delighted to leave, if for no other reason than to have the pleasure of getting away from the sight of you."

And I walked out on him without even a bow.

For, indeed, the very sight of that horrid shrimp disgusted me and made me furious. I have never met such an ignorant idiot, such an insufferably arrogant, unbearably presumptuous type as this repulsive, filthy creature whom any respectable army would not allow to wear its uniform, but who was an important personage in the Japanese Army, with power of life and death over unfortunate people who came within his reach.

I was still cursing to myself when I met my old beggar near one of the village houses. While I placed a coin in his hand, he said:

"Colonel C. will arrive to-morrow evening with 2,000 men and camp a few li from here. S. is here with me. At 11 p.m. this evening he will come to see you in your coach."

S. like many other Russians had joined the Irregulars whose avowed task was to kill every Japanese they could lay their hands on and destroy everything Japanese.

All over Manchuria, small and large bands of

ex-officers and soldiers were harassing the hated enemy and never leaving him a minute's peace.

These bands of Irregulars, up to the day when I departed from Manchuria, were the real masters of the areas away from the railway lines. After six years of occupation of Manchuria, the Japanese may, in part, claim to be masters of the districts contiguous to the railways, but a few kilometres away from the lines, the Irregulars are in control. Japanese fliers may now and then conduct bombing raids, but the soldiers on foot dare not venture too far from the railroad.

Few there are who know about the heroism and patriotism of these scattered bands of ex-soldiers whom the Japanese call bandits, of their innumerable surprise attacks on the common foe. Few have heard how, in May, 1935, 323 Irregulars, surrounded by more than 2,000 Japanese soldiers in a small village called Meitokato, situated 100 miles from Tsitsihar, in the Province of Heilungkiang, defended themselves for three days, during which they had practically no food, against constant attacks. Japanese planes dropped more than a 100 bombs on the village, killing most of the inhabitants. And when these Chinese defenders had fired their last cartridge, the 60 survivors, nearly all wounded, with fixed bayonets, sabres and hand-grenades, crept in the middle of the night to the encampment of the Japanese, who had felt so sure that they had finished the enemy that they had gone to sleep without any sentries.

A terrible fight took place in the night. The Chinese

Irregulars mixed right in among the Japanese and killed them right and left, while the Japanese shot like mad, often killing one another. The fight ended when every Chinese had been killed; but 157 Japanese were dead and over 200 wounded.

Even among the most savage tribes, brave, hard-fighting enemies have always paid each other the tribute of admiration. But not so the Japanese. The more and the better an enemy fights, the more resentful the Japanese become. For anyone who opposes them they entertain nothing but hatred and contempt, no matter how valiant and heroic they may be in defence or attack. There can be no heroes but Japanese heroes; there can be no bravery but Japanese bravery.

True to this Japanese trait, the Japanese Colonel in command of the troops whose attacks had been repulsed for three days, when he stood before the dead body of the Chinese Commander, could not refrain from giving vent to his Samurai instincts. He cursed the dead hero, he hurled insults upon him and ended by kicking him in the face.

Such outrageous bestiality seems unbelievable. Still, if the world has thus far ignored what has happened in Manchuria, for want of witnesses like myself, it has now learned through the press and radio what the Japanese Military have been doing in North China and Shanghai, Nanking and Hangchow.

The world now, witnessing these atrocities, can well imagine what must have taken place in the far interior

of Manchuria, and can conceive how even my testimony can reveal but a small fraction of the outrages committed by the murderous, thieving emissaries of the people whom the civilized nations have mistakenly accepted as one of themselves.

CHAPTER VIII

RETRIBUTION

AT 11 P.M. S. came to my railway coach where I slept during my stay in Hengtao. We both were glad to meet again. S., an ex-officer of the Russian Army, had joined the Manchurian Intelligence Service after the Great War and for several years had been under my orders. He told me of his adventures with the detachment of Irregulars commanded by Colonel C., of the many encounters with the Japanese and of the prospects for the future. I, for my part, gave S. detailed information on the whole situation in and around Hengtao, the number of the Japanese soldiers, where they were billeted; where were the Gendarmerie, the Russians, the Japanese Staff and the Commander.

It was 2 a.m. when S. left my coach and disappeared in the dark.

On April 22nd a telegram came, ordering Captain Muto to return to Harbin. Another telegram addressed to me by the Chief, ordered me to remain on the scene to prepare a complete report on what was happening in Hengtao and to keep my eyes open, especially with regard to the Gendarmerie and their Russian assistants.

At nine o'clock that evening the population was in a high state of excitement. A Japanese lieutenant in a

house of prostitution had shot and killed one of the girls who had refused his attentions. Then, coming out of the establishment, the drunken Samurai had fired on everybody he saw, killing a Korean and wounding a Russian woman and two Chinese. Needless to say since he was a Japanese officer wearing the Imperial Japanese uniform, no one had dared to lay hands on him. Covered with the glory of his brave deeds, the murderer simply went home. Whether he was punished or decorated, I never could find out.

The following day, April 23, 1932, I sent an invitation to Ying to come and have dinner with me at 9 p.m. At about four that afternoon the Chinese beggar let me know that Colonel C.'s detachment of Irregulars had surrounded the town, and warned me to stay in my coach after dark.

Ying arrived at nine, accompanied by two lieutenants and four bandits who stood outside the coach.

Notwithstanding the excellent dinner I had prepared, with plenty of good wine and vodka to wash it down, Ying was sad. He complained of the way he was being treated.

"What am I now? . . . For years and years I have had as many as 15,000 men under my command. . . . Now? . . . I have scarcely 1,000 . . . and they had promised that I would have at least 5,000. They give me only dirty work to do, with very little money in it. . . . Do they think that I don't know that the Japanese and Korean settlers occupy a village a few days after it has been pillaged by us? So they take me

for a fool? . . . They had better look out! . . . They told me that I would be employed only against Soviet citizens and Koreans, instead they are using me against the Chinese, on the pretext that they are Communists. . . . Who ever heard of Chinese peasants being Communists? . . . I have had enough of their filthy business and some day, I'll tell them to go hang . . . and I shall go my own way."

I listened and said nothing. Ying continued:

"You must not think that I have any complaint against you, I know the conditions under which you must work. I know that the Japanese are holding you by force and that it is very much against your own will that you have to do this hateful work. . . . I know everything, even the things which you hide within your heart. . . . What hurts me most is that you do not place enough trust in me. . . . You and I can make a fortune together. . . . I still hope that some day, you and I, both independent of that cursed Japanese race, shall be able to act freely and as we wish. . . . What are the Japanese, anyhow? . . . Physically they are dwarfs . . . mentally they are orang-outangs. . . . Have you seen the Colonel? . . . That monkey whom we call Torquemada II. . . . It makes me sick every time I look at him.

"The horrid rat . . . before I leave, I intend to have his ears cut off . . . so he will have something to remember me by. Li-Tung, my lieutenant here present, has sworn that if the Colonel does not get out of Hengtao soon, he. . . ."

Just then a shot, followed immediately by rifle and machine-gun fire, put an end to our conversation. One of the guards left outside by Ying rushed in and told us that shooting was going on all over the town. It was ten minutes after eleven. I looked straight at Ying, who seemed perfectly unconcerned.

"Do you think we should go?" I asked.

"Go for what? What could we do? We have only revolvers. . . . A fine show we should make against rifles and machine-guns. . . . We shall get out when it's all over. Besides, I do not think they will bother us here in this car. . . ."

Ying then ordered his men to tell all the guards to come inside. He had told me there were four, now I counted eleven.

The firing would stop now and then, only to start again. By one o'clock we could hear only spasmodic isolated shots. This went on until about 2.30 a.m. At four, we went out.

The Japanese, caught sleeping, had not had time to get their rifles. Many of them had been killed in their barracks, and the rest taken prisoner.

Most of the officers, being in geisha houses at the time, were found in kimono and unarmed; those who offered resistance were killed, the rest were made prisoner and ordered to follow the Irregulars.

After the raid the Irregulars with all their prisoners had disappeared in the mountains.

As we stood there surveying the situation, little by little the Japanese officers and men who had managed

to evade the raiders came out of their places of hiding. By 7 a.m. 11 officers, the highest of whom was a captain, and 137 soldiers had come out in the open. All their arms had been carried away by the Irregulars. Of the 23 Russian auxiliaries to the Gendarmerie 14 were dead, and 9 had escaped. In all 143 dead, and 127 prisoners. As soon as the telegraph was working again we heard that at the same time as the raid on Hengtao, another band of Irregulars had attacked Imiempo, 100 kilometres from Harbin. The Japanese had been obliged to retreat leaving 134 dead and 86 prisoners.

At 11 a.m. a special train carrying a battalion of Japanese arrived at Hengtao, and a dozen airplanes which had been flown from Harbin were hovering about looking for the raiders.

The day after, April 24, a wire from the Chief ordered me to return to Harbin. I took the train a few hours later. Ying came to see me off, most unhappy because he could not come with me, as he had to join some of his men at Muling. Just as the train was pulling away he said with much emotion: "If you had not invited me to dine with you, I and my men would be dead now. I shall never forget it."

In Harbin, when I reported to my Chief, he received me in a rather cordial manner. More than the affair of the train wreck and attack on Hengtao, he was interested in Torquemada II's action, from the moment he had arrived at Hengtao to the time he had been taken prisoner. As for the victims,

Japanese, Chinese and Russians, he never made a single comment nor showed the least sign of pity or sympathy.

On May 2, the day after my return to Harbin, the Japanese Military Mission gave the following "official version" of the events that had taken place at Hengtao:

"On the 12th of this month, at 5.30 p.m. in the neighbourhood of Hengtao, Soviet Agents derailed a train travelling to Muling. Three persons were killed and ten wounded. Arrests were made and it was clearly proved that the attempt was the work of the Communists.

"On the 23rd, at 11 p.m. a band of bandits more than 4,000 strong attacked a detachment of Japanese troops at Hengtao. Our troops succeeded in repelling the bandits, who left 367 dead, 211 prisoners and a large quantity of arms and ammunition.

"Our losses were 4 soldiers killed and 11 wounded.

The Chief
of the Japanese Military Mission,
COLONEL DOIHARA."

The above "official" Japanese version is typical of the race. The immutable conviction that they are a superior race, a race of gods, a race compared to which all others pale into insignificance and become nothing, does not permit them to admit that they have come out second in any encounter or been beaten. Defeat is inadmissible to a Japanese. The

conviction that his is a sublime, divine race renders him blind to the evidence of facts. He fails to see his physical inferiority, which so strongly corroborates Darwin's theory.

What shall we say of the Army and Navy of Japan? Here is a subject upon which the Japanese will allow absolutely no discussion: The army and navy of Japan can defeat the combined armies and navies of the entire world . . . and that settles the argument. This conviction is shared by everybody in Japan, from the Emperor down to the coal-heaver.

How else could it be?

The army of an Emperor who is a direct descendant of Amaterasu-O-Mi-Kami, the Sun Goddess, must be invincible. If it is invincible, it must logically follow that any member of that army must also be invincible.

Now then, to write that a patrol of Japanese soldiers has been beaten is an insult to the entire army, to the Mikado and to the Sun Goddess; no less. To write that some Chinese had bombed a Japanese Military train, killing hundreds of Japanese soldiers, is merely to state an utter impossibility. Let us therefore change the few Chinese into "Soviet Government", let us minimize the importance of the catastrophe, let us reduce the number of dead and wounded and omit to state that they were soldiers, so that the honour of the Japanese Army, that of the Mikado and of the Old Lady Amaterasu-O-Mi-Kami, may be saved.

Japanese "Official Reports" have nothing to do with facts as they are or with acts as they are performed. The primary and most important task of a Japanese militarist in preparing a report or a communiqué is to emphasize and extol the military valour, the invincibility, of the Japanese Army and of every one who wears the Japanese uniform. In order to achieve that end nothing is too sublime or too ridiculously unbelievable. The more sublime and unbelievable, the more Military Authorities will approve and be delighted.

The Japanese myth about the Samurai who killed 2,000 enemies must appear, in somewhat reduced proportions, in all official Japanese reports of engagements with an enemy. The sort of exaggeration and distortion which would make a wooden doll laugh is accepted in all seriousness by the Japanese, who see in such gross extravagances only the true spirit of Japan.

During the four and half years that I had to work with the Japanese Army in Manchuria I never read a single accurate report of its almost daily encounters with the bandits or Irregulars. The Japanese never admitted that they had been defeated or had suffered heavy losses. When they had real victories, they were equally grossly exaggerated. Were one to assemble together the official communiqués handed to the press by the Japanese Military Command, they would form a most laughable collection of incredible jokes.

For instance, the official report on the Battle of

Sunbei given to the press by General Tamon, Commander of the Military Division of Harbin, is typical of Japanese mentality and imbecility:

“The 18th of May 1932, a detachment of 1,200 Japanese soldiers met in the vicinity of Sunbei (a village a few kilometres from Harbin) a strong band of bandits numbering more than 8,000 men, all well armed with Soviet rifles and machine-guns. After a terrible battle which lasted more than six hours, and during which there were repeated bayonet charges, thanks to the insuperable bravery of our soldiers the bandits ran away leaving 1,214 dead and 763 wounded. Our losses were 14 dead and 31 wounded.

The Commander of the Division,
GENERAL TAMON.”

In terms of the actual facts of that incident known to me the above fairy-tale must be revised to read as follows:

“In the Battle of Sunbei a detachment of Japanese, more than 3,500 strong, were attacked by a heavy force of Irregulars. After a desperate resistance, the Japanese were forced to retreat toward the Sungari river on the bank of which, in a fishermen's village, they barricaded themselves and waited for the night to fall. Under cover of darkness they crossed the river in fishing boats under a terrific fire from the Irregulars. Of the 3,500 and more, only 1,676, of whom many were wounded, succeeded in reaching

the opposite bank. Six days later, when strong Japanese reinforcements occupied Sunbei, 907 Japanese corpses were found between the village and the Sungari river; everyone of them naked, their uniforms having been removed by the 'bandits'. During the next 15 days 531 more corpses were found in the river, among whom was the body of the Colonel in command of the detachment.

"On May 27 the Commander of the Japanese Military Mission in Harbin received a letter from the Commander of the Irregulars in which he was informed that 382 Japanese soldiers and 11 officers were held prisoner, and a proposal of exchange of prisoners was made."

This fundamental trait of the Japanese military mind reveals itself not only in serious military matters but also in the most simple things of their life.

For instance, a Japanese gendarme stops a Russian on the street in Harbin and tries to search him. The Russian, who is considerably filled up with vodka, grabs the gendarme by the collar, takes his revolver away from him and gives him such a beating that when he has finished, the gendarme lies there with a broken arm and a cracked skull. Sub-Inspector Feodoroff of the Criminal Department arrests the drunken Russian, takes him to the Police Station, and writes his report, stating the actual facts of the case.

The morning after hell breaks loose. The Commander of the Japanese Gendarmerie sends for

Sub-Inspector Feodoroff and gives him such a calling down that he almost threatens to have him shot.

"How dare you take the liberty of writing that a drunken Russian could disarm and beat up a Japanese gendarme? . . . You have insulted the Japanese Army . . . the divine Japanese Emperor. Write another report and be careful about what you put in it."

Poor Feodoroff, not knowing what to do, consults Ishibashi, a Japanese lawyer, who writes a report which supplies the police circles of Harbin with a good joke for over a month. Here it is:

"On the evening of the 5th of June 1933, at 10 p.m., the Japanese Gendarme Shintaro Kakehi met a group of more than 20 young Communists who were shouting and outraging peaceful citizens, thus disturbing the public peace: Gendarme Kakehi courageously faced the group of Communists and ordered them to disperse and stop causing scandals. The drunken Communists, instead of heeding the request of the representative of the law fell upon him and beat him with sticks.

"Gendarme Kakehi, like a true Samurai, defended himself with admirable courage and, although seriously hurt, succeeded in repelling the Communists, arresting their leader and placing him in the custody of the undersigned. . . . His duty thus accomplished he fainted.

"As Sub-Inspector of Manchoukuo Police, it is my duty to call to the attention of the Superior Japanese Authorities the heroic deportment of

Gendarme Kakehi, a worthy representative of the glorious Japanese Army, a true Samurai, whose heroism fills us with admiration and wonder."

The re-written report was highly commended by the Japanese Military Authorities, and brought praise to Feodoroff.

Three months after Gendarme Kakehi was decorated for his valour.

CHAPTER IX

THE LYTTON COMMISSION

WHEN I RETURNED to Harbin on May 1 there were only ten days before the arrival of the Lytton Commission in Harbin. A week earlier all the various Police Departments received orders to arrest and incarcerate all persons "suspected of wishing" to present any complaint before the League Commission.

The Japanese police systems are something beyond belief or comprehension. In Manchuria there were the following organs of law:

- 1.—The Japanese Intelligence Service, the Chief of which is appointed by Tokyo, and who answers to Tokyo only.
- 2.—The Japanese Gendarmerie, which is subordinate to the Japanese Military Authorities.
- 3.—The Gendarmerie of Manchoukuo, subordinate to the Manchoukuo Military Authorities.
- 4.—The State Police of Manchoukuo, under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior of Manchoukuo.
- 5.—The City Police, controlled by the City Municipality.
- 6.—The Japanese Consular Police, which is responsible to the Japanese Consulate.

- 7.—The Criminal Police, subject to the Municipal Authorities, but independent of the City Police.
- 8.—The State Intelligence Service, under the Manchoukuo War Office.
- 9.—The Railroad Police, under Railroad Administration.

Each of these Police Forces operated independently of each other; instead of co-operating and helping one another, they frequently worked in opposition. The amount of hatred, jealousy and animosity that existed among them was incredible. In fact the main task of the men belonging to one Police Department came to be that of spying on those of the other Departments and attacking them on every occasion. It often happened that an individual arrested by one Police organisation because he had a suspicious character or was a dangerous person, would be declared a model citizen and a gentleman by another. There was, for instance, the case against Kavalsky, an ex-millionaire whom the Japanese Military authorities had robbed of all he had, and who, seeing himself unable to pay his debts, declared himself bankrupt. Both the State and City Police stood by him and maintained that he was an honourable man, above all suspicion; whereas the Gendarmerie and the State Political Police insisted that he was nothing but a rascal capable of committing any sort of crime. There was general laughter in Court when this contradictory evidence was given.

The order to arrest all persons "suspected" of being "liable" to make the truth known to the Lytton Commission was a real treat to the various Police Forces in Harbin.

In accordance with standing orders, all arrests were to be made at night. And so, as soon as it began to get dark, the different Police Departments sailed forth and arrested the richest people, intending to set them free upon payment of a sum of money proportionate to their wealth. This was bad enough, but the tragedy of it was that having paid, say, the Gendarmerie, and thinking themselves free, the victims were again arrested by another branch of the Police Service and had once more to pay ransom. Some rich Chinese were thus arrested five or six times and were bled white and, to top it all, were kept in prison just the same.

All the arrested "suspects", according to orders from the Japanese Authorities, were to be kept in prison until after the departure of the Commission of the League of Nations. They were thrown in underground cells together with thieves, bandits, dope-fiends, and others. A large number of them were not set at liberty until 30 or 40 days after the Commission had gone.

One month before the Lytton Commission arrived, the Japanese had ordered a number of prominent Chinese and Russians to form Committees to present "petitions" to the representatives of the League. Every one of such "petitions" was written and prepared by the Japanese. All the Chinese and Russians

had to do was to sign their names. Needless to say, these "petitions" expressed unbounded praise and enthusiasm over the glorious present and future of "Manchoukuo".

A Reception Committee was formed with the greatest care. To all the members of this Committee lessons were given in manners and on how they were to comport themselves. They had to learn by heart what they were to say and how to say it. They were warned that if they said one word more or one word less than they had been instructed to say, that if they made the least sign which might belie what they were saying, they would pay with their lives for such additions, or omissions or contradictions.

The Lytton Commission was coming to Manchuria to make an investigation and to discover the true state of affairs. . . . The Japanese made it their business to hide all they could from every member, and to deceive them in every particular. They overdid it so much that it has now become a world record in stupidity and has made them ridiculous wherever they go.

The Hotel Moderne in Harbin, where the leading members of the Commission were to stop, was placed in a regular state of siege. Certain rooms, near those to be occupied by such members, were assigned to Japanese and Russian agents of the State Political Police who were apparently to be ordinary hotel guests. Three agents of Police were placed as clerks in the office, others as Chinese bell-boys, waiters,

room-boys, hall-boys, etc. Three Japanese girls, employed by the Police, were to act as chambermaids. Dozens of agents were given posts in the dining-room, in the reading-room, in the reception-room and all around the hotel. The same precautions were taken in other hotels, such as the Grand Hotel and Novi Mir (New World) where other members of the Commission were likely to stay.

In all the principal stores, restaurants and first-class theatres where the Japanese thought some of the members of the Commission might go, they posted police spies as employees, clerks, waiters, ushers, etc.

To give exact figures: 1,361 Chinese, Russians, Koreans and nine Japanese "suspected" of being "liable" to make hostile demonstrations against Manchoukuo in the presence of the Lytton Commission were arrested and taken to a concentration camp at Sunbei, on the other side of the Sungari river, six kilometres from Harbin. Likewise, as there was a possibility that the Commission might wish to visit the prisons, all political prisoners, all Soviet citizens, all those who could speak English or French, were removed from the prisons and sent to the Sunbei camp.

The same precautions were taken in the case of all the hospitals. All suspected patients were removed to Japanese hospitals where the Commission was not expected to go.

The next move in the setting of the stage was to fabricate public enthusiasm, so as to impress the

Commission with the idea that the people were all for "Manchoukuo".

Hundreds of thousands of small "Manchoukuo" flags, and cheap pictures of Pu Yi (then Chief Executive) were printed at a cost of about three cents for the flag and two cents per picture. Not only everybody in Harbin but all the Chinese, Russians and Koreans living along the railroad line were obliged to buy both the flag and the picture of Pu Yi at one dollar each. Each "flag and Pu Yi" salesman detachment consisted of a Chinese, a Russian, an escort of two gendarmes and a Japanese cashier. Dozens of such detachments went from house to house and compelled the occupants to buy a "set" under the threat that if the "flag and Pu Yi" were not properly displayed at the door and window during the entire stay of the Commission, the whole household would be arrested. Those who were too poor to pay the two dollars cash were reminded that they had to bring the money to the Police Station within 15 days.

My Chief seemed to have lost his head. He gave orders and counter-orders; he had some people arrested, only to set them at liberty a few hours later. He was on pins and needles lest some overt act would be committed for which he would be held responsible.

The Lytton Commission was due to arrive on May 10, 1932.

On the 4th the Chief sent for me. The call was urgent. As I entered his office I was immediately

aware that he was in a very bad humour. He broke loose and burst forth:

"You don't know anything; the only time when you know something is when I tell you. What in the world Marshal Chang Tso-lin could find in you, is beyond me. Why he should have promoted you, paid you good money . . . even kept you in his service, is a mystery to me. If I had been he, I should have kicked you out the very first day. . . . I would not have kept you one minute. You are good for nothing . . . absolutely for nothing!"

"If that is the way you feel" I replied, "then, why do you not kick me out yourself? I have never asked to work for you. If you let me go, I certainly won't complain."

"Not another word from you! Don't forget you are addressing the Chief of the Intelligence Service. I can say whatever I please, but you have no right to answer. . . . Now listen to me! . . . You know Chang Fen-tin and Mo Wen-huang? . . ."

I did. The first was a millionaire, president of the Harbin Exchange Committee, and also owner or president of some 20 financial corporations; the second, also very rich, was the proprietor of the Tun-Fa-Lun Department Store.

"These two gentlemen," the chief told me "are preparing a petition signed by other rich merchants . . . they intend to present it secretly to the Commission of the League of Nations. It is understood that the petition is not in favour of 'Manchoukuo'. One of my Japanese agents has brought me this

information a few hours ago. Now . . . my orders to you are to see that, by whatever means, this petition signed by millionaires should fall into our hands. If we succeed in getting hold of this petition we shall be able to denounce everyone of those bandits before the military Tribunal and bring charges of treason against them. . . . This, of course, will mean confiscation of their property, which amounts to more than a hundred million dollars . . . a sum of money which the Japanese Army can use very nicely. I now depend on you to see that we get this petition. Have these men watched . . . have their houses watched . . . have every foreigner that calls on them watched. . . . I have a hunch that they will use some foreigner to have their petition delivered."

"Very well! We can watch them all . . . but the fact remains that all my agents are working 24 hours a day and I have no personnel available for all these services."

"I thought of that, too "; he rejoined, "and since all the Police Departments are very busy, I have decided that we should use Ying's bandits to keep an eye on these rich Chinese. The Gendarmerie will give them a card appointing them as special agents for a short period. Just the same, they will keep on working under Ying, to whom you will give instructions as to what they are to do."

"Do you think we can trust them?" I asked. "They are bandits. . . . Once they are invested with authority, they might see a chance to indulge in some sort of

abuse of it. Besides, you know what sort of rags the bandits wear, they would not cut a very good figure as special agents."

"I have already provided for that," he answered, "Five hundred uniforms of the Manchoukuo Army will be placed at Ying's disposal. That should solve the problem. As to what the bandits might do, I am not at all concerned. The only thing that interests me is that the members of the Commission should not be approached by anyone whom we do not approve."

Everything was carried out down to the smallest detail. Three days later, four or five "special agents" in military uniforms were installed in every one of the houses of the rich Chinese as special "guards of honour." The rest of the "special agents" patrolled the neighbourhood, shadowing those who had visited the guarded houses.

I am gratified to state that Ying's bandits did not abuse the authority vested in them. They strictly attended to duty; proved themselves good agents and were proud of the trust placed in them. Not only did they abstain from committing any reproachable action, but many of them, once the Lytton Commission had left, were loath to return to their bandit profession, and applied to be kept permanently on the police force.

It was 4 p.m. on May 9, 1932, when the Commission of the League of Nations arrived at Harbin. By noon of that day, the railroad station and the street through which the Commission was to pass were filled with "Manchoukuo" Chinese and Russian police. The

thousands of Japanese Police and soldiers who were usually so much in evidence in the streets of Harbin had completely disappeared. The Japanese General Staff had issued orders that no Japanese uniform should be seen on the streets, because the Lytton Commission must be led to believe that the formation of the new state of "Manchoukuo" had been the result of the spontaneous will of the people of Manchuria, and that the Japanese had no hand in it.

The thousands of Japanese Gendarmes and Japanese soldiers all wore the uniforms of the army of "Manchoukuo".

In accordance with the orders of the Japanese Military Command, all Provincial and City Authorities as well as the Military Authorities of "Manchoukuo" were present at the railroad station, together with the Reception Committee.

The train arrived. Lord Lytton, followed by the members of the Commission, stepped out, and after formal presentations the procession started toward the main exit. It was at this moment that a Korean, a member of the Japanese Gendarmerie, clad in the uniform of the police of "Manchoukuo" and forming part of the cordon which lined the platform, stepped forward and attempted to deliver a letter to one of the members of the Commission. He had only advanced three steps when a group of Japanese in the uniforms of "Manchoukuo" police laid hands on him and pushed him behind the cordon of troops.

The poor, patriotic Korean was arrested and my Chief ordered him to be brought before him.

Kim Kwok was his name. For seven years he had been serving as an agent of the Japanese Gendarmerie; but his hatred toward the race which oppressed his people had grown with the years. In his simple way he believed that the Commission of the League of Nations was something very great, that it had the power to give liberty to his beloved Korea which was now so oppressed and tormented. In the letter which he had written in Korean he asked why the League of Nations was so interested in freeing Manchuria, which has been under Japanese domination only a few months, when it should be interested in liberating Korea, which had been suffering for years?

That night, toward nine, while the Commission of the League was enjoying its first banquet in Harbin poor Kim Kwok was given the third-degree.

My Chief himself wanted to do the questioning, for he felt sure that Kim had accomplices.

But Kim was a true hero; if he did have accomplices he never admitted it. The Chief first let him talk just as he pleased. Yes, the poor fellow had thought that he had a chance to help his country, he had written the letter himself, and had intended to deliver it to one of the members of the Commission. Nothing more. No one else had had a hand in it.

Seeing that he was not getting what he wanted, the Chief became a beast. He had the poor victim tortured in the most horrible manner. They tore off his toenails and fingernails, they twisted his arms out of their joints, they burned the soles of his feet

with an alcohol lamp, and in a final spasm of fiendishness the Chief himself gouged out his left eye with the pen he was then writing with. And all the time Kim kept repeating: "I have no accomplices, I wrote the letter myself. I wanted the League of Nations to put the Japanese out of Korea."

Two hours later they carried him half dead to the neighbourhood of the cemetery and finished him off with a shot through the head.

To each member of the Commission the Japanese had assigned four agents, who took turns in watching his every move and recording everything he did, taking the names of every person he spoke to, or who spoke to him, or tried to approach him in any way.

As an excuse for such an unusual display of solicitude, the Japanese explained to the Commission that such measures of precaution had to be taken against the Communists, and also against the Chinese partisans of Manchurian independence, who intended not only to attack the members of the Commission but also to assassinate the Chinese representative of that august body.

Both these allegations, having no foundation in fact, failed miserably to impress the Commission.

Anyone with half an eye could readily see that the Communists were happy that the Commission had come to see how things were. As to the Chinese who wished to see Manchuria independent, it was not

possible that they should cause any trouble, for the very good reason that such Chinese did not, and do not, exist. All this watching and spying of the Commission had but one purpose: to isolate the Commission from everybody. It saved the members from assassination but from assassination only by Japanese agents.

Yet it was all of no avail. A great many Manchoukuo, Russian, Chinese and Korean Police Agents assigned to the spying duty were opposed to the "Manchoukuo" scheme, and did everything they could to assist the Commission in finding out the truth. Right under the nose of the Japanese Gendarmerie they arranged private meetings and interviews, and facilitated the delivery of hundreds of written communications.

In the chapter entitled: "Opinions of the Inhabitants of Manchuria" of his Report to the League, Lord Lytton states as follows:

"It was one of the objects of the Commission to ascertain the attitude of the inhabitants of Manchuria towards the new 'State' . . . however, the obtaining of evidence presented some difficulty. The danger, real or supposed, to the Commission from bandits, Koreans, Communists, or supporters of the new government who might be angered by the presence of the Chinese Assessor on account of his criticism of the régime, provided a reason for exceptional measures of protection. There were, no doubt, occasional real dangers in the unsettled conditions of the country. . . . But the effect of the police measures

adopted was to keep away witnesses, and many Chinese were frankly afraid of even meeting members of our staff. We were informed at one place, that . . . no one would be allowed to see the Commission without official permission. Interviews were therefore usually arranged with considerable difficulty and in secrecy, and many informed us that it was too dangerous for them to meet us even in this way.

“In spite of these difficulties, we were able to arrange private interviews with business men, bankers, teachers, doctors, police, tradesmen and others, in addition to our public interview with ‘Manchoukuo’ officials, Japanese Consuls and Military officers. We also received over 1,500 written communications; some delivered by hand, the majority sent by post to different addresses. . . .

“Many Delegations representing Public Bodies and Associations were received, and usually presented to us written statements. Most of the Delegations were introduced by the Japanese or by ‘Manchoukuo’ authorities, and we had strong grounds for believing that the statements left with us had previously obtained Japanese approval. In fact, in some cases, persons who had presented them informed us afterwards that they had been written or substantially revised by the Japanese and were not to be taken as the expressions of their real feelings. These documents were remarkable for their studied neglect to comment, either favourably or otherwise, upon Japanese participation in the establishment or maintenance of the ‘Manchoukuo’ administration. In the main, these

statements were concerned with the relation of grievances against the former Chinese administration and contained expressions of hope and confidence in the future of the new 'State'.

"The letters received came from farmers, small tradesmen, town workers and students, and related the feelings and experiences of the writers. After the return of the Commission to Peiping in June, this mass of correspondence was translated, analysed and arranged by an expert staff specially selected for the purpose. All of these 1,500 letters, *except two*, were bitterly hostile to the new 'Manchoukuo Government' and to the Japanese. They appeared to be sincere and spontaneous expressions of opinion.

"The higher Chinese officials of the 'Manchoukuo' Government are in office for various reasons. Many of them were previously in the service of the former régime and have been retained either by inducement or by intimidation of one kind or another. Some of them conveyed messages to the Commission to the effect that they had been forced to remain in office under duress, that all power was in Japanese hands, that they were loyal to China and that what they had said at their interview with the Commission in presence of the Japanese was not necessarily to be believed.

"The Chinese business men and the bankers who were interviewed by us were hostile to 'Manchoukuo'. They disliked the Japanese. They feared for their lives and property, and frequently remarked: 'We do not want to become like the Koreans. . . .' The professional classes, teachers and doctors are hostile

to 'Manchoukuo'. They allege that they are spied upon and intimidated. The interference with education, the closing of universities and of some schools, and the alterations in the school text-books, have added to their hostility, already great on patriotic grounds. The censorship of the Press, Post and opinion is resented, as is also the prohibition of entry into 'Manchoukuo' of newspapers published in China. . . . Many letters were received from students and young people, directed against 'Manchoukuo'.

"The heads of the 'Manchoukuo Government' and of the local administrations are purely Chinese. The Japanese hold positions as 'Advisers'. The organization is such as to give to these officials and 'advisers' opportunities, not merely of giving technical advice, but also of actually controlling and directing the administration. . . .

"After careful study of evidence presented to us in public and private interviews, in letters and written statements, we have come to the conclusion that there is no Chinese support for the 'Manchoukuo' Government, which is regarded by the local Chinese as an instrument of the Japanese."

The Lytton Commission of Investigation of the League of Nations never knew that during the 14 days of its stay in Harbin five Chinese and two Russians were arrested and shot by the Japanese for having tried to deliver letters of protest to the Commission.

The Lytton Commission never knew that on May 13, 1932, at 9.30 p.m., a young Russian student

of the Polytechnic School was killed by the Japanese on the second floor of the Hotel Moderne where some of the members of the Commission lived, merely for having tried to deliver to Lord Lytton a letter in which he protested against the closing of the school where he wished to continue his studies.

More than 150 Chinese and 50 Russians were arrested simply for having been found near the Hotel Moderne.

Under threat of arrest, parents were compelled to send their children out to join demonstrations and parades in which they had to shout enthusiastically and wave the "Manchoukuo" flag.

Every Chinese employee of the Government, every office worker, every factory hand, every one able to stand up, be he Chinese or Russian, was forced to buy a "Manchoukuo" flag and join the parade. And all had to shout at the top of their voices: "Long Live Manchoukuo!"

CHAPTER X

PRAISE, AND A SIDE-SHOW

THE DAY FOLLOWING the departure of the Commission, my Chief sent for me. This time he seemed in good spirits; he extended his hand and asked me to be seated. This is what I recall of his conversation:

The Chief: "At last we can now breathe! That Commission of old fools is left. Who knows what they are going to report to Geneva? Well . . . they can report anything they please, we Japanese don't give a whoop one way or the other. If the League recognizes 'Manchoukuo', so much the better . . . if they don't . . . we won't recognize the League. It will be tit for tat. We have conquered Manchuria by force of arms and all the prattle of the League is not going to make us give it up. Why should the world raise so much fuss over Manchuria? Bunch of fools! What are they going to say when we occupy China, Siberia, the Philippines, Indo-China? . . . They will see . . . they will see how Japan will surprise them . . . a nice surprise for everybody; for Russia . . . for America . . . for France . . . for Holland . . . and for our dear old Lady England. There is going to be plenty to do for the League of Nations . . . it will have its hands full sending Commissions of Investigation to all those countries which we are going to occupy!"

He was quite sober. He stopped talking a moment, and smiled to himself, apparently satisfied with the force of his eloquence. Then, resuming:

"I am grateful to you for the good work you have done during the days the Commission stayed in Harbin. Everything went as I had planned, and it is but just that I should congratulate you. Don't pay any attention to me if at times I tell you things that are disagreeable and distasteful. . . . I have a nervous temperament, and when anything goes wrong I am quite likely to vent my bad humour on the first one who comes along. So I hope you won't hold any grudge against me if I spoke to you a little harshly a few days ago. I was very nervous, and I owe it to you to apologize.

"In the report which I am preparing on the visit of the Commission of Investigation, and which is to be sent to Tokyo, I shall not fail to make due mention of your excellent services, of the scrupulous punctuality with which you have executed my orders and carried out my instructions. I hope that before long we may consider you as fully worthy of our confidence. After all, I do not wonder. As an Italian you cannot help but feel sympathy and admiration for the great and noble Japanese nation.

"What can you possibly have in common with the Chinese race? . . . What are the Chinese, anyhow? They don't amount to anything . . . they never will . . . except when we have them under our domination. My advice to you is to become a citizen of Manchoukuo . . . you will thus sever the

last bond which ties you to China. How does that seem to you?"

Myself: "I shall consider the matter. You understand that changing one's citizenship is not the same as changing a cinema programme. One must think, and think seriously, before deciding on such a step. Later, perhaps, if I see that the Japanese authorities accord me confidence and stop considering me as a hostage, I might follow your advice after having consulted my family."

The Chief: "Very well! Whenever you do make up your mind, come straight to me; I shall always be ready to recommend your naturalization. I am now going to show you how much I do trust you. . . . Listen. . . . The bandits are holding more than 500 Japanese soldiers as prisoners, among whom are some 30 officers. They are divided into two or three groups, the largest of which is on the Harbin-Pogranichnaya line. The chiefs of these groups of bandits have informed us that they are ready to negotiate an exchange of Japanese prisoners for the bandit prisoners whom we hold: two bandits for one Japanese. They also demand several hundred thousand dollars. We are disposed to exchange prisoners, but we refuse to pay one penny. Furthermore, we find many difficulties as to how and where the exchange should take place. So I have thought of you as the one capable of bringing to a successful conclusion the negotiations which have been going on for over two months without any result. Nearly every one of these bandit chiefs is a former officer of

the Chinese Army; you might know them . . . if so, it would be easier for you to obtain better terms. What I very especially demand of you is the utmost secrecy. No one must know officially that Japanese soldiers have been taken prisoner by bandits. If the bandits or the Chinese or Russians should say any such a thing, we should issue a strong denial and no one would believe them. But if you were to speak, things would be different. That is why you must observe the greatest secrecy.

“Within two or three days the bandits will send their emissary. You will return with him to their camp and do your dealing with the Chief . . . also I want you to ascertain if there really are as many Japanese prisoners as that.”

Myself: “Allow me to remark that if the bandits are ex-officers, they must know that I am a Chinese citizen and that I was for many years in the service of the Manchurian Government. Do you think that when they see they have me in their power they might simply put a few bullets in my back as a traitor?”

The Chief: “You have nothing to fear on that score. This is not the first time that we have sent our emissaries . . . they have always treated them with respect.”

Evidently, I thought to myself, Chinese bandits are more particular about keeping their word of honour than are the Japanese officers. I reminded my Chief that a Japanese Major, in Hailar, had two Soviet Russian emissaries tortured and killed, after allowing them to cross the Russian-Manchurian border to

present a request that a certain number of cows stolen by Japanese soldiers should be returned to their owners.

"The Soviet Russians are a regular pest," he rejoined. "They should all be destroyed. . . . Now let us take up another matter. I had ordered you to have the two Chinese millionaires Chang Fen-tin and Mo Wen-huang watched, as I had been informed that they wanted to communicate with the Lytton Commission. What was the result of the spying?"

"The result was nil," I told him. "In my opinion these two rich Chinese are against 'Manchoukuo' as all the other Chinese are; but they are too intelligent to show it openly, for the good reason that they do not want to be separated from their millions. If you Japanese have decided to appropriate their property, all you have to do is to confiscate it as you have already done in the case of many others, without all this sort of hullabaloo. You are expecting too much if you think that these gentlemen will openly oppose the 'Manchoukuo' scheme."

The Chief seemed to like my frankness. He laughed and said:

"You are quite right. However, these two Chinese have too many friends in China and abroad. If we should confiscate their property without due process of law, the scandal would be too great. But if we could show that they have conspired against 'Manchoukuo', the whole thing would work out in the normal course of justice and law. Anyhow, we shall talk about it some more.

"It is time for you to go. As soon as the bandit messenger comes, I shall let you know."

I left the Chief and went home, where I found my No. 1 Assistant waiting for me at the door. He and I went into the room which the Second Japanese Military Mission had assigned to me for meeting my assistants.

As soon as we were inside he closed the door and told me that my assistant No. 4 had disappeared and that he had been looking for him these last two days without result. I went to the hotel where No. 4 lived, and was told that he had left his rooms three days before, taking all his belongings with him. Long-distance phone calls to Dairen and Shanhaikwan were fruitless. No one had seen him.

The next day, as I entered the Hotel Moderne, one of the reception-room boys handed me a sealed envelope. As I opened it I was dumbfounded. It contained a letter from my No. 4, written in Russian on Hotel Moderne stationery, and which I still have in my possession. Here is a translation:

"DEAR MR. VESPA:

"I have been obliged to leave Manchuria for very serious reasons. These Japanese pigs, after having forced me to help them in their abominable deeds, have tried to put me out of the way. I cannot leave, however, without justifying my action in your eyes, you who have always been correct with me. Here are the true motives which compel me to disappear. Last month, two captains of the Gendarmerie, with whom

I had worked in Mukden, told me of their plan to kidnap the Chinese Director of the Bank of Communications of Futientien (the native city, five minutes walk from Harbin).

"As he was well guarded, we decided to arrest him. A Russian agent of the Gendarmerie by the name of Knipe, a sergeant, two Japanese gendarmes and myself went to his house, arrested him and took him to an empty house near the Futientien Gendarmerie station, where the two captains were waiting for us.

"The bank director was hanged by the feet and the two captains gave orders to go and arrest his wife and bring her in. When she came, they showed her her husband and told her that he would be kept hanging in that position until she brought \$300,000, and then they let her go. Two hours later she returned with \$180,000 in cash which she handed to the captains, stating that she had been unable to procure the entire amount in such short time, but promising the balance within 15 days if they set her husband free.

"The director was given his freedom, and as soon as he had gone, the captains gave Knipe and me \$10,000 each, making us swear not to say one word to anybody about the affair.

"This morning, the Commander of the Japanese Consular Police sent for me and told me that he had heard of the kidnapping of the Director of the Bank of Communications, and ordered me to give him \$8,000 or he would have me arrested.

"I know the Japanese too well not to understand that the game is up. Even if I paid out the money, they would plant me under the soil just the same . . . that is why I think it is better that I should disappear with the little money I have and start a new life somewhere else.

"Begging your pardon for my mistakes, believe me,

"Respectfully yours,

"SUB-CHIEF No. 4."

A post-script written in pencil said:

"I asked the boy to give you this letter three days later, please do not scold him."

After reading the above, I left the hotel and went straight to the Chief, to whom I showed the interesting message. My expectation that he might have a fit of temper over it did not materialize. In fact he took it as a big joke and laughed most heartily. Once he had calmed down he said:

"That is what I call quick work! \$180,000 in two hours. . . . What a fine pair of rascals . . . those two captains! They deserve that I should let them enjoy their money in peace . . . but the amount is too large. I know they will be displeased when they learn that I know the whole story and that they will have to turn in to our treasury most of this money which they believe is theirs. What surprises me, though, is that on the one hand they acted like crooks, and on the other like idiots. The idea of giving \$20,000 to two Russian beasts! . . . unthinkable! . . . if our poor army officers in Japan, who

never have five yen in their pockets, should ever hear of such a thing, they would start a revolution.”

Without wasting a minute he called up the Gendarmerie and gave orders that Knipe be immediately arrested and kept *incommunicado* until he, the Chief, saw him.

The two Gendarmerie captains were obliged to hand the sum of \$140,000 over to the Chief, who let them keep \$20,000. Knipe was kept in prison 43 days, during which he was repeatedly subjected to terrible beatings until he revealed where he had hidden the \$9,600 balance of the \$10,000 he had received. After recovering the money the captains took him back into the Gendarmerie service as if nothing had happened.

I EARN MY REWARD

On an official call to the Chief two days after I had shown him No. 4's letter, I was told to wait a while. Within half an hour a Japanese and a Chinese came in; both were unknown to me. The Japanese exchanged a few words with the Chief and left. Then the Chief introduced me to the Chinese, a tall, robust fellow around 40, rather ordinary looking, and he said, addressing me:

“This Chinese represents a group of bandits that roam about in North Manchuria. He informs me that they hold two Japanese officers and 34 soldiers prisoner, and that they would like to exchange them for some friends of his whom we are keeping in

prison. He is ready to remain as hostage until your return, and to answer with his life for your personal safety. To-morrow, you and a Chinese friend of his will leave for Hailun; you will get off the train at a station which he will indicate, and you will follow him wherever he takes you. When you arrive at the bandit camp you will ascertain the fact that there are Japanese prisoners. If there really are, you will write down their names and their regiments, and you will arrange the terms and manner of the exchange."

The next day at 7 a.m., I took the train for Hailun, accompanied by the lieutenant of the Chinese hostage. At Lichiawopu, 50 kilometres from Harbin, my companion, who up to that time had not spoken a single word and had answered my questions with "yes" or "no" signs of his head, respectfully suggested that we get off. Leaving the station, we entered a village, crossed a few streets and came to a small Chinese house, in front of which stood two saddled Mongolian horses. Without asking for anyone's permission, my guide untied the horses, placed the bridle reins of one in my hands and begged me to mount. We rode for six hours and at about 3 p.m. arrived at another Manchurian village where we were stopped by a group of Chinese who, after exchanging a few low-spoken words with my companion, came to me and told me that I had to be blindfolded. I willingly consented and we rode on for another 20 minutes. When the bandage was removed, I saw that we were in a dugout cave where five Chinese were waiting. One of these, wearing European clothes

and high leather puttees, stepped forward and bid me welcome in quite correct Russian.

The discussion was short. They were truly bandits, and were only interested in securing the freedom of 27 of their men who had been taken prisoner in an encounter with Japanese forces. In return they would set the 34 Japanese soldiers and two officers free. It was agreed that 17 soldiers and one officer would be liberated on condition that the next day the Japanese Military Command would liberate 17 bandits whose names the chieftain gave me. Mindful of the previous Japanese tricks played on them, they requested me to remain as hostage, for, owing to the important character of my mission, they took me for a "big shot."

At seven that evening, the 18 blindfolded Japanese, mounted on Mongolian horses, left with a Chinese escort. To the officer I handed a letter addressed to the Chief, in which I explained the terms of the exchange agreed upon.

Two days later, at about sunset, the 17 liberated bandits arrived and the remaining 18 Japanese prisoners were released and sent to Harbin in the same manner as the first contingent. I stayed on as hostage. . . . Rather, I was a guest of honour. The bandits treated me most graciously, offering me the best they had in food and drink out of their not too abundant supplies.

Again two days passed and the last 10 released bandits arrived. My mission thus satisfactorily ended, I returned in the way and manner I had come. Two

mounted escorts came along and after several hours of riding I was told to dismount. The bandage was removed from my eyes, my revolver returned, and one of the Chinese directed me to walk straight on towards a point where a few lights could be seen. In half an hour I reached Hsinglungchen station, 40 kilometres from where I had first got off.

In Harbin the Chief received me beaming and overflowing with praise:

"I am going to write a report to Tokyo to-day and tell them of the fine way you have accomplished your task. I won't forget to call their attention to the fact that you offered yourself as hostage in order to expedite the freedom of Japanese soldiers.

"Now your next job is to secure the release of several hundred Japanese held by the Irregulars. These are harder to deal with than bandits. We have been trying for three months without success. They are giving us a lot of trouble, these Irregulars. Badly armed, badly clad and badly fed, they keep on fighting, blowing up trains, destroying the railroad beds, and committing all sorts of depredations. And to think that there are Japanese idealists, pacifists and other imbeciles who think that a united China would be more useful to Japan than a China disorganized by revolution and under the military control of the Japanese!

"A united China, 10 years from now, would not buy a dollar's worth of Japanese goods. . . . The Chinese manufacture everything . . . everything . . . from toys to guns and munitions. Ten years

from now China will be producing everything which Japan sells to her now; not only that, but she will be selling us her products, she will compete with us with her cheapest of cheap labour, who are paid even less than the miserable wages paid to Japanese operatives. Neither our workmen nor our farmers can possibly compete against the factory and farm hands of China; for the Chinese are more sober, they are stronger physically and are better able to adapt themselves to all sorts of conditions of climate and of living than the Japanese.

“Strange that I, a Japanese general, should talk to a European this way . . . but if I tell you these things it is because I am convinced that your sympathies are for us Japanese . . . because I am beginning to consider you as one of us and hope that you will be one for good some day.”

After a short pause, he continued:

“In order to be able to meet Chinese competition we have built hundreds of factories and laboratories in China where we can operate with cheap Chinese labour, while there are countless unemployed in Japan. If we should allow China to carry on her work of unification and reconstruction for another 10 years, we should be pronouncing our own death sentence. Even now that they are not yet united, they are building arsenals, landing-fields, military schools, etc. . . . Ten years more and they would be too strong for us. The old idea that the Chinese cannot fight has been exploded. You have seen what has happened on the Nonni River, at Sunbei, at

Tsitsihar and dozens of other battles. You see them to-day . . . those bandits . . . they fight like tigers and are willing to die to the last man rather than surrender; they are everywhere, yet you can find them nowhere. We think that we have destroyed them, but our trains are bombed everywhere, our men are being killed every day, and hundreds of Japanese soldiers are held prisoner. Ten years! . . . If we should allow them 10 years there would be no more security for us, not only in China, but also in Manchuria, in Korea and perhaps even in Japan. Ten years! . . . to give time to 450,000,000 Chinese to arm and organize themselves . . . and then . . . to kick us as they please. That must never be. If Japan does not decide to adopt military dictatorship, to shoot hundreds of idealists, pacifists, dangerous idiotic agitators . . . our country is lost. We must conquer China now. Each year that goes by is making the task more difficult, and if we wait too long it will become impossible.

“Only by controlling the natural resources of China shall we be able to execute our vast programme of increasing our Army and Navy to the point where we shall be able to impose our will on the world and expand our empire in the way we plan.

“Once Japan controls China we can go after Siberia, Indo-China, the Philippines, India, New Zealand and Australia whenever we wish. Without China, the Japanese will have to retire to their island and live on fish.

"I am afraid I have bored you with my talk . . . but it does one good at times to unburden oneself.

"Now . . . if you are not engaged, I should like the pleasure of your company at tiffin."

I accepted the invitation, and we went upstairs where this man of mystery had his apartment. To my surprise, lunch was served in European style and I observed that at table my Chief's manners were those of an accomplished gentleman. Two young Japanese girls did the serving.

The occasion seemed propitious for me to try to satisfy my curiosity concerning this strange man who could, in turn, behave like a gentleman, or like a vulgar individual; who was cultured in many ways, and yet so ignorant in many things; who, at times, felt so sure of the triumphant march forward of Japan, and at other times seemed to fear for his country's future. Truly, one of the most paradoxical men I have ever met.

At our first glass of the second bottle of an excellent French wine, I ventured to remark:

"You impress me as a man who has done much travelling."

"What makes you think so?"

"The fact that you speak perfect English, though, perhaps, with an American accent. Only people who have travelled much and lived a long time among the English and Americans can speak English as you do."

The Chief looked at me a while . . . then his expression became serious.

"Perhaps you are right . . . but I am sorry not to be able to answer you. No matter what rank one holds in the Japanese Intelligence Service, one is not at liberty to tell one's name, one's rank, one's antecedents or anything concerning one's life. We are all just numbers, without names, without glory, without any social life."

"You must pardon me my indiscretion. . . . We had better talk about the Service."

"That is exactly what I was going to do. . . . In two or three days you will have to see what you can do to secure the liberty of our men who are held prisoner. As it is possible that you may have to spend quite a few days with the bandits, I have decided that you should rest a while. So, unless something out of the ordinary should come up, you will not be called upon for duty."

CHAPTER XI

I VISIT A CAMP OF "IRREGULARS"

FOUR DAYS LATER the Chief sent for me.

I found him in his office with a Colonel who said he had just come from Changchun, the capital of the puppet state, now called Hsinching. The colonel looked at me from head to foot, and said something to the Chief, who turned to me:

"The Chief of the Military Staff has been highly pleased at your ability in liberating our Japanese soldiers. Now he would like you not only to treat with the Irregulars about the exchange of prisoners, but also get information which we need in order to surround and destroy one of the strongest bands of them. What is your opinion?"

"This is not an easy task," I replied. "If the negotiations which have been going on for over two months have utterly failed, it is simply because the Irregulars have found out that the Japanese emissaries were more interested in gathering information concerning their own movements than in securing the liberation of prisoners. That is why they are so much on their guard . . . and I should not want to go and play the part of a fool with the probability of being shot."

The Chief and the colonel had a ten-minutes' discussion in Japanese. From the few words which I

could understand, I could see that my Chief's opinion differed from that of the colonel, who, in the end bowed two or three times to the Chief and left.

A few minutes later, as the sound of a motor-car indicated that the colonel had driven away, the Chief broke his silence:

"You just forget about the proposition I made to you in the presence of the colonel. To-morrow you will leave for Muling, where a representative of the Irregulars will be waiting for you. I know that you will do your best, and I have full confidence in you. We are disposed to exchange two bandit prisoners for one Japanese, but we won't pay any money. Try to impress them with our military greatness, with our powerful air force. Give them to understand that we can soon destroy them. If you could succeed in persuading them to surrender, so much the better. In a word I give you *carte blanche*."

Twenty-eight hours later I was in Muling. Hardly had I come down the train when a Chinese dressed like a Russian peasant approached me and inquired if I was Mr. Vespa. I answered in the affirmative, and he asked me to follow him. Outside the station two saddled horses were waiting. We mounted and rode away. As we reached the last houses on the outskirts of the town we were stopped by a patrol of Japanese soldiers, to whom I showed my pass, which contained a request to all military and civil authorities not to ask me questions or interfere with my movements.

After several hours' ride we came to a village where Colonel C. was waiting for us.

"Hello; you 'Manchoukuoan'!"

"Hello; you bandit!" I shouted back, dismounting.

After shaking hands, C. presented me to several officers who accompanied him, some of them old acquaintances of mine.

"I see," said C., laughing, "you are now a diplomat, while we . . . Well, we are bandits; but I am not jealous nor do I hold any grudge against you. To show you that my heart is in the right place, I have had a fine luncheon prepared for you."

And saying this he led the way to a Chinese house ten minutes' walk distant. I was indeed surprised. The table was richly set with white linen, fine wines and all sorts of preserves. The furniture was rustic but clean, and on a table was a splendid transmitting and receiving field radio set.

"You need not wonder, Vespa, everything you see here used to belong to the Japanese. Radio, furniture, pots, and pans, table service, food, and canned goods are all presents which we took from the Japanese. Most of my soldiers wear Japanese uniforms; the rifles, machine-guns, hand-grenades we use are also Japanese. We have two mountain cannon, but no shells; lots of horses . . . all from Japan. We need an airplane badly, but we have not succeeded in capturing one yet; although with our two Japanese anti-aircraft guns we have brought down five of their planes, but they were too much damaged to be of any use."

After luncheon C. took me on a visit to the houses occupied by his soldiers. He had spoken the truth; it looked as though I were in a Japanese encampment. Everything was Japanese: uniforms, caps, bed-covers, etc., only all distinguishing marks had been removed by the Irregulars.

"To think," said C., "that the Japanese accuse the Soviet Government of arming us! It is they that supply us with arms . . . and they are going to continue to do so until they either get out of here or all get killed. Bandits! . . . they call us bandits, they who have stolen our country, our property and massacred our homes and families."

"Where are the prisoners?" I asked.

"They are about 15 li from here with the greater part of my men. I keep only about 500 men here."

The Irregulars were quartered in Chinese houses and were on excellent terms with the civilian population. There was something wonderful about those soldiers who all looked quite neat and well disciplined. They did not have to stay in the service if they did not want to; they could leave whenever they pleased, but they all stayed on, and new recruits arrived every day to replace those who got killed and to increase the ranks of the Irregulars. I noted several wounded wearing bandages.

"Who looks after the wounded?"

"We have four doctors . . . one of them is a surgeon."

C. mentioned their names, and I recognized them as the sons of distinguished Manchurian families.

"Talking about doctors," C. went on, "among the Irregulars there are six sons of millionaires, thirty who used to occupy Government positions, merchants, students, interpreters, etc. . . . And they dare call us bandits . . . they, the murderers of our people, the destroyers of our country. We are Chinese . . . and we fight for the liberation of our Fatherland. We rob nobody. We attack the Japanese because we are in our own home, this is our country . . . every one has the right to protect his property against thieves and killers. You have noticed how well they treat us in the village? It is because they know that we are Chinese soldiers and that we are fighting to free Manchuria from those Japanese thieves. We attack everything that is Japanese, their trains, their railroads, their properties, and the same applies to the Chinese traitors.

"The Japanese make a point of concealing their losses, but I can assure you that not one day passes without an attack by the Irregulars . . . and we seldom fail to destroy what we go after. We are going to keep this up until they go away. The Japanese dare not venture more than a few kilometres from the railroad. We are the masters here. . . . You have noticed how freely my men go about. . . . the Japanese are afraid to come this far."

Bandits? . . . That is what the Japanese propagandists through the *Domei* Agency have always called these Irregulars even to this day. If such Chinese patriots were "bandits", it would be true to say that

Manchuria is full of "bandits", for it was these same "bandits" about whom General Hattori, Commander of the 7th Japanese Brigade, wrote when he reported, in February, 1934, that his forces alone had lost 520 men in 10 battles. On the usual basis of calculating losses adopted by the Japanese Military Authorities one may safely assume that the Hattori Brigade must have been well-nigh annihilated.

Japanese propaganda and the *Domei* Agency call the Irregulars "bandits" in order to discredit them in the eyes of the world, and also to justify the presence and activities of the Japanese military. Heroes rather than "bandits" are the patriots who set fire to the Imperial palace where the Japanese hold Pu Yi prisoner; who burn Japanese aerodromes, Japanese barracks, Japanese railroad stations; who dynamite Japanese trains, attack Japanese troops.

At the fifteenth Assembly of the League of Nations, September 14, 1934, Minister Quo Tai-chi thus defined the activities of these so-called "bandits":

" . . . a movement of protest and resistance by a down-trodden population against enormous, illegal military oppression; in line with the tradition of great causes that never conceive themselves hopeless, and keep up sporadic warfare until the opportunity shall arise for final deliverance. . . . Manchuria to-day still presents in essentials the same picture as it did when the occupation first started: namely, that of a Japanese army on active service, holding the main cities and the railway lines, and endeavouring to cow the population by incessant punitive expeditions . . . "

One of the best proofs of how things go in Manchuria is the report of the Directors of the five principal railroad lines of Manchuria, in which they declare that "in 1935 there were in Manchuria 73 wrecks of international trains, 131 armed attacks on trains, 74 railroad stations burned, 340 railroad employees killed, 650 wounded and 451 kidnapped."

If we consider that in 1935 the five railroad lines were in Japanese hands, most of the casualties mentioned in the Director's report must have been Japanese.

A PLEASANT SURPRISE

It was just beginning to grow dark when C. and I got up in the saddle and, escorted by several officers and 10 Irregulars, rode for two hours to the place where the Japanese were kept prisoner.

After having eaten dinner in C.'s house, we went to another building which served as a place of meeting. It was a one-story isolated house, the floor of which was built of large flagstones. The large hall must formerly have been used as a cattle shelter; fresh grass was spread on the floor, there were benches and tables and a fine radio.

Some 40 officers were seated, some playing cards, some mah-jong, while others were engaged in reading or in conversation.

As we entered, C. at the head, everyone stood up. After presenting me, C. explained the motive of my visit, and discussion started. All were agreed

as to an exchange of prisoners, but many doubted the word of the Japanese and feared a trap.

I assured them that so long as the negotiations and the exchange would be made through me, I should not countenance any trap or deception. Finally, after a long discussion we agreed that 50 Japanese should be sent to a railroad station two days' march away, and set free. Then, upon the liberation of 100 Irregulars, another 50 Japanese would be given their liberty.

I spent the night in Colonel C.'s house, where an excellent camp bed, Japanese, of course, had been prepared for me. But we did more talking than sleeping. We spoke of the past, the present and the future, of our secret organization, of those who helped the Irregulars financially and of a few patriots who were too much attached to their money. We spoke of the well executed coup at Hengtao, and the one at Imiempo; and, of course, I did not forget to inform Colonel C. that the Chief had requested me to scare him with the greatness of the Japanese Army, with the deadliness of Japanese aviation and with the prospect, in the very near future, of the Irregulars being all wiped out. We both laughed like schoolboys at a picnic.

C. took great delight in informing me that our dearest friend, Colonel Torquemada II, the butcher hero of the Hengtao Inquisition, was a model prisoner and the most humble and submissive cur imaginable. I was to have the pleasure of meeting him again the following morning.

It was 2 a.m. when we finished our chat and decided to sleep.

A few minutes after seven we got up. S., the Russian who had visited me in my coach in Hengtao, presented himself together with five other Russians who had joined the Irregulars. They had heard of my presence in the camp, and wished to salute me. C. invited them to have breakfast with us and the Chinese officers. The best kind of camaraderie and good-fellowship was much in evidence.

Breakfast over, I asked Colonel C. to let me see the prisoners. These were kept in a barbed-wire compound in which there were some 20 Chinese houses. A number of sentries did guard duty outside the wire fence. The Japanese officers were occupying three houses apart from the soldiers. The man of highest rank was Torquemada II himself. Colonel C., four Chinese officers, the Russian S., and I walked toward the house in which Torquemada II was kept. Near the front door several Japanese soldiers were doing some washing in old five-gallon kerosene cans, others were cutting wood while armed guards watched them.

As we all went in, a dozen or so Japanese all got up and respectfully executed several of their meaningless and well-known Japanese bows. Some were in uniforms, some in civilian clothes, and others, among them Torquemada II, in kimono. If the man had looked like an ape when in uniform, to see him now in kimono with a month's growth of beard reminded

one of Gustave Doré's grotesque monster in Dante's Inferno.

At the sight of me he made some sort of grimace which he intended for a smile; he tried to step forward, but S. pushed him back unceremoniously. I expected a loud protest, but instead Torquemada II bowed respectfully and excused himself in Russian.

What a transformed Grand Inquisitor he was! He who had held the lives of hundreds of Chinese and Russians in his bloody hands, he who had killed and tortured to his fiendish heart's content, was now ready to rub his face in the dust in the presence of his captors. And likewise the other Japanese officers with him; all kept on bowing and bowing, these terrible Samurai, these brave officers of the divine emperor's army, these assassins and murderers of unarmed citizens, these ferocious tormentors and violators of little girls. Where was their bravery now? Bravery? . . . the bravery of the savage horde . . . the bravery of barbaric mass fanaticism inspired by a primitive Shintoism.

I went up to Torquemada II and said to him:

"I have been sent by the Japanese Command to arrange the liberation of prisoners; negotiations are proceeding satisfactorily and I hope that to-night the first contingent of 50 will leave for Harbin."

"Thank you . . . thank you," he said most apologetically, bowing down almost to the ground, "You are a great and honourable gentleman, a very great and honourable gentleman . . . and if I regain my

liberty I shall not forget you . . . and I hope that the honourable gentleman will arrange that my humble person may leave with the first contingent of prisoners."

"Colonel C. will have to decide on that, not I. However, I shall do my best to have you go with the first batch released."

We left the house and I could see that all were feeling as disgusted as I. I did not think it possible that this abject creature could be the same arrogant tyrant who had threatened to have me shot a few weeks previously.

Turning to Colonel C. I said:

"What fun it would be to give the beast a good whipping!"

"One should always accommodate a good friend . . . to-night you will have the pleasure of executing your wish."

"Yes? . . . but then, they might very well shoot me when I get back to Harbin."

"Everything can be arranged," he said laughing.

When dusk came, 50 of the sick, wounded and weak Japanese prisoners were blindfolded, helped in the saddle and, escorted by 25 Irregulars, taken to the Tiehlingho Station, two nights' ride away. The entire contingent was to keep hidden during the day, on account of the Japanese scouting planes. To the one Japanese officer set free I gave a letter addressed to my Chief, in which I explained the terms of the exchange agreed upon, and reminded him to be sure not to break his word.

Two hours after the departure of the prisoners, Colonel C., his officers and I had dinner, following which he gave orders for the table to be cleared and asked me to step into a small waiting-room where he left me alone. I wondered what was in the air.

Within about 10 minutes the door opened and in came the Colonel, revolver in hand. He came close to me and whispered in my ear: "You play your part well," then, in a loud voice: "Come out of there you . . . damned Manchoukuoan, come out . . . quick . . . get in here! . . ."

Assuming a sort of obedient pose, I went back into the large room, in the centre of which, to my surprise, I saw Torquemada II kneeling Buddha-like. Colonel C. placed a whip in my hand, and, pointing his pistol at me spoke out commandingly: "Now . . . you dirty Manchoukuoan . . . you insisted that Torquemada II should be allowed to leave with the first batch of prisoners; that means that he is a friend of yours. . . . You are going to give your dear friend 20 lashes and . . . good ones; otherwise I put a bullet in your head."

Taking a magnanimous pose, I flatly refused.

"Ah . . . ah! you refuse? All right! But before I shoot you, you are going to see your friend whipped just the same, only, instead of 20, it's going to be 50 lashes."

Turning to a soldier, C. ordered him: "Give this dog 50 lashes." The soldier played his part well, too. Solemnly he came up to me, extended his hand for me to hand him the whip, and, with his face

cruelly set, faced the horrified and cowering Torquemada II, who stretched trembling hands toward me:

“Please! . . . Please! . . . Mr. Vespa, it is better that you give me 20 lashes. . . . This fellow will kill me. . . .”

With feigned reluctance I took the whip and gave Torquemada II a couple of light strokes on the back.

“Hit harder! . . . Harder! . . . Harder! . . .” C. ordered me severely, “otherwise I shall make it 50.”

The remaining 18 strokes were administered with all the might in my arm and Torquemada II howled like a trapped coyote.

The punishment over, C. gave orders for Torquemada II to be taken back to his quarters. Accompanying him to the street I apologized for my “unwilling” part in this “horrible affair”.

Then I went back and we all enjoyed one of the best laughs we ever had.

While hitting the beast I kept thinking of the hundreds of his innocent victims.

It took 19 days to set all the prisoners at liberty, because each contingent that left was sent by a different way to a different station.

When it was all over, I bid good-bye to Colonel C. and to his brave officers, and started back for Harbin.

The Chief received me as a hero and told me that he had proposed to Tokyo that I be named his assistant.

In conclusion, Torquemada II was disgraced and sent back to Japan for having been made a prisoner while in kimono. Likewise every Japanese officer was repatriated for having allowed himself to be caught.

CHAPTER XII

KIDNAPPING À LA MODE

THE SUCCESSFUL \$180,000 coup of the two Gendarmerie captains, recounted in Chapter X, which had caused my No. 4 man to flee from Harbin, had roused no end of envy and emulation. Kidnapings now became the order of the day. The 10 bandits in the employ of the Gendarmerie hardly let a day pass without "snatching" some rich Chinese or Jew. A reign of terror spread all over Manchuria. Every one of the different Police Services had its group of bandits who kidnapped people for ransom. In all the principal cities, rich Chinese and Jews were thus forced to pay large sums of money in order to be set free.

I here relate only what I saw with my own eyes and that which passed through my own hands. Events and happenings which took place away from me, or which have been told me, have no place in this book.

Manchuria is an immense country, and, as I mentioned before, all the different Japanese police systems have no correlation or contact.

Furthermore, a great many of the kidnapped victims, especially the Chinese and Jews, paid ransom without notifying the police, for they well knew that the kidnappers worked hand in hand with the police and that if they should complain they might, besides

losing money already paid, find themselves in more serious trouble.

I know for an absolute fact the cases of many persons kidnapped by Russian and Chinese gangsters employed by the Japanese Gendarmerie and the Intelligence Service, because it was I who had to look into such cases, acting under the orders of the Chief, who wanted to make sure that the ransom amounts were not greater than the money turned in. I had frequently to act as interpreter when the Chief insisted on questioning the victims himself, especially the rich ones who maintained they had no money or not enough.

Here are some actual names and figures:

A millionaire called Wan You-chin paid \$250,000 for the liberation of his son; then he had to pay \$400,000 and again \$100,000 for his own freedom.

A merchant called Chan Chin-ho was caught three different times; he paid \$200,000, then another \$200,000, and the third time \$100,000.

A department store proprietor called Mo We-tan was kidnapped twice. It cost him \$100,000 each time.

A merchant, Lu Tai, paid \$100,000 for his son and \$50,000 for himself.

The entire property and wealth of a great many very rich Chinese and former high officials was confiscated and the victims obliged to enter monasteries. The ex-Chief of Police of Harbin, Mr. Wang, who used to own considerable property, is at present an Abbot in a Buddhist monastery near the new Russian cemetery of Harbin, and there are many others with

him. It was my duty once a week to call at the monastery and see that all the ex-officials were there. Some of these men deserved the punishment they got, but some were perfectly respectable and harmless people.

Dr. Kasem-Bek, beloved and respected by all who knew him, a man whose generosity and philanthropy had endeared him in the community, was twice kidnapped by the Japanese Gendarmerie's bandits, and was forced to pay a heavy ransom each time.

The same happened to Dr. Hellieson. Mr. Tarasenko, a merchant, was kidnapped by the Gendarmerie and paid \$15,000: he was then kidnapped by the municipal police who got \$5,000. Mr. Tisminitsky, a merchant, was ransomed for \$15,000; Mr. Eskin for \$10,000. Mr. Sherel de Florence was seized by six armed men as he was leaving the Synagogue. Though this happened in the presence of over 200 witnesses, the police were indifferent and did not interfere because they knew quite well that the kidnappers were Russians in the service of the Gendarmerie. Mr. Sherel de Florence was held captive for 105 days, in a dark cellar, and obtained his liberty by paying \$25,000.

The Chief of the Gendarmerie gave orders that a young boy student of the Polish school be kidnapped. The three kidnappers, two Russians and a Chinese, made a mistake in identity. Instead of the very rich boy, they took a young orphan protégé of the Catholic Church, Valentin Tanaief. Nevertheless, the Chief of the Gendarmerie refused to release the boy. "The

Catholic Church has money; if the boy is poor, let them pay!" he said. It cost the Bishop of Kirin \$2,000 to have the boy returned after two months' detention.

A large drug-store in Harbin was owned by Mr. Kofman, who, to all appearance, was a rich man. On the night of March 11, 1932, towards ten o'clock, he was kidnapped by some Russian in the service of the Japanese Gendarmerie and taken to the latter's underground cellar in New Town. In the Russian papers, the next day, the news was published that Mr. Kofman had been taken by the bandits and that the *Rupor*, a daily, had received a note from the bandits in which they demanded a \$30,000 ransom from the victim's family. On that night, the 12th, the Russian tools of the Gendarmerie removed Mr. Kofman from the cellar to a small Chinese house in a suburb called Madiagou.

Whereas some of the Russian informers claimed that Mr. Kofman was a rich man and could easily pay \$30,000, there were others who affirmed that he could not possibly put up that amount. He has property, they said, but very little money in cash.

The Chief asked me what I thought of it. I frankly told him that I did not believe the Kofman family capable of paying so much money. Furthermore, I called his attention to the rumours current around town to the effect that Mr. Kofman had been kidnapped by the Gendarmerie and not by the bandits.

"I am not interested in rumours. If Kofman is not as rich as 'we' thought he was, the Jewish Association can raise the money and pay the ransom."

The following day, the 13th, the Gendarmerie had consented to reduce the ransom to \$15,000; but just when a note to that effect was to be sent to the *Rupor*, one of the Russian kidnappers, Radzoyevsky, came in. This worthless young scoundrel had left Soviet Russia in 1927 and came to Manchuria with his equally worthless family. At first, they were thought to be agents of the Soviet Government, owing to the fact, no doubt, that his father was employed at the Soviet Consulate. Later, however, the son had joined a gang of suspicious characters who camouflaged their activities under the cloak of patriotism and anti-Sovietism. Twice Radzoyevsky had been arrested for picking pockets. Threatening the use of strong-arm methods, he had managed to be admitted as a student in a law school, which he likewise compelled to issue him a diploma after a few months' attendance.

It was but natural that this gang of ruffians should attract the attention of the Japanese, who thereupon invited them to join their own band of murderers and to spread terror in Harbin.

And so Radzoyevsky had taken part in the kidnapping of Kofman and had insisted that the Kofman family should pay \$30,000. He was against reducing the ransom to \$15,000, claiming that he had reliable information about Kofman's financial condition.

"I want to be permitted to question him. I am sure I can get the \$30,000 if you let me handle this. Leave it to me and everything will come out all right."

He was allowed to go ahead.

Together with Kirichenko and two Japanese gendarmes he went to the house where Mr. Kofman was being kept bound and gagged. At 11.30 the Chief sent for me to come in a hurry.

"Do you know what has happened?" he said to me. "Kofman is dead. It seems that they tortured him and that he could not stand it on account of his weak heart. Anyhow, I want you to go and take a look and let me know how it happened. I called up the Gendarmerie and asked them to let you pass."

I rushed to the quarters of the Gendarmerie whence I was taken in a non-military automobile to the Chinese house in Madiagou district, which we reached in 10 minutes.

The car stopped in front of a wretched-looking structure. The Gendarme Sergeant who accompanied me pushed the door open and we went in. By the light of a candle I could distinguish five men seated at a table, drinking beer: two Japanese members of the Gendarmerie dressed in civilian clothes, Radzoyevsky, Kirichenko, and another Russian by the name of Kalusko.

I was offered a seat and Radzoyevsky invited me to a drink.

"Thank you, no, I have come to find out what has happened here."

Radzoyevsky squinted at me mockingly and said:

"I did not think that it was necessary to prepare any police report over the death of a swine. This damned pig of a Jew loved his money more than his skin. That's what he got for not wanting to talk, or write

to his wife. I scared him a little and the old fool just died. We can't help that. Harbin is full of pigs like him."

I wanted to see the body. It lay in a corner, covered with a dirty old blanket. I stooped over it, uncovered the upper part of the body, and stood frozen with horror. The victim's face was hardly recognizable from the deep burns inflicted by his torturers; the odour of burnt flesh was sickening. This explained to me the nauseating smell I had noticed on entering the room. I knew what had happened.

"Who did this?" I asked.

"I," answered Radzoyevsky, "and this is the way all the dirty Jews, enemies of Russia, should die."

I found out that the unfortunate Kofman had been ferociously tortured. After applying fire to his hands and feet, they had practically roasted his face, and then, as he yelled under the excruciating pain, they gagged him so tight that he choked to death.

I went back to report to the Chief what I had seen and learned. He did not seem to care, and only remarked: "Too bad! all that trouble for nothing."

Adding horror upon horror, the Japanese Gendarmerie had the body of the dead man cut in four pieces, on account of his weight, and dumped in a trench grave in which they disposed of all the victims of narcotics found dead on the streets of Harbin.

All the same, the Japanese Gendarmerie carried on negotiations with the Kofman family for the payment of the ransom money. Three weeks after the

brutal murder of her husband, Mrs. Kofman paid \$18,000 to the Japanese for his liberation.

There were so many rival bands of Russian and Chinese gangsters in the service of the Gendarmerie and of the other Japanese police organizations everywhere, that the rich Russians and Chinese dared not leave their houses. It was indeed a "Reign of Terror", worse, perhaps, than during the days of *carte blanche* and the Bastille.

In order to extract money from Soviet citizens, the Japanese did not go to the trouble of kidnapping them; they simply accused them of being Communists and propagandists, and had them thrown into prison, whence they could not get out without paying heavily. The same happened to most of the rich Jews of Manchuria.

Maybe this is what the Japanese diplomats had in mind when they tried to assure the world that they would adhere to the principle of the "Open Door". The only door they keep open is the door by which they send people to prison. Their motto is: "Your money or we won't open the door."

Edgar Snow, in an article entitled "Japan Builds a New Colony";¹ wrote:

"Harbin, once delightful, to-day is notorious as a place of living death. . . . Probably in no other great city of the world is life so precarious. Harbin residents, including about 100,000 White and Red Russians, risk their lives if they go unarmed anywhere, even in

¹*Saturday Evening Post*, Feb. 24, 1934.

broad daylight. Holdups, robberies, murders, kidnappings, are common occurrences.

"Foreign consuls are obliged to surround themselves with bodyguards. While in Harbin I went out upon the Sungari River one day with Boston's Congressman Tinkham, who was touring Manchuria. We visited large-hearted George Hanson, probably the best-loved consul-general anywhere. On a little table in front of Mr. Hanson's shack was a small arsenal of rifles and automatics. On either side of his place were bodyguards who kept vigilant lookout for bandits. . . .

"The owner of the Moderne Hotel, where I stayed in Harbin, was grief-stricken over the recent disappearance of his talented pianist son, Simeon Kaspe, a French citizen. He had been kidnapped by Russian bandits who threatened to cut off his fingers unless his father paid over \$300,000 ransom. Instead, they sliced off his ears and eventually murdered him. Many others are held by gangs but a few miles from the town."

THE KASPE CASE

The kidnapping of young Kaspe was the most internationally sensational case amongst the many with which I was concerned. In fact I was so closely connected that it almost cost me my life.

Mr. Joseph Kaspe, father of the victim, had come to Harbin as a Russian refugee after the Russo-Japanese war, in which he had fought in a Cavalry regiment.

In Harbin he opened a small watch repair shop, which in a few years became a jewellery and silverware store. By 1918 he was owner of the finest jewellery business in the Far East, and co-owner of the Hotel Moderne, the best in Harbin.

In 1932, at the time of the Japanese occupation, Joseph Kaspe had his large jewellery store; he was sole owner of the Hotel Moderne, and also president of a theatrical company which operated a chain of theatres and motion-picture houses. There were various estimates of his wealth, ranging from a half million to several millions. As to the ways and means of amassing his wealth, there were all sorts of rumours and opinions.

Joseph Kaspe had a weakness; he delighted in talking about himself and his millions . . . and also about his two sons who were students in France, one at the University of Paris, the other at a Conservatoire of Music. He loved to say that his boys were at the head of their classes and a great credit to their respective schools . . . and, of course, they had become French citizens.

Kaspe's two sons now being French citizens, he lost no time in transferring the ownership of the Hotel Moderne and of all his theatres to their names, for he had noticed that the Japanese had been showing an unusual interest in his properties, and he knew what that meant. The transfer once completed, the French tricolour was hoisted on the Hotel Moderne building and on all his theatres.

To see these splendid and money-making properties

pass under French jurisdiction was not at all to the taste of the Japanese, who were already imagining themselves in possession.

As early as the beginning of May, 1933, my Chief had expressed a desire to kidnap Kaspe. But he admitted that it would not be an easy job; Kaspe seldom went out, and on the rare occasions when he did, he was always accompanied by armed bodyguards. His residence on the ground floor of the Hotel Moderne was like a fortress; the windows and doors were all protected by heavy steel bars, and there were plenty of Russian guards both within and without.

When young Simeon Kaspe finished his course at the Conservatoire in Paris, he came to spend some time in Harbin. He was a very fine young man and an accomplished pianist whom his proud father considered far superior to Paderewski. Papa Kaspe spared no expense to have his maestro son give recitals in his best theatres; he also made costly arrangements to have him play before select Shanghai audiences, and likewise in Tokyo, whence he was to return home.

In Harbin the Gendarmerie were on the lookout for young Kaspe, who, being a French subject, did not even suspect that anyone would dare kidnap him. How mistaken he was!

On August 14, 1933, the Chief asked me if the relations between Mr. Reynaud, the French Consul, and the Kaspes were what one might call intimate. I told him that I did not think there was any friendship between them.

"I thought so myself," said the Chief. "What could there be in common between the Consul for France and these Jew swines . . . even if they are rich? The Consul must well know that if the sons have been naturalized French citizens, they did so only in order to prevent their properties from being taken by the Japanese.

"Anyhow, the French flag is not going to stop us from doing what we please . . . that's why I have already given orders to the Gendarmerie to kidnap young Kaspe, who, according to reports from my Moderne agents, often goes out at night with Jewish girls and turns in quite late; but in order to prevent anyone from suspecting the Japanese, I have decided that the kidnapping be done by the Chinese. As soon as my plans are completed I shall communicate them to you that you may instruct Ying to pick eight of his best men for the job."

On August 17, 1933, the Chief ordered me to send Ying with 50 of his men to Tonaichow, over 100 kilometres north-west of Harbin, to punish that village for having killed a petty-officer and a Japanese gendarme. As he made no allusion to the Kaspe matter I thought he had given up the idea.

Eight days later my No. 1 informed me that there were rumours of young Simeon Kaspe having been kidnapped. I went to announce this to the Chief, who with his peculiar, sarcastic smile, said:

"I have heard about that too . . . but I am not acquainted with the particulars. As far as you are concerned . . . you need not worry. I have instructed

other agents to investigate this affair. . . . I know you are very busy . . . besides . . . in a few days it will be all over!"

That same evening, my agents brought me a detailed report of how the kidnapping had been done, and gave me the names of those who had been directly and indirectly connected with the outrage. This is what had happened:

The Japanese Gendarmerie issued its orders through a secretary-interpreter, Nakamura, who, together with Martinoff, police-inspector, had organized the plot. The latter had a gang of about 15 criminals at his disposal, picked with the help of Radzoyevsky, editor of the infamous *Nash Put* and head of the "Fascist Club" (a libel on the good name of Italian Fascism and an insult to all that it represents under Il Duce), from the membership of which the Japanese authorities recruited the hoodlums they needed. The kidnapping plot had been hatched in the Fascist Club's quarters. For several days a Greek blackguard, who for several months had been spying on the Hotel Moderne guests and always hung around the Hotel, had informed Nakamura about Simeon Kaspe's movements. The young man used to go out almost every night with certain young ladies whose names and addresses were given, as well as the names of the streets along which young Kaspe drove his car.

Young Kaspe was kidnapped toward midnight on August 24, 1933, at the time when he stopped his car in front of the house of a young lady whom he

had seen home. He was taken to a hiding-place near Harbin.

The next day, the Gendarmerie sent Mr. Kaspe's father a demand for \$300,000 ransom. The old man refused flatly and there ensued a series of fruitless negotiations. The Gendarmerie wanted money, Mr. Kaspe refused to pay anything, except for a few thousand dollars which he insisted on paying only after his son had been safely returned. He was absolutely adamant. Threats to kill his son did not affect his decision in the least.

Over a month later, on September 28, young Simeon's ears were cut off and sent to the father, but the gruesome message failed to change old Kaspe's mind. He still insisted on paying \$35,000 but only after his son had been set free.

The French Consul had sent a note of protest to the Japanese authorities, who answered that they were doing their best to find young Kaspe.

But if the French Consul had confined his efforts to the writing of a letter, the Vice-Consul, M. Chambon, a very intelligent and active young man, well aware that the Japanese authorities would do nothing, had initiated a search of his own, having retained the services of able and trustworthy agents. M. Chambon soon found out the real facts, but as he needed proofs, he ordered his investigators to get hold of Kommissarenko, the youngest of the bandits who had taken part in the abduction of young Kaspe, and to bring him to the Consulate, where he not only confessed, but put his confession in

writing and signed it. He was immediately released, and the following day the Vice-Consul went personally to see the Director-General of the Police, before whom he laid a formal accusation against all the individuals involved in the kidnapping and also a copy of Kommissarenko's confession.

The police informed the Gendarmerie, who wasted no time in getting Kommissarenko to clear out and go to Pogranichnaya, 600 kilometres from Harbin, on the Soviet border, and in arresting M. Chambon's investigators. (One of these, Mr. Kirmistach, was still in prison when I left Manchuria in 1936).

The next day, the two Japanese papers published, in Russian, the *Harbinskoe Vremia* and the *Nash Put*, launched a most insulting attack on M. Chambon calling him a dirty Jew, a Communist, etc., and this was kept up for several weeks. Things reached the point when a member of the Fascist Party challenged the Vice-Consul to a duel.

However, news of the kidnapping had reached foreign countries. American, English, and French newspapers became interested in this new outrage. Tokyo, apparently sometimes much concerned about public opinion, gave orders for the affair to be brought to a close. Accordingly, my Chief, much against his own will, ordered the arrest of the kidnappers whose names appeared on the written accusation left with the police by M. Chambon; and on October 9, Martinoff and Shandar were taken to prison, while the others were left alone, on the pretext that they could not be found. Both swore

that they did not know where young Kaspe had been taken.

In the meantime, Simeon Kaspe remained in captivity and tentative negotiations still went on between the father and the Gendarmerie.

The young victim wrote dozens of letters which the bandits delivered to Mr. Kaspe, who, in spite of his son's appeals and of all sort of dire threats, refused to be shaken in his stubborn determination to pay nothing until his son was released. So sure was he of his own importance that he even boasted that they would return the boy without getting a cent from him . . . nay, they would apologize.

Such boastful assurance was fatal. When it was reported to the Chief, he said in his quiet way: "Kaspe will never see his son alive, even if he pays a million."

Besides, there were other reasons why the Japanese could not let him live. They could never release him now that he had spoken with Nakamura, also with officers of the Gendarmerie. Young Kaspe now knew that he was not being held by Russians but by Japanese . . . No, no, they could never set him free now . . . he would talk. . . .

Fearing that the new investigators employed by the French Vice-Consul and those retained by the Kaspe family might discover the place where young Kaspe was being kept, the Japanese moved him from one place to another several times.

Colonel Fukasi Oi, "High Adviser" to the Railroad Police, in other words, its Chief, now entered the scene. Colonel Oi was in the full sense of the word

a gentleman—one of the very few (if not the only one aside from General Muto) high Japanese officials who left an excellent record in Manchoukuo. Although he occupied one of the highest posts, with full authority over thousands of miles of railroad, he always exercised his power with justice and strict impartiality. His administration was scrupulously honest and worthy of the highest praise. He issued orders absolutely prohibiting the use of torture methods such as were employed by other police authorities. To all those under him, regardless of their nationality, he was a severe but excellent father. Even those Chinese who hated all Japanese could not help but love and respect Colonel Oi. All along the railroad territory under his jurisdiction, kidnapping was unknown. Any Japanese who tried to act to suit himself within the Colonel's territory, soon found himself on his way back to Japan. Not only did Colonel Oi disapprove of the abuses committed by the Japanese Military authorities, but he was utterly disgusted and was not afraid to say so. "They can do their dirty work at home," he used to say, and for that reason the agents of other police organizations had to be good when they found themselves within the railroad zone.

When M. Chambon had denounced the guilty ones to the Police Director for having kidnapped young Kaspe, the Gendarmerie shipped Kommisarenko from Harbin to Pogradichnaya. But this latter town was near the railroad and therefore under the jurisdiction of Colonel Oi, who, upon

hearing that Kommissarenko was in his territory, had him arrested and taken back to Harbin where, before witnesses, he made the same confession he had made before the French Vice-Consul.

This second confession, duly signed by the kidnapper himself, was handed over by the Colonel to the Chief of the Japanese Military Mission.

In spite of all this, the Gendarmerie had not given up hope of getting ransom money from Kaspe. From the \$300,000 first asked for, they had come down to \$150,000, then to \$100,000, then to \$75,000 and finally to \$50,000, but the old man kept insisting, as before, on \$35,000 to be paid only when his son was back home.

On November 28, 1933, Colonel Oi was informed that Besruchko and Zayazeff, two other assistants in the kidnapping of young Kaspe, often went through the Starom Harbin (Old Harbin) Station. His order for their arrest was carried out that night, just at the moment when they were boarding the train for Siaolin, near where Simeon Kaspe was being kept under the guard of Kirichenko and Kalusko. When the latter saw the train arrive without Besruchko and Zayazeff, who were to relieve them, they began to suspect something had gone wrong, and they grew quite uneasy. Kirichenko, the more nervous of the two, went several times to the station and telephoned to Nakamura, asking why the two expected accomplices had not arrived. But Nakamura did not tell him that they had been arrested; instead he asked him to take it easy and wait patiently.

It was during these absences of Kirichenko that Kalusko, left alone with young Kaspe, tried to drive his own bargain with him.

"If your father gives me \$10,000, I can set you free, and he won't have to pay anything to the Gendarmerie."

"What do you want me to do?"

"Write a letter to your father to that effect and give it to me."

This was done without a minute's delay.

When Kirichenko returned from telephoning, he noticed the strange manner of the two, and became aware that something was going on between them. When Kalusko insisted on going to Harbin that evening his suspicions grew but he said nothing, having decided to call Nakamura once more before Kalusko left. One hour passed. Kirichenko again became nervous and jittery . . . he had to go back to the station and call up Nakamura, to whom he told his suspicions. Nakamura told him to tell Kalusko that he wanted to meet him at five, near the freight depot.

To this rendezvous went Nakamura, a Japanese gendarme, and Kommissarenko (again at liberty). Kalusko was seized and searched. The letter which young Kaspe had written to his father was found, but as it was pencilled in French, the only thing which the four could understand was the figure: "\$10,000."

That made everything plain enough. Nakamura drew his pistol and shot Kalusko through the head;

then he sent a message to Kirichenko in which he ordered him to kill young Kaspe and rush back to Harbin, where he would be given a passport and money to go elsewhere.

Having executed this order, the murderer left for the North under another name and a false passport supplied by the Gendarmerie. But he did not get very far; on December 18 he was arrested at the Giaronde Station by order of Colonel Oi.

To explain Kalusko's death, the Gendarmerie declared that he had been killed in an encounter with the police, who wanted to arrest him.

The day following the shooting of Kalusko by Nakamura, Radzoyevsky came to my house to have young Kaspe's pencilled note translated. The note asked the old man to give \$10,000 to Kalusko, who had promised to give the captive his liberty, and begged him not to try any trick that might cost him his life. The boy felt sure that Kalusko would keep his word.

It was December 3 when the Gendarmerie announced that Simeon Kaspe had been killed. His body was found in a shallow grave covered with a few inches of earth. I have never seen such a horrible sight. Poor young fellow, how he must have suffered, what tortures he must have gone through, alone with his inhuman captors. Ninety-five days of captivity had almost reduced him to a skeleton. This fine twenty-four-year-old young man had become unrecognizable. The frightful cold of North Manchuria, which reaches 25° and 30° below zero in November,

had frozen his cheeks, his nose and hands so that pieces of flesh had fallen off and gangrene had set in. His ears had been cut off . . . he had spent 95 days without washing, shaving or a hair-cut. . . . The sight of him, the thought of his spiritual torments as well as his physical torture, made me feel glad he could suffer no more. In firing the bullet that had ended the boy's life, the assassin had perhaps committed the only act of mercy in his wretched life. That was, however, not the end of the tragic story.

The boy's mother, though still ill, had left Paris for Harbin with the hope of being able to secure her son's freedom. She had arrived in Shanghai December 3 and on the morning of the 4th, while breakfasting at the Palace Hotel, she read in the *North-China Daily News* of her son's murder.

When the boy's remains were brought to Harbin, the father, against the advice of his friends, insisted that the coffin be brought to his house. He had the lid removed so that he could see his boy once more. The shock was so great that he lost his reason instantly, letting out a maniacal howl.

I AM WATCHED

Indignation in Harbin rose to white heat. Not only the Jews but the entire Russian population as well as the Chinese and Koreans, nay, even some of the Japanese, were utterly disgusted at such an

uncalled-for outrage. The Japanese Military Authorities were openly accused of being responsible for the kidnapping and murder. Public demonstrations were organized, and on the day of the victim's funeral, 250 gendarmes and a whole regiment of Japanese Infantry came from Tsitsihar to reinforce the local forces.

There never was such a funeral in Harbin. In spite of orders from the Japanese authorities to the effect that the cortège should not pass through the main streets of the city, in spite of the large bodies of soldiers and police, the entire population of Harbin followed the funeral car all the way to the Jewish cemetery, and the cries of "Death to the Japanese Militarists!" "Death to the savage brutes!" "Death to the damned monkeys!" could be heard everywhere.

Doctor Kaufman, president of several Jewish associations, delivered the funeral oration. In burning words he denounced Simeon Kaspe's cowardly murderers and those who, behind the scene, were protecting them.

The following day, Doctor Kaufman was summarily summoned before the Japanese Military Mission, who hurled at him every insult they could think of, and threatened to expel him from Manchuria. Radzoyevsky wrote in the iniquitous *Nash Put*, a long article in which he demanded the arrest and punishment of the Doctor for having insulted those patriotic Russians who had only done an act of justice in killing a dirty Jew whose father was an agent of the "Third Internationale".

The Japanese Military Authorities did not permit the six kidnappers to be brought before a court of justice, but, for safety's sake, had them placed in the jail of the Criminal Police, where they remained untried for over 15 months. At the end of that time no one thought that they would ever be brought to trial.

While in jail, they received special treatment; meals from a nearby restaurant; daily visits from friends and family. There were even rumours that they were let loose at night to do some more kidnapping or commit other crimes profitable to the Gendarmerie.

I have reason to believe that such was the case from the following incident:

One night in June, 1934, Major Hara of the Gendarmerie and I, accompanied by two Russian informers, four Japanese gendarmes and 25 of Ying's bandits, were conducting a search of the houses of Soviet citizens in Ashehe, a village a few kilometres from Harbin.

All of a sudden, we saw on a country road a group approaching. Major Hara ordered us to hide and let them get closer. A while later we surrounded them, our rifles pointed and ready to shoot. A Japanese stepped forward, and while he gave an explanation to Major Hara, I drew closer to the group and noticed a man and a woman, both Europeans, with their hands tied behind their backs. There were also three Russians unknown to me, and two others whom I recognized as Shandar and Kirichenko,

The short conversation over, Major Hara allowed the group to go on its way. As he said nothing I never knew who the two captives were. . . .

However, the French Consul, the Kaspe family, and the foreign press kept on protesting louder and louder that the assassins of Simeon Kaspe should be denounced and brought to justice, until an order came from Tokyo to the effect that the six criminals should be turned over to the Judicial authorities of Manchoukuo. The indictment was prepared by Eguchi, the famous chief of the Criminal Department, the very same fellow who paid \$100,000 a year to hold his job, and who was the secret accomplice of all the Russian, Chinese, Korean and Japanese bandits. The indictment was, and will remain, a masterpiece of infamy. The six criminals were described as "most honest and excellent citizens; real Russian patriots who had devoted a large part of their life to the struggle against Communism. If they had kidnapped Simeon Kaspe, they had not done so from motives of personal gain, but purely and primarily to provide the anti-Communist organizations with the funds necessary to continue their noble fight against Bolshevism. Such being the facts of the case, the banditry law could not be invoked against them because they could not be considered as bandits; not only that, they could not be considered as common but rather as political criminals in answering the charges against them. And what were those charges? What were the crimes which the accused had committed? (The indictment here did not

mention the kidnapping.) Mutilation of person? . . . Kaspe had had his ears cut off by Kalusko . . . and Kalusko being now dead, could not possibly answer the charge. . . . Murder? Kaspe had been murdered by that same Kalusko . . . so justice could do nothing about that. . . . Extortion of money? . . . Not at all: Kaspe had not paid one penny. Consequently, and therefore, it was perfectly evident that in view of the above elucidations the only charge which could be brought against the six accused was 'attempted extortion' . . . with extenuating circumstances, for, indeed, this 'attempt' had not been committed for personal benefit but for political reasons; it had been committed against a man generally recognized as a Jewish agent of the Communists, a receiver of stolen goods, an enemy of society . . . and since the sins of the fathers fall upon their children, Simeon Kaspe had paid for the crimes of his father . . . a further extenuating circumstance in favour of the brave and patriotic accused Russians."

The entire Consular Body of Harbin branded this "indictment" as an abominable outrage. All of Manchuria was utterly disgusted. The staunch and upright Colonel Oi, whom I had grown to consider as a friend and who often asked me to assist him in his work, considered that such a document was a shame and a disgrace for Japan.

Eventually the six accused were put in charge of the President of the Superior Court and taken to jail.

Although the Courts of Justice were under the control of Japanese "advisers", the Chinese judges in

Harbin on rare occasions were emboldened to disagree with them if they felt that justice and right were overwhelmingly on their side.

The trial of the Kaspe kidnappers and murderers was to be before Chinese judges who insisted on knowing the real facts of the case. They were not satisfied to accept at their face value the statements made by the Japanese; they themselves wanted to find out about certain particulars. But this was a most difficult task, in view of the fact that the Japanese had agents and spies everywhere. It was then that my Chief said to me:

“Do you know that the President of the Superior Court is trying to get information concerning the past of the six accused? Evidently he has his doubts as to the correctness of the ‘indictment’ prepared by Eguchi. Hmm! He thinks he is cleverer than we are . . . we shall see. I have had all the different Police Services notified that in case any of the judges should apply to them for information they must all stick to the counts of the ‘indictment’ drawn up by Eguchi. However, I am inclined to think that the presiding judge is going to seek information from extra-official sources, and this is where you come in. I want you to have the residences of the three judges watched, and to arrest and question any suspect that visits them. I don’t want another Chambon affair.” (M. Chambon, the French Vice-Consul who revealed the true kidnappers, had been declared *persona non grata* by the Japanese and transferred to Tientsin by his Government.)

It was to save the necks of accomplices in profitable crime that the Chief was ordering me to keep the truth hidden from the Chinese judges.

The next day I asked a friend of mine to introduce me to one of the three Chinese judges, to whom I offered to give any information he might wish to have with reference to the accused. This offer was accepted with much appreciation, and a week later I delivered to the judge all the documents necessary to prove that the accused had nothing to do with politics; that they were most dangerous criminals, the worst type of recidivists, that Martinoff, six months before, had, by order of the Chief of the Gendarmerie, killed Colonel Argunoff, murdered dozens of rich Chinese and Russians; that Shandar and Kirichenko were brothel owners, exporters of white-slaves; that the whole bunch of scoundrels belonged to a band of murderers in the service of the Japanese Gendarmerie; that it was Shandar who had cut Kaspe's ears off, and that it was Kirichenko, not Kalusko, who had killed the kidnapped boy.

During the long trial the judges often secretly got in touch with me, in order to have certain points clarified or explained.

I also turned over to the judges the documents found in the pockets of Kommissarenko, Zayazeff, Besruchko and Kirichenko at the time of their arrest in Colonel Oi's railroad zone. These documents showed clearly that the four kidnappers were agents of the Gendarmerie, that no one should disturb them or be in any manner interested in their comings and

goings. For without such documents these criminals could not have moved freely from one point to another on the railroad. In Manchuria no one can travel without the necessary documents to prove the purpose of the trip.

As the trial dragged along, the Japanese were completely mystified by the mass of information in possession of the Court.

On February 26, I received the following letter from the head of the Fascist Party and editor of the infamous *Nash Put*.

“A. Vespa, Esq.,

“Our Party considers that your work is in opposition to our principles and in favour of the Jews. You who occupy such a high position should know what you are doing.

“We hereby warn you to stop working against people whom we consider brothers and patriots.

“The Chief of the Fascist Party,

“K. V. RADZOYEVSKY.

“Harbin, Feb. 26, 1936.”

This letter made me wonder. Had someone shadowed me during my visits to the judge at night? Had one of the judges said anything? And, if they knew . . . how much did they really know? Preferring to face the story right away, I took the letter to the Chief, who said smilingly:

“You must not take the letter too seriously. You know that Radzoyevsky is a fool. Probably someone

saw you when you went to see that your men were watching the judges' houses, and thought you were the one who supplied them with information about the accused."

Seeing that my Chief had no suspicion about me I added: "Several times, after the hearings in Court, when I saw how well informed the judges were, I went to their houses to see if I could find any letters or notes that might have given us a hint as to the person informing them."

The Chief called up someone on the phone, spoke a few minutes in Japanese and then said:

"I just phoned to the Chief of the Gendarmerie and told him to tell Radzoyevsky to mind his own business; that you had visited the judges in compliance with my orders."

On March 4, 1936, at about one o'clock in the morning, I was coming out of a Chinese monastery where I had gone to pay a visit to one of the high Chinese whom the Japanese had compelled to become a monk. I found myself almost face to face with Fotopulo, the Greek spy, whom the Japanese had assigned to the Hotel Moderne. I saluted him jokingly:

"What is Mr. Fotopulo doing around here at this time of night?"

"I spent the evening with some friends close by, and stayed rather late. . . . And you, Mr. Vespa, what can you be doing in a monastery at this hour?"

"As you must know, there are many important persons in the monastery, and it is part of my duty

to see to it that they stay here. I often come around like this at night, for that is generally the time when escapes are made."

"Night is also a good time for plots."

Such a "fresh" rejoinder displeased me very much. This ignorant Greek who had never been anything but a waiter in common hash-houses was trying to match his wits against mine; I decided to put him where he belonged:

"Mr. Fotopulo, I have been wanting to have a talk with you for a long time; if you are free to-morrow morning at eleven, come to my house. You will be glad you came."

"With pleasure, Mr. Vespa, with pleasure. I won't fail."

The next day, as we both sat on a bench in my garden, I started:

"Mr. Fotopulo, I do not know what you know about me, and I do not care to know, but you have got to know one thing. Listen to me. Seventeen years ago, you came to Harbin without even a shirt on your back. When you saw that no decent European would have anything to do with you, you went to work with the Chinese . . . and with the Chinese you made from 20,000 to 30,000 dollars. On the day when you thought yourself smart enough to do without the Chinese you lost everything. The Chinese have been like brothers to you, they helped you, they put you on your feet, and you owe it to the Chinese if you can meet decent people to-day. How are you repaying their kindness? . . . Facts speak for them-

selves. Since the Japanese have arrived you have been serving them, and like them you bow and bow from morning to night. You were the only European who wrote a letter of humble subjection to Pu Yi at the time of his coronation. Besides, you do not let a day pass without outraging the Chinese who received you as a brother. Not satisfied with that, you are trying to do harm to those who have remained faithful to the Chinese. This sort of conduct has highly displeased a friend of mine who has asked me to introduce you to him so that he might give you a warning."

So saying, I turned to a Chinese who until then had been watching the people pass by:

"Mr. Ying," I called.

Ying came forward and executed a most polite bow to Fotopulo. After being introduced Ying spoke out in cutting calm tones:

"Mr. Fotopulo, my very dear friend, Mr. Vespa, has told me that lately you have been concerning yourself with matters which are none of your business. This meddling of yours has disturbed Mr. Vespa's sleep. Now Mr. Vespa is a blood brother of mine and I must see to it that he sleeps peacefully. The last person who interfered with his restful slumber was invited to be my guest, and was treated so well that at the end of the week he begged me to kill him. I should not want to see you in the same predicament, Mr. Fotopulo. . . . Life is so sweet! See! . . . Spring is coming . . . the beautiful flowers. . . . I hope nothing will happen to Mr. Vespa; for, if anything happens to him, within one hour you will be

my guest and will spend the last week of your life with me."

Ying bowed and left.

The Greek spy was scared out of his skin. He sat there, staring at the ground and repeating to himself: "Ying?" . . . "Ying?" . . . "Ying?" . . .

Then he turned to me, hysterically:

"Mr. Vespa. . . . I swear to you . . . Mr. Vespa . . . I never intended to do you any harm. I only followed Nakamura's order. . . . Nakamura is against you. He says he wants to see you arrested . . . that he is sure that you gave the Court the facts in the Kaspe kidnapping case, that his name has been brought up twice in Court."

"Who told Nakamura that I gave information to the Court?"

"I do not know. . . . I did not tell him. I beg you . . . please tell Ying that I have nothing against you. . . . Watch out for that fellow Nakamura, he thinks you are connected with the Irregulars."

I had put Fotopulo where he belonged, but my success was only temporary, I knew. Only a few months later he was to have his revenge, when I was nearly to lose my life.

Sentence on the kidnappers of Simeon Kaspe was pronounced in June. In spite of all the tricks and efforts of the Japanese to shift the issue on the ground of patriotism and politics, the Chinese judges could see nothing but plain banditry, kidnapping and murder. In accordance with the law, four of the

guilty were condemned to die and two to life imprisonment.

The whole city rejoiced at the news, but the jubilation did not last long. Two days later my Chief had the presiding judge arrested and the sentence declared null and void. Six months later three Japanese judges dismissed the case and ordered the kidnappers to be released on the ground that they had acted as patriots.

CHAPTER XIII

MONEY—QUICK IF NOT EASY

KIDNAPPING, HOWEVER, was only a sideline in the great business of bleeding Manchuria.

Above all, "Japanese goods must be sold!"

Every store in "Manchoukuo" is compelled to handle Japanese-made products. The large Japanese import houses deliver a large consignment of Japanese goods to all the stores and get receipts for them. Once a week a representative comes around and checks up on the sales. If there has been no sale of Japanese goods, or if the sales have been too small, the Japanese Gendarmerie takes a hand in the matter and closes the store.

And thus "Japanese goods must be sold" not only by Chinese and Russian stores, but by American, English and French concerns as well. Nationality makes no difference: "Japanese goods must be sold!"

If "Japanese goods must be sold", the sale of other goods must be prevented. Such is the policy of Japan; a policy which ignores all principles of fair competition.

The Japanese, having full control of the Customs of "Manchoukuo", did all in their power to prevent foreign goods from being imported, and to see to it that those that were imported in spite of all the restrictions got spoiled. Even when, after endless

delays and difficulties, foreign goods had been removed from the customs warehouses, they were either unsaleable or badly damaged. If it were wine the bottles were broken; if textiles, they were all spotted. Machinery was rendered useless, canned goods were punctured, bungs were removed from barrels, sacks were ripped open, etc. etc.

“Tschurin and Company”, a large Russian commercial house with department stores all over Manchuria, was under the control of the Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation, to whom it owed \$5,000,000. For that reason the Tschurin stores all flew the British flag.

This was not at all to the liking of the Japanese, who could do nothing against the Hongkong & Shanghai Bank. Still, something had to be done to wreck such a strong commercial institution; and so . . . they arrested the president of the Company, Mr. Kassianoff, and three of the principal stockholders, Mr. Katiayeff, Mr. Babinsoff and Mr. Sarmanoff, together with their wives. The eight of them were thrown into a large prison cellar in which the worst types of criminals were kept. They were subjected to repeated beatings and tortures until they accepted the conditions which the Japanese imposed upon them.

There were two papers in the English language in Harbin, one of which was the *Harbin Herald*, edited by a British journalist named Lenox Simpson, a brother of the late B. Lenox Simpson, better known as “Putnam Weale”. As he criticized the high-

handed actions of the Japanese, his paper was ordered to cease publication, all the type and presses were confiscated and Mr. Lenox Simpson was expelled from "Manchoukuo". He went to Dairen and started proceedings to get redress. His case was presented to Parliament, before the House of Lords. London protested to Tokyo with as much result as a dog gets by barking at the moon. Japan refused to agree to the least compensation and Mr. Lenox Simpson is still in Dairen.

The other English paper in Harbin, the *Harbin Observer*, was edited by Mr. B. Hayton Fleet, who did everything possible to save his publication. Even though he never allowed any criticism of the Japanese to appear in the *Observer*, it availed him nothing. Many times he was called before the Military Command, threatened, insulted, and even boycotted. But in spite of everything he managed to hang on and carry on. Finally, to end it all without further ado, he left "Manchoukuo". He is now in Shanghai directing the *Fleet News Agency*.

Although the Japanese had let it be known everywhere that the decisions of the League of Nations did not interest them in the least, when the League's final verdict was published they went into fits of fury. They could not understand how the entire civilized world could unanimously declare them as being the aggressors. How was it possible? Were they not the nation of the gods . . . of the Samurai . . . of the divine emperor . . .? How could the world dare accuse them?

To the Japanese mentality this was inconceivable, inexplicable. But there was one thing which “got their goat” more than anything else, one thing which brought out all the “noble” Japanese qualities, and that was to think that all their trouble, the immense preparations which they had made to fool the Commission; the tremendous amount of camouflage and scenery, all the thousands of arrests, all the thousands of police placed everywhere had been love’s labour lost, as fruitless as a dead log.

The Commission had, after all, seen through the clever Japanese deception. Those old women, as they used to call the members of the League’s Commission of Inquiry, had not only been able to receive more than 1,500 letters of protest and condemnation, but right under the noses of thousands of Japanese police they had succeeded in having interviews with all sorts of people. To the proud Japanese intellect, which believes that it is immensely cleverer than the stupid Englishman, whom it holds in the deepest contempt, this was an unbearable humiliation.

Not only had the Lytton Commission declared the Japanese to be aggressors, but, before the eyes of the world it had showed them up for what they really are: deceivers and fakers. This galled them beyond description—they, the direct descendants of Amater-asu-O-Mi-Kami, the Goddess of the Sun. To be openly declared aggressors, falsifiers, deceivers, before the inferior nations of the world was enough to cause widespread *hara kiri*; and the amount of abuse and curses which I heard the Japanese heap upon the

heads of the members of the League Commission, upon Lord Lytton, upon England and the Jews and Free Masonry was enough to fill all the volumes in a good-sized library of the damned.

When I came to my Chief's office, the day following the publication of the Commission's report to the League, he looked at me from head to foot, and said: "Have you read about the report of the League?"

I told him that I had done so.

"If you have really read it," he declared, "and if you understand what it means to us, you should commit suicide. You may go. . . . I have nothing more to say."

And out I went. I thought to myself that suicide was a rather serious matter. One does not commit suicide every day; so it must be done properly and with all respect to the exigencies of the occasion. The Japanese style is to commit *hara kiri*; the Italian, to put a bullet through one's head; the Chinese, to take poison. Now I, a born Italian, naturalized Chinese and working for the Japanese, had to figure out a method of passing from this world to the next which would not only not hurt the susceptibilities of these three nations, but receive their approval and appreciation. I am still puzzling over this problem. Maybe the Japanese will try to solve my difficulty when they read what a good memory I have of their behaviour.

I kept away from the Chief for two days, contemplating my suicide in peace, and he did not

send for me either. On the morning of the third day I received an urgent call. His calls were always urgent, somehow. As I entered the office, I found another Japanese with him. The Chief shook hands cordially and asked me to sit down. Then he said:

“Mr. Vespa, I have been called back to Japan, and am leaving to-morrow. From now on, this gentleman will be your Chief. I have acquainted him with your work and your good points, and I think you will be able to continue and, perhaps, even do better than if I had remained.”

My new Chief and I exchanged several courteous bows. He seemed to be about 50 years old, of real Mongol type, with a bristling moustache, altogether not unpleasant looking.

Speaking Russian and in a falsetto voice, he said:

“Mr. Vespa, if I am not mistaken, we have met before . . . in 1918 in Irkutsk, Siberia. You were with an Englishman Major Stevens, and Captain Webb, a Canadian. I was with the Japanese Military Mission.”

Though his facts were right, I had to confess that I did not remember having met him at that time.

“Come and see me to-morrow at 10 a.m., I have other agents to receive now.”

As he said this, my old Chief accompanied me to the garden gate, assured me of his deep appreciation of my services, of the great fortune ahead of me. . . . “I have spoken highly of you to your new Chief; I am sure he

will like you. . . . Well, good-bye, I hope you will have kind memories of me."

I assured him that I should, and we shook hands.

The first thing my new Chief told me the next day was:

"The report of the Lytton Commission has caused many officers to lose their posts. Your former Chief is one of them. In assuming the Command of the Japanese Intelligence Service in North Manchuria, I have discharged a great many of the chief agents and kept a certain number who, I hope, will do good work. You are one of these, and I hope that my confidence in you is well placed. Now listen carefully to what I am going to tell you.

"There are many in Tokyo who lay the blame for the League of Nations' verdict on the Japanese authorities in Manchuria who did not prevent the Commission from receiving thousands of letters and giving hundreds of interviews. I do not believe that. Even if the Lytton Commission had not received a single letter nor had had a single interview, the decision would have been against Japan just the same. The League has been organized, operated and supported by Free Masonry and Judaism; by France and England . . . which means the same thing. It is the Jews and the Masons who make the League's decisions, no one else. The League has made its decision . . . we shall make ours. Here is my programme:

"From to-day henceforth, the Jews, the Masons, and whoever is in sympathy with them, must not be

allowed one moment's peace in Manchoukuo. Indirectly they must be persecuted, tormented, humiliated, reviled without respite. We must make their lives as miserable as possible. We must show those scoundrels that we Japanese can hit back and hit hard. Starting to-morrow, I have ordered our two Russian papers to start a merciless campaign against the Jews, the Masonic Lodge, and the Y.M.C.A., which is a Jew-Mason organization. Rich Jews must be kidnapped daily and made to pay, not small sums such as my predecessor asked for, but very large amounts. The Masonic Lodge, the Y.M.C.A., must be closed; Manchoukuo is too good for those dirty rascals . . . if they are not allied with Communism, it amounts to the same thing . . . from now on, it is going to be war . . . and no quarter given. . . . Where is that Chinese called Ying?"

"He is in the neighbourhood of Heilung with 500 men."

"What is he doing there?"

"He is cleaning out four Chinese villages in order to make room for 650 Japanese colonists who are due to arrive in a few days."

"How long has he been there?"

"Two weeks."

"Two weeks? . . . to put out a few hundred ragged Chinese . . . it has taken them two weeks? Two days ought to be enough for a job like that. Wire him to leave his men in charge of a lieutenant, and for him to come to Harbin with 50 men. . . ."

Sure enough, the following day the *Harbinskoe Vremia* and the *Nash Put* began a campaign of defamation against the Masonic Lodge, the Jews, and the Y.M.C.A. It is impossible to relate the infamies which they wrote against the latter organization, which at that time was under the able direction of Mr. Haag, an American, who had laboured 15 years to make the "Y" a first class scholastic institution. Beginning with an elementary school department, this distinguished Director had succeeded in the course of time in adding a High School, then a College with courses in Engineering, in Science, and Literature; all this, of course, as an extension of the Y.M.C.A.'s regular activities in the field of sports, which placed it at the head of all other organizations.

Mr. and Mrs. Haag were loved and respected by everybody; they were welcomed everywhere, not only in Harbin but all over Manchuria. Yet the most disgusting insults were showered upon this respectable couple. The Y.M.C.A. students were accused by this same paper, of being criminally inclined, addicted to the use of drugs; the girls were declared to be mostly prostitutes, etc. . . .

When Radzoyevsky, the Japanese tool-editor of the Japanese tool-paper *Nash Put*, saw that all his accusations did not have any effect on the Y.M.C.A. membership, he had recourse to force: several students were attacked by the Fascists and several young girls were publicly assaulted.

This went on for two years. But what could Mr. Haag do against scoundrels backed by the Japanese

Gendarmerie? Little by little the terrorized young folks stopped going to the Y.M.C.A. school and college: and in 1935 Mr. Haag saw himself compelled to leave. The Y.M.C.A. still exists in Harbin but it has been Japanified and has not one-tenth of its former attendance.

Eighty per cent of the members of the Harbin Masonic Lodge are foreigners: English, Americans, some Danish, five or six Russians. The same two Japanese-controlled papers conducted an intensive campaign of defamation against them. The Worshipful Master, Mr. Neville, an Englishman of over 70 years of age respected by everybody in Harbin, was subjected to abominable attacks, as also was his son who belonged to the Lodge. The Russian Masons were insulted in every imaginable way, then they were threatened, and finally forced to keep away from meetings.

Odious and contemptible though the attacks on the Y.M.C.A. and the Masonic Lodge were, Japanese infamy reached its heights in the attacks against Jewish organizations and the synagogues.

Dr. Kaufman, President of the Hebrew Association of Manchuria, a most cultured scholar, beloved by Gentiles and Hebrews alike, was attacked daily for months in the two Japanese-owned papers. He was often attacked on the street by Russians in Japanese employ. My new Chief assigned two Russian thugs to go at night and smash all the windows of the two synagogues. Each time that the glass was replaced it was broken with stones and bricks, until finally

all repairs had to be given up. Religious services had to be held with broken windows, in a temperature thirty degrees below zero.

When Ying came, he and 50 men stayed in Harbin, where his job was to kidnap rich Chinese for heavy ransoms. The rest of his band had split up into two groups; one worked on the Harbin-Pogranichnaya line, where it constantly attacked trains in order to stop the export of Soviet goods via Vladivostock; the other group operated in the district north of Ilan (Kirin Province), where it terrorized the Chinese and forced them to abandon their fertile lands to make room for Japanese settlers. Over 200,000 acres of rich land were confiscated from Chinese owners on the pretext that their title-deeds were faulty.

The Chinese who were willing to let their land go without putting up a fight were paid one dollar an acre; those who refused that offer were expelled by Japanese bandits.

But the bandits' task was not always an easy one. In March, 1934, they were ordered to dislodge the Chinese peasants in Talunshan district. The peasants, reinforced by a battalion of Irregulars, were waiting for them. There was a fierce battle which turned so much against the bandits that they had to run away leaving more than 100 dead.

The Japanese Command did not like that at all; they ordered the Japanese Colonel in charge of the Ilanchianmassu garrison to take a company of soldiers to Talunshan, join forces with the garrison there and to destroy the Chinese rebels. But the Talunshan

garrison was composed of Manchurian men, with a Chinese by the name Li Yo-chun in command. When the Japanese Colonel arrived with his company of Japanese soldiers he found that the entire "Manchoukuo" garrison had gone over to the side of the farmers. He and every one of his men were destroyed.

A month later, 10 Japanese planes bombed the three villages for two days and reduced them to masses of debris and ruins; then came the Japanese troops and after them . . . the Japanese settlers.

And those settlers . . . what were they?

According to the Japanese General Staff, they had been selected for their moral and physical qualities, and had formally undertaken to live a bachelor's life for a period of two years. A fine set of model young men, one would think. In reality their co-citizens had been most happy to get rid of them. The few among them who might have been called farmers did not have the least idea about the cultivation of the soya-bean, kaoliang, groundnuts, and other indigenous products. Their harvests were scant or next to nothing . . . but what difference did that make? . . . there still were Chinese farmers . . . with good crops . . . their barns were raided while the Gendarmerie and the Japanese soldiers stood by, looking the other way, or even taking a hand in protecting the hauls.

Hundreds of Chinese farmers had their entire crops stolen by these Japanese settlers, who, not satisfied with removing the products of the fields, carried away the young women.

Some Japanese farmers who, perhaps, were afraid to risk their skins in raiding the Chinese farms, were content to force whole Chinese families to work their stolen farms. In such instances, the only recompense received by the workers was just enough food to keep body and soul together. The whole crop and the girls belonged to the Japanese landlords.

On October 26, 1935, Major Inoue of the Gendarmerie, Captain Isobe of the Judicial Department, and I, accompanied by some 20 soldiers, went to investigate the deaths of seven Japanese settlers killed in the neighbourhood of Tatungkow. As usual, no evidence could be found, and the Major promised to have the village bombed.

On our return, as we came near Putiaopeng, we met 40 to 45 Chinese men, women and children escorted by eight Japanese gendarmes and a few Japanese "farmers". Major Inoue stopped them to inquire who they were. One of the Japanese, the leader perhaps, calmly answered that these were his farm hands who had run away two nights before. The gendarmes had searched and found them, and now they were on their way back to the farm. The poor fugitives were pitiful to look at. I could see that many of them had been cruelly beaten; dried and dust-covered blood could be seen on their faces and hands. Major Inoue said nothing, he showed not the least sign of surprise, let alone sympathy. What are the Chinese, if not beasts to be exploited by the sons of gods . . . the Samurai?

But notwithstanding arrests, tortures, assassinations, destructions, confiscations, kidnappings, punitive expeditions and massacres, Manchuria was turning out a complete disillusionment for all the Japanese, disappointment for the military, civilians, rich and poor. Manchuria had been a mirage; it was becoming a heavy burden. An immensely valuable asset was turning into a liability. They had killed or driven the Chinese out of their villages, forgetful of the fact that the villages owed their prosperity to the Chinese, and not the Chinese to the villages. The crop of a Chinese who works for himself is very different from the crop of a Chinese who is forced to work under penalty of death. The flow of hundreds of thousands of settlers who annually used to come from Shantung, had stopped completely; in fact, the opposite was taking place. The unspeakable Japanese depredations had sent hundreds of thousands of Chinese farmers back to China. The entire mining industry suffered accordingly. The whole thing could be summed up: "Why work, only to be robbed by the Japanese?"

But the military expenses were the heaviest burden of all, and the Japanese were very sorely disappointed in this regard. They had figured out that after one year of occupation two divisions plus the Gendarmerie Service would be enough to maintain order in Manchuria; they had thought that the Irregulars and the bandits could be finished off in a few months; they had imagined that the Soviet troops, once their military demonstrations were over, would retire from the frontier. Now everything had gone wrong;

nothing had turned out as hoped. The nice juicy sugar plum proved to be but a dry, bitter apple. To-day, after six years, in spite of the many divisions and the tens of thousands of police, there are in Manchuria more Irregulars and bandits than ever, harassing everything Japanese; so much so that even the South Manchuria Railway which runs to Dairen, so dear to the Japanese, is now frequently attacked.

As to the Soviet Government, they maintain close to 300,000 choice troops, modernly equipped, near the border; which obliges Japan to keep at least 250,000 men ready to face them. How this heavy expenditure galls Japan can be readily understood from a speech made by General Minami to a gathering of army officers at Hailar:

"You must be ready for anything at a minute's notice. The present situation cannot be allowed to last. Japan cannot go on spending millions each year, just to maintain a large army ready to face the U.S.S.R. A pact of non-aggression must be signed and their troops must get away or else we shall be compelled to send them home ourselves, by force."

MONEY—DIRTY IF NOT ALWAYS BLOODSTAINED

My new Chief, as I said, seemed to be a very quiet, gentle, and peace-loving type of man. He never uttered an offensive or discourteous word; even

when he reprimanded anyone or made certain observations, he did so in the calm and persuasive tone of a good pastor speaking to a member of his flock. . . . But there was one thing upon which he doggedly insisted, and that was money . . . make more . . . get more money . . . money and plenty of it at all cost. "Japan is poor, very poor," he used to tell me, "our first task is to lighten the burden of our enormous military expenses. We did not take Manchuria to spend millions in it . . . all our expenses . . . all the expenses of the army of occupation must be borne by the Manchurians."

Make money! . . . More money! Increase the rackets . . . multiply the monopolies . . . arrest more people . . . get busy with the kidnappings . . . more kidnappings . . . more and bigger ransoms . . . money . . . money . . . money . . . the Japanese Army must have money . . . the Gendarmerie officers must fill their pockets faster . . . the Police Services need cash, lots of cash, lots of cash. . . . Now everyone get busy and go to it!!

And go to it they did. Kidnappings became so numerous that all the principal centres of Manchuria lived under the dark shadow of fear and terror. All the stories, cleverly spread around to the effect that the bandits were responsible for all these crimes, now fell on deaf ears. People did not believe them; they knew that the Japanese authorities were the real kidnappers.

Protests and accusations which at first had been voiced in whispers were now expressed loudly and openly. Particularly in foreign circles was the blame squarely laid at the door of the Japanese, who were held responsible for all these atrocities. Names were mentioned, places where the Gendarmerie and the Police kept the kidnapped victims, were publicly known and pointed out. The Consular Body of Harbin held a number of special meetings at which kidnappings and monopolies were discussed and documentary evidence of the complicity of the Japanese authorities was proffered by some of the Consuls.

A Chinese lady, whose husband had been kidnapped over a month previously, was on her way to the Police Headquarters to arrange for his liberty, when she recognized a Police Inspector as the person who had come to her house to ask for the ransom money.

In Tsitsihar, January 8, 1933, several bandits broke into the house of a rich Chinese, bound the husband and wife and servants together and were engaged in opening the strong-box when a watchman fired from the garden, killed two of the robbers and put the rest to flight. The two dead were recognized as a Russian employed by the Gendarmerie, and a Japanese "interpreter".

Since it was a part of my duty to do so, I informed my Chief with regard to the agitation and all the rumours rampant in foreign circles. He calmly answered that all the cackling of the public did not

interest him in the least. If the foreigners were not happy and satisfied in Manchoukuo, all they had to do was to get out.

However, as months passed, public indignation became so loud that even the Chief began to take notice. It seems that instructions had come from Tokyo . . . these horrid rumours had to be stopped.

The Chief called all the police heads in secret conference; the situation was discussed, measures were decided on.

Two days later the Chief of the Criminal Police published the following notice in all the papers:

“We have at last discovered who are the kidnappers who have been terrorizing Harbin and the surrounding districts for some time. They are Valesky and Mandrika, two notorious criminals. The police are on their trail, and it is only a question of a few days, perhaps hours, before they are apprehended and brought to justice.”

For several days after the publication of this “marvellous news” the Criminal Police kept feeding the papers with more facts and particulars concerning the various horrible crimes committed by these two “human wolves”, these two “ferocious bandits”, who had kidnapped so many people. Every article closed with the statement that these awful criminals would soon be placed behind the bars.

Did all these naïve and ingenious Japanese fabrications impress the intelligent public? Not at all. Everyone could see through the smoke-screen. “What

sort of comedy are they trying to play on us?" people asked. They asked, because they knew that Valesky had recently been released from jail after serving a three-year sentence for theft, and that there was nothing of the "ferocious criminal" about him. Besides, if he had just spent three years in jail, how could he have committed all those kidnappings?

Clever, those Japanese!

And as to Mandrika? . . . was he not just a common pickpocket with nothing else against him? Yes! . . . what is all this comedy about? The answer soon came.

One afternoon all the Harbin papers came out with an "Extra": the two terrible, ferocious and much sought-for criminals, Valesky and Mandrika, had been surprised by the police in a small house in Samanaya Garadoc (Harbin suburb) and a terrific battle had ensued during which more than 150 shots were fired from automatic pistols, the two desperadoes finally being killed by the representatives of the law.

Again for several days the papers were full of detailed stories of the terrible battle, of the heroism of the police agents, of the enormous quantities of arms and ammunition found in the bandits' lair . . . now Harbin and North Manchuria could breathe freely . . . the dreadful menace had disappeared . . . the two dangerous kidnappers were dead, thanks to the glorious courage of the police.

Telegrams of congratulation were exchanged between my Chief and Tokyo and between Tokyo

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and Changchun; congratulations between the different Chiefs of Police . . . a big banquet was given in honour of the heroic police agents . . . rewards and promotions . . . comedy after comedy.

Yes! The Japanese are very ingenious!

Now for what actually happened:

Scarcely had the first article, accusing them of being the authors of so many kidnappings, appeared, than Valesky and Mandrika were advised by the Criminal Police Inspector to get out of Harbin for a while and to remain hidden in Samanaya Garadoc (where they were killed) until their innocence could be proved. The two poor simpletons fell into the trap and were killed by machine-guns fired from a window. They were not armed and never had the least chance of defending themselves. Fire was opened on them while they were lunching on bread and sausages. Valesky had 31 bullets in his chest, Mandrika 19 in the back. I witnessed this act and saw the corpses afterwards.

Harbin and Manchuria understood perfectly the police motive behind this assassination of two comparatively harmless men. As people kept on talking and discussing kidnappings, my Chief ordered the Censorship Bureau to delete from all papers all news concerning kidnappings, and the police were told to arrest any person found discussing or talking about such matters.

These orders were carried out, but nevertheless, as the kidnappings grew worse and worse, as some of the victims disappeared for ever, they more than

ever formed the main topic of private and secret conversations.

On April 8, 1933, General Lau Shu-Pan-si, a millionaire, who had once before been kidnapped on the orders of my first Chief, was again abducted on the orders of my new Chief. It cost him a half million dollars to be set free. The deal was made within six hours. I was the intermediary.

In early June, Mr. Chapovesky, a rich Hebrew, was kidnapped. For three weeks, in spite of the terrible tortures he was subjected to, he refused to sign or write letters to any of his acquaintances asking them to pay the money demanded by the Gendarmerie. In the end, seeing that they could not break his determination not to pay a ransom, the Gendarmerie turned him over, one night, to two of their Russian agents, who took him to the Pitommie, near Harbin, killed and buried him.

This, however, did not deter the Gendarmerie from approaching the helpless widow and making her sign an order authorizing them to withdraw the money which Mr. Chapovesky had in the bank. The bank refused to hand over the money, on the ground that they had no proof that Mr. Chapovesky was dead, stating further, that people sometimes disappear for a while and reappear later.

But once the Japanese Gendarmerie gets on the trail of a sum of money, they never let go. Since the bank wanted proof of Mr. Chapovesky's death . . . well . . . that could be easily fixed. They had the body exhumed, the head cut off and placed at

a pre-arranged spot near the river, where, of course . . . of course, an agent of the Gendarmerie found it the next morning.

In view of this evidence the bank had to pay the money and the Gendarmerie took half of it.

Toward the middle of June that year, 1933, the Chief, through me, ordered Ying to organize an expedition to Mongolia in order to seize seven Mongolian chiefs, among whom were two princes. On July 9 Ying returned, bringing 15 Mongolian chiefs who remained three weeks in captivity. The Chinese who served as interpreter during the negotiations told me that the Japanese Military Command squeezed \$3,000,000 ransom money. Ying got \$50,000 as a special tip.

It wasn't until June 16, 1936, however, that one of my most ardent wishes was satisfied. Ying with his entire band stopped a train, killed 21 Japanese soldiers and two officers, took \$300,000 which the Bank of Manchoukuo in Harbin was sending to the branch of Tsitsihar, and declared himself independent of the Japanese.

MONEY—THE MONOPOLY OF MONOPOLIES

At the beginning of the Japanese occupation all the first "advisers" and "interpreters" were hastily appointed. Things changed when it was discovered that every single one of the whole crooked bunch of extortioners was getting rich quick. The Japanese

Military authorities could not possibly let such a golden opportunity go by. And so it came to pass that a post as "adviser" and "interpreter" only went to anyone who offered the most money for the job.

Nikolai Nikolaievich Yaghi, a Japanese who had "embraced" the orthodox religion, and who was the first "high adviser" to the Central Police Bureau, paid \$50,000 to the Japanese Military Mission for the privilege of holding his job. In two years' time Yaghi was the owner of several valuable properties and had over \$300,000 in the bank.

The job that brought in the most money to its holder was that of "high adviser" to the Criminal Police. A Japanese named Eguchi who occupied that post for three years amassed a vast fortune, notwithstanding that, to hold his position, he had paid \$100,000 a year to the Japanese Military authorities.

Interpreters in the small police station paid from \$3,000 to \$5,000 a year for the position.

The Japanese, with their genius for committing abominations, left no stone unturned. They had a spy system which kept them informed as to all kinds of family reunions or festivities, such as birthdays, engagements, weddings, dinners, parties, etc. At the proper moment the police would arrive: ". . . More than ten people here?" . . . "Reunion without permit . . . you are all under arrest." If people played cards or mah-jong, they were arrested . . . if they sang, they disturbed the peace, and all were arrested and all had to pay heavy fines to get out.

The situation in Harbin grew so unbearable that many stopped entertaining and no more invitations were sent out.

The Japanese police therefore devised a new way of squeezing a fortune out of the people. This was the "House Numbers Racket". Almost every month the Japanese police authorities published notices in the papers to the effect that, for some reason or other, the numbers of the houses had to be changed. This idiotic practice was carried out all over "Manchoukuo". The police would go from house to house, remove the old number plates and collect one dollar for a different number. The plates were all made after the same pattern, thin sheets of enamelled iron that may have cost a few cents and which were used over and over again. So much for petty thieving, official.

During the last months of the winter it had always been the practice of hundreds of industrious Chinese to cut ice on the Sungari River and to sell it to the people in Harbin and suburbs. Every household in Harbin had a special ice-house in which to store ice for the summer months. Naturally, until the arrival of the Japanese, anyone was free to go on the river and get all the ice he wanted.

In February, 1933, just at the time when the ice cutting and transporting was about to start, a Jap, Takahasi, called on the Japanese Military Mission and offered to pay \$10,000 for the "Sungari River Ice Monopoly". The Military Mission accepted gladly and appointed several Japanese soldiers to guard the river. Any person wishing to take ice had

to pay 50 cents per 100 kilos to the Monopoly. But there was an even better ramp.

Mr. Isoda was an enterprising Japanese, full of bright ideas. He had a toy and lacquered goods' store which did not yield him sufficient profits, so he decided to sell it to another Japanese. The day after making the sale he went to the Japanese Military Mission and declared that he was ready to pay \$10,000 for the "Harbin Chimney Sweep Monopoly". This meant that no chimney could be cleaned by anybody whatsoever without infringing upon the "rights" of the Monopoly owner. As usual, the Military Mission accepted the proposition and placed 10 gendarmes at the disposal of Isoda as bodyguards as well as enforcers of the Monopoly law. From that day on, this is the kind of scene that took place in every house in Harbin:

A Japanese gendarme, an interpreter and a Chinese worker come to the front door and knock or ring the bell.

"We want to see the owner."

"What do the gentlemen want?"

"We want to clean the chimney."

"Clean the chimney? . . . Why, my chimney is clean . . . and if it needed cleaning I can have it cleaned by anybody I please."

"You are mistaken, sir; no one in Harbin can clean chimneys but the 'Chimney Sweep Monopoly', and we represent the Monopoly. You either let us clean your chimney or we shall have to do it by force; and in that case you will have to pay not only for

the chimney cleaning but also for having resisted officers of the law. The presence of the gendarmes here must tell you clearly that you are on the wrong side."

"How much does the cleaning cost?"

"Two dollars."

"Very well, here is your two dollars and you may leave me and my chimney alone."

The three leave to go and repeat the same operation at the next house . . . the door closes with a bang and the owner utters a long string of words not to be found in any dictionary.

One of the best known crooks in Harbin was Yamasaki, an absolutely unscrupulous trickster who had joined the orthodox church for nefarious ends.

He went to the headquarters of the Japanese Military Mission one day and told them that he intended to open an office for the collection of debts, I.O.U.'s, promissory notes and all sorts of such obligations with the co-operation of the Mission and he was ready to give them 25 per cent of the profits. The deal was made and Yamasaki opened an office at the corner of Kitaiskaya and Mongolskaya Streets.

But Yamasaki did not bother about collecting for others. He bought at from 2 per cent to 5 per cent of their face value any sort of obligation, right or wrong, due or not due, genuine or fictitious, regardless of the date thereon.

Once the legal owner of such papers, he proceeded to collect the full amount plus 3 per cent a month

or 36 per cent interest a year, which the law of Manchoukuo allows.

With the backing of the Gendarmerie, Yamasaki grabbed houses, stores, land and all sorts of properties.

Here is an example of his manner of operating:

For the sum of \$700 a certain well-known usurer of Harbin, Bogin by name, a typical confidence-man, sold Yamasaki \$25,000 worth of promissory notes, some false, some already paid, some many years overdue. Among them there was a \$200 note from a widow, Mrs. Halnik, signed three years before in favour of Bogin. Mrs. Halnik had paid the note in full, with interest, but Bogin, claiming to have lost the paper, refused to surrender it to Mrs. Halnik. In its stead he gave her a written statement in which he declared that he had been paid in full and had no further claim.

All this, however, did not help Mrs. Halnik. Not only did Yamasaki demand the payment of the \$200, but he insisted that she pay him 5 per cent a month interest for the entire three years from the date of the note, plus expenses for collection, making a total of \$845. As the poor widow owned a small house, Yamasaki initiated proceedings to have it sold to satisfy his claim against her.

Fortunately, however, Mrs. Halnik's daughter happened to work in my office and she asked me to help her. I went and spoke to my Chief who happened to be in a good mood at the time, and he promised to interest himself in the case.

Two days later Mrs. Halnik received from Yamasaki the original note signed by her, with a receipt in full.

This was only one of scores of cases in which I was able slightly to redress the balance of justice, but against them must be put the thousands upon thousands of cases where I was as powerless as the victims themselves.

There was also an organization under the full control of the Japanese Military Mission, who put a respectable Russian ex-General at its head. This nominal President of the Bureau, who was forced to accept the position, has no authority whatever. All he does is to sign the letters which the Japanese bring before him. This is the "Refugees' Bureau" and it is divided into six departments in which all the employees are Russians. Questioned as to the character of these Russian employees, any Manchurian will answer that the Japanese chose them chiefly because they are all criminals, crooks and adventurers of the worst type.

The "Bureau" exercises an autocratic authority not only over all Russian refugees, but also over every European in Manchoukuo.

All banks, firms, corporations, factories, business houses, restaurants, etc. etc., must be "registered" with the "Bureau". No one can employ anyone, much less seek employment, unless he or she be inscribed on the register of the "Bureau".

A force of "Inspectors" is maintained by the "Bureau" who regularly visit all business establishments and request the employees to show their

"registration" cards. Those who are caught without one are ordered to quit their work immediately. Result: money pours into the coffers of the Japanese Military Mission, for every workman, every clerk, every bank and office employee must pay taxes and fees to the "Bureau" as also must every business of any character or description.

As a sideline, the "Refugees' Bureau" runs a National Lottery all over Manchoukuo.

Another important and profitable task of the "Bureau" consists in conducting Japanese propaganda campaigns among the Russians and the Chinese, as well as in operating a complete system of espionage. To this end the "Bureau" has offices in all the principal cities of Manchuria and China where a regular information service is maintained. The hundreds and hundreds of "Bureau" employees are all secret agents of the Japanese Gendarmerie.

In Peking, Tientsin, Hankow, and Shanghai can be found branch offices of the "Refugees' Bureau", which are nothing but nests of Japanese spies. A good many Russians employed in the Administration of the Concessions, in the Auxiliary Police, are registered with the "Bureau" and are paid by the Japanese to spy.

During the four and a half years that I was in the Japanese Intelligence Service I used to receive regularly, information about China from the "Bureau" agents.

In Tientsin and in Shanghai the Japanese publish Russian newspapers, called *Vosradjenie* and *Slovo*,

respectively, which are edited by agents of the "Bureau".

Still another exceedingly important task of the "Bureau" was, and perhaps still is, to enlist and train young Russians capable of bearing arms, and form them into armed bands which, under the direction of the Japanese, play their part on the Sino-Soviet border, provoking "incidents", making attacks across the frontier line, committing various acts of depredation and devastation in such manner that the blame is placed on the Soviet Government and the Japanese can protest about something or other.

The "Bureau" maintained an Officers' school and two Petty-Officers' schools for the purpose of training such young Russian refugees.

Time and again when my work happened to take me to districts near the Soviet border, I met bands of Russian refugees wearing Japanese-made Soviet soldiers' uniforms. They used to attack small villages on the Manchurian side of the border, pillage all they could lay hands on, and then seem to withdraw towards Soviet territory in order to make the natives believe that their attackers were really Soviet citizens. It was but natural that the deception should fool the inhabitants . . . had they not seen the Soviet uniforms? . . . had they not come from across the border? . . . had they not gone back in that direction? Result: the next morning the Japanese Government would send a note to Moscow protesting strongly against attacks. Newspapers all over the world have

been publishing quite a few of these "faked" attacks. *Domei* saw to that. . . .

The same sort of "incident" was engineered in the air. The Japanese painted several of their airplanes to make them look exactly like Soviet planes. The Japanese pilots would fly the planes over Manchurian territory scattering thousands of Japanese-printed Communistic propaganda pamphlets in Russian and Chinese, and an occasional bomb. Of course, no time was lost in dispatching a Japanese Commission of Inquiry to the spot. The pamphlets were gathered, people were requested to testify and make affidavits that they had seen Soviet planes fly over Manchurian territory and drop bombs and Communist literature.

Once more, a note of protest from Tokyo to Moscow . . . once more *Domei* got busy bamboozling the press of the world . . . the world which might think that those darn Soviets were an awful pest. Hook, line and sinker, you white suckers! . . . and a laugh in a kimono sleeve.

Various groups of Russian members of the "Refugees' Bureau" were sent to Mongolia, Chahar and Jehol, to assist the Japanese in Japanifying those countries. The same thing was done along the railroad of Manchuria. When it was noticed that the Chinese could not be trusted and often joined the ranks of the Irregulars, Russian guards were posted along the lines. But even then there were a great many cases of desertion and a rebellion among these Russians hired by the "Bureau" at \$60 a month plus uniform, lodgings and the promise of European

food. When they arrived at their distant posts, hundreds of kilometres away from the cities, they would find conditions entirely different from those represented to them by the Japanese. They were treated like slaves, fed on Chinese fare and lodged in quarters not even fit for animals. As to the \$60 a month they never saw one penny of it.

When the new Harbin-Lungmenchen line was being constructed, a gang of Russian "Bureau" soldiers rebelled. On August 16, 1933, at the Tungpei Station, 21 of them killed two Japanese officers and five soldiers; they took five machine-guns and a number of guns, set fire to the station, and deserted. Through the activities of the "Refugees' Bureau" the Japanese, during the first two years of their occupation of Manchoukuo, had many hundreds of Russian families of colonists sent to a district called Three Rivers, 70 kilometres from Hailar and not far from the Soviet border.

To these refugees the "Bureau" promised financial aid, farm implements, horses, cattle and homes. But bitter disappointment awaited them. Once arrived at the colony the poor refugees were compelled to work like slaves under the guard of Japanese soldiers who assaulted many of the young girls and committed all sorts of abuses.

At the head of the colony the "Bureau" had placed a certain Tirbash, a Russian ex-lieutenant who had promoted himself to the rank of general, and who had assassinated dozens of Russians on the pretext that they were Communists.

Constant abuses and oppression was bound to bring retribution in the end. Part of the Three Rivers colony rebelled in August 1935, and several Japanese officers, many soldiers, Tirbash, and his aides, were all massacred.

CHAPTER XIV

THE END DRAWS NEAR

I HAVE MORE ANECDOTES than I have space to tell—some of which, involving others as they do, including foreign consuls, who fell under the baneful influence of Japan, cannot be told without infringing the laws of other countries and forfeiting the good will of many of my fellow creatures.

The end of my labours, however, was at hand. By the beginning of 1936, with the final judgment in the Kaspe case, it was evident that a storm was gathering against me. What was I to do? . . . Disappear? . . . that was not easy, with a family of five. Besides, my funds were low. The Japanese had promised to pay me \$1,400 a month, but they did not live up to their agreement. They paid me in full the first month, then half, then one-third, then a few hundred dollars, and then, after the first six months, I hardly received a cent. Whenever I mentioned money matters, they always repeated the same story: "As soon as things settle down we shall pay you everything in full to date." But as things never settled down, I saw the colour of their money no more; they now owed me \$52,000.

I had been hoping against hope that the Japanese would at least pay me a portion of my earned salary.

All the "Manchoukuo" employees were in exactly the same boat. No one was paid; the police, the army officers, received nothing. The Gendarmerie officers, and a few of the army made money in contraband, gambling, prostitution, narcotics. The others were always broke.

In desperation towards the end of March, 1936, after securing an order from the Court, I succeeded in selling a piece of property I owned for \$12,800. When I went to collect the money due to me, I was told that I could not collect anything for a month yet, and that it was necessary to publish an official notice in case there might be claims against me.

The notice was published, the month passed. An arbitrary tax claim to the amount of \$2,500 was filed against me, but still I could not collect my own money. Another sort of notice had to be published, and still another month had to pass, at the end of which I was told that I could not get my money yet, as it was possible that some creditor outside of Harbin might not have read the notice.

I was merely one of innumerable people who had sold their properties, some worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Time and time again I told the Chief that I had to have money to live, that if they could not pay me they should let me go and give me a chance to earn my living some other way, but he always had the same thing to say:

"Give us a little time, when things are more normal you will receive all that is due to you."

Once, when I rather insisted, he said:

"Can you tell me how much the Europeans paid the Orientals when they were masters of the Orient? The highest-paid employee received from 50 to 100 dollars a month. Now that we are masters, why should we pay more?"

The thought of working day and night at all sorts of disgusting tasks, and then having to live on my own savings, made me mad with rage. There was one consolation, however, if the Japanese held me under their thumb, if they kept my family practically as hostages, if they humiliated and robbed me, their "cleverness" was very costly to them. I made them pay for it in many ways. All the information which came to me or passed through my hands, I relayed secretly to the volunteers and to the enemies of Japan. The Irregulars were always notified in advance when a Japanese military train was being sent against them; they always knew when Japanese troops were on their way to attack them.

Often, when the Japanese were getting ready to make a "search" or an "arrest" (which often meant confiscation or kidnapping), I sent a warning to the prospective victims in time for their escape.

Hundreds of Chinese, employees of the Manchurian Government, were compelled, like myself, to continue in their service, but a great many of them had become members of the Chinese Secret Societies whose avowed purpose was to kill Japanese

civil and military officers and Chinese traitors. Thousands of Japanese were thus killed. Many Chinese traitors paid with their lives for having sold themselves to the Japanese. Three attempts were made on the life of puppet Pu-Yi, whose imperial palace was half destroyed by a fire started by a member of his entourage; the Japanese military airport in Changchun was burned; the airport at Tsitsihar was fired twice, the one in Harbin once, that at Pogradichnaya twice. Scores of military trains were wrecked. In all these attacks the Japanese police forces were unable to discover the authors.

Right under the noses of the ablest and most dreaded agents of the Japanese Police and Intelligence Service, a perfect system of espionage was maintained day and night. Truly the Japanese are thick-headed. Where a movement of the eyes, a sign of the hand, have a meaning to an intelligent man, the Japanese requires you to draw a diagram and give an hour of detailed explanations.

In the early days of August I tried once more to collect from the Court the money owed me from the sale of my property. I hired a Japanese attorney to whom I had to promise \$1,000. I could see by then that things were going from bad to worse, and I knew full well that I was in danger. I had to get ready to go away. Mrs. Vespa's health had been terribly undermined by the life of uncertainty which we were forced to live. Our doctor certified in writing that she had to have a change of air, but the Chief refused to let her go: "The climate of Harbin is

excellent," he insisted. "Your wife does not need to go away in order to get better." On August 10 the Chief sent for me and asked me if, in 1934, I had known a certain Li Shun-hen. I told him that I had known him before the arrival of the Japanese in Mukden, where he used to be a teacher of history in the Military School, but that since the invasion I had lost sight of him.

The Chief looked at me a while and said:

"Do you think that Li Shun-hen whom you knew in Mukden was the same Li Shun-hen who, when the Gendarmerie tried to arrest him in Harbin, ran into the Matura building and jumped from a fifth-story window?"

"How should I know, since I never saw the Harbin Li Shun-hen either before or after he killed himself?" I countered.

The Chief gave me another long look. Then he said: "I'd like to see how you write your name in Chinese . . . write it down for me."

I wrote the three Chinese characters which form my name. The Chief glanced at the paper and stuck it in his pocket without comment. Then he asked:

"In 1934, did you not speak with the two Soviet aviators who made a forced landing in Manchurian territory?"

"You mean those two who deserted?" I asked. "No one could talk to them, it was strictly forbidden."

"Don't try to be funny!" the Chief warned me

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sharply. "You know very well that they were not deserters. If we said that, it was to humiliate those dogs of the Soviet Union. I have been told by several parties that in Changchun you spoke for over half an hour with the two fliers."

"You have been misinformed," I told him. "I did not have the pleasure of talking to the Soviet aviators; I could not even get near them. Whoever told you so is a liar. I am aware that I am under suspicion. . . . If you do not trust me, why do you keep me in the service? Instead of receiving my long-overdue salary, I am receiving nothing but insults and humiliation . . . all because I do not happen to stand in the good graces of Nakamura and Radzoyevsky, two good-for-nothings."

After listening silently to this broadside of unquestionable facts, the Chief extended his hand for me to shake, saying:

"Everything is going to be all right, Mr. Vespa. I know that these fellows are plotting against you; but if I listen to the others, I listen to you also."

A few days later, discussing the kidnapping of two Jews and also the case of the young nineteen-year-old Abrahamvich, whom the Gendarmerie was holding for a \$30,000 ransom, the Chief asked me whether I thought that the father had as much money as that.

"I do not think he has," I replied. "And if he has, what good will it do him? The boy has been killed by the agents of the Gendarmerie."

"Is this being spoken of about town?"

"Of course, people speak about it."

"What do they say?"

"That the so-called bandits are men in the employ of the Gendarmerie and other Japanese Police Services, and that the ransom money goes to the Japanese Military authorities. It is impossible to prevent thousands of people from talking . . . they cannot all be arrested."

That evening, I went to see the Japanese lawyer to find out about how the matter of getting my money on the sale of my property was progressing. He told me that there were many difficulties, and that the best thing to do was to try to speak to the Japanese judge before whom the case had been brought, and that, perhaps, by paying him something I could get my money.

Willy-nilly I had to subject myself to this other "squeeze," and so the lawyer took me to the judge's house on Uchatskovaya Street. As I was being presented to this most presumptuous official, he looked at me from head to foot as though I were a rare specimen of worm. The upshot of our conversation was that for me to receive the money due me from the sale of my property I should pay this Japanese judge the sum of \$3,000. Forced to agree to this brazen robbery, I had to sign three one-thousand-dollar promissory notes in favour of Yamasaki, the famous crook who had the I.O.U. Monopoly. For this I was promised my money within a week. It happened that while we were bargaining, I raised

my voice several times; invariably this bribe-hunting Japanese judge reminded me that I was talking to a Japanese jurist. This travesty of justice personified who was shamelessly robbing me of \$3,000 dared to call himself a jurist!

Near the end of August, the Japanese lawyer told me that I could go to the Court and receive my money. The Court handed me a statement which said that of the \$12,800 owed me on the sale of my property I had to pay a tax of \$2,500, judiciary fees of \$750, leaving a balance due to me of \$9,550. I was to present this statement to the Court Cashier who would give me a cheque. The Japanese cashier told me that there was some irregularity in my papers and that I should wait a while. I waited . . . and waited . . . and waited, only to be finally told to come again the next day.

I went home feeling feverish, my feet seemed like tons of lead. My courage was gone. I had lost all strength to struggle any longer against these lying, hypocritical beasts. My wife was sick, and I said nothing to her about how I felt. Genevieve, my fourteen-year-old daughter, did her best to console me. In spite of her youth, she was a real comfort to me. I hid nothing from her. "Cheer up, papa, you will see that all this will pass, you are going to win and we shall all be able to get out of Manchuria, to get away from these savage apes. What does it matter if we have lost everything? You are strong and capable, and you will soon be able to make

up for what the Japanese have taken away from you."

The same evening Yamasaki called up and told me that he had an important message for me. The helpless condition in which I found myself forced me to overcome the natural repugnance I felt at coming into contact with him. So I went over. He received me with all those bows and compliments which have so fatally deceived the world as to the true character of the Japanese, the keynote of whose ethical life is hypocrisy and deceit. After officious enquiries about my state of health, after tea and cigarettes, he informed me that the Japanese cashier of the court would not have paid any attention to the "irregularities" found in my papers, and would have given me my cheque if I had been willing to pay him \$500. Upon my word, I was pleasantly surprised. I had expected that he too would have stuck me for \$3,000. The court cashier, evidently, was not a "Japanese jurist"! He was willing to take less. So I consented to this other pound of flesh and gave Yamasaki another promissory note for \$500.

The following day, when I presented myself before the cashier he welcomed me with a smile, told me that happily the slight irregularity in my papers had been corrected and politely handed me my cheque. In the hall I met Yamasaki, who was waiting for me accompanied by another Japanese and by his body-guard Lapshoff, a huge Russian. We all went to the bank where I cashed the cheque. It would not have surprised me a bit if the Japanese bank-cashier had

found some more "irregularities" in the cheque and held me up for another thousand or so. Thank God, the cheque was O.K. I got the money and paid Yamasaki the \$3,500, for the note I had signed for the judge and for the cashier.

The same evening the representatives of the *Nash Put* and *Harbinsloe Vremia* came to my house and asked me for a contribution of \$500 to each of them. I told them both to go to hell. Later an employee of the *Nash Put* phoned and warned me that I had only three days in which to pay the \$500 requested. If I did not pay, they were going to print in the papers that I was an agent of the Comintern, of the Kuomintang, and an associate of the bandits. The *Harbinsloe Vremia* did the same thing. To both I answered that they could print anything they pleased.

I mentioned all this to the Chief, but he coldly said that he was not interested in gossip.

Now I knew that the climax was fast approaching.

I had to act, and act quickly. As had been previously arranged, I went to a person who knew how to reach Colonel C. and I sent him an urgent message.

That same night Fotopulo informed me that Nakamura wanted me to pay him \$1,000. I said my money was all gone. Two days later he phoned that Nakamura was much hurt at my refusal to pay the \$1,000 . . . too bad . . . it would now cost me \$2,500, otherwise he would make such revelations

about me that my life would not be worth a pinch of dust.

On September 3 a friend of mine on the General Staff secretly informed me that the Chief of the Japanese Military Mission, the Chief of the Gendarmerie, and my own Chief would meet the same evening to discuss several charges brought against me, and promised to let me know the result as soon as possible.

The morning after, at seven o'clock, I was given the following information: The Chief of the Gendarmerie had brought various documents, depositions of arrested Chinese and a statement made by a Russian agent, which indirectly connected me with the Irregulars; Fotopulo had declared that he had seen me several times come out of the Buddhist monastery at night; the Chief of the Military Mission had been very much impressed that the three Chinese characters that formed my name were written in the note-book found in the pocket of the Chinese Li Shun-hen who jumped off the fifth floor of the Matsura Building, when the Japanese Gendarmerie agents tried to arrest him. My Chief had done his best to defend me, but without any result. The final decision had been that three days later I should be sent to Tsitsihar, which meant, to disappear . . . without trace.

"You must get away without a moment's delay," my friend and informer told me.

"And my family?"

"Alive, out of Manchuria, you will be more useful

than dead in Manchuria. You cannot help your family by staying; but away from the Japanese you will have a better chance. Go, I beg you, while you still have your military documents. No order has been issued against you, as yet; go to the aerodrome and take a plane."

This was wise advice, and I wasted no time in following it. I called on Colonel C. and explained my case and my decision to go away, which he heartily approved, assuring me that he would see to it that my family would be safely put on the train the following morning and that nobody would interfere with them during the trip to Dairen. Then I went to say good-bye to an old Chinese friend whose last recommendation I treasure to this day, and rushed home once more for a last farewell. I dared not take any baggage with me, but my wife insisted that my secretary accompany me to the airport, so that she could bring back word that I had succeeded in leaving safely.

Half an hour later, I was flying toward Changchun and Dairen, whence I took the boat for Tsingtao, which I reached the following day.

On the morning of September 8, 1936, I went to meet the Japanese steamer *Tsingtao Maru*, on board which I was expecting my family. As the ship docked I looked everywhere on deck but could not see them. Suspecting that something was wrong I went on board and in the first-class came to a cabin through the open door of which I saw my wife sitting on the bed crying, my daughter looking

gloomy and my son trying to console his mother. I was surprised to see two Japanese police stationed at the cabin door. Something had happened, I knew. While I stood there, seemingly uninterested, but undecided as to what would be best to do, my son raised his eyes and saw me. With remarkable presence of mind he went on talking to his mother in Italian: "Go away quick, we are all arrested and they will arrest you too." In a minute I was back on the pier and hastened to report to the Chinese authorities, who tried their best to have the Japanese Consul issue an order that my family be allowed to land. Their efforts failed utterly.

Taken before the Japanese Consul, my wife and children were subjected to a long interrogation and brought back to the ship, which sailed that evening for Shanghai, whence it returned to Tsingtao three days later. Once more the Chinese authorities protested, and once more their plea fell on deaf ears. Mrs. Vespa and the two children were taken back to Manchuria. The same evening the Chief of the Japanese Consular Police and two agents came to the hotel where I was living and tried to kidnap me, on the pretext that the Japanese Consul wished to speak to me. I at once informed the Chief of the Chinese Police who, to frustrate any Japanese trick, put at my disposal four Chinese policemen who kept good care of me till the day after when they saw me safely on board a Chinese aeroplane bound for Shanghai.

SHANGHAI, A HAVEN WITHOUT REST

I arrived in Shanghai on September 12, 1936, and immediately went to work to have my family released. First, I wrote a long letter to my Chief, in which I explained the reason for my departure, assured him that I had no intention of making any adverse publicity and that my one desire was to have my family with me. Then I wrote to General Ando, Chief of the Japanese Military Mission in Harbin, very much along the same lines. Copies of these two letters were handed to the Japanese Ambassador in China. I received no answer.

On the 19th I received the following telegram from Dairen: "Family arrested by Dairen Police for Fotopulo affair. If you do not surrender here in ten days they will be deported Harbin. Send me 500 yen. Wife penniless, Luraschi."

Mr. Luraschi is an Italian merchant of Dairen.

On September 20, *Domei*, the Japanese News Agency, issued to all the papers of Shanghai a Dairen dispatch which stated that my family had been arrested because I had run away from Harbin with money belonging to two Italians, Paduvani and Delmissier, my two associates in a theatrical enterprise. On that very same day, the *Domei* Agency issued to the Harbin papers a news dispatch which stated that my wife and children had been arrested because I had left Harbin without paying a debt of \$25,000 I owed to the Greek Fotopulo.

A few days later, Mr. Paduvani, my former partner, in answer to a letter from Mr. Premet, my Shanghai attorney, wrote that "he had not made any such accusation against me for the very reason that there was absolutely no motive for him to do so; and that, as to my other associate, Mr. Delmissier, he could not possibly have accused me, because he had died five months before".

Once more, on September 28, I wrote to General Ando in Harbin, and warned him that if the *Domei* Agency again issued false dispatches concerning me, I should be obliged, in self-defence, to make public statements which would not be to the liking of the Japanese authorities. From then on, in spite of the fact that English and Russian papers wrote many protests against the Japanese Military authorities for holding my family as hostages, the *Domei* Agency showed no more sign of life.

Towards the middle of October, friends of mine in Harbin informed me that the notorious Nakamura, together with the two Russians who had murdered Mr. Chapovetsky, had secretly left for Shanghai. True enough, a few days later I observed these two blackguards sneaking about in the vicinity of the house where I lived in the Rue Molière, in the French Concession. Some friends of mine stopped them and told them that if they were seen again in the neighbourhood they would get the same medicine they had given Chapovetsky.

Nakamura lived in the Japanese Consulate General, 25 Whangpoo Road. I had him shadowed, and thus

surprised him one day as he was walking out of a Japanese bank on the Bund.

When I stood in front of him and blocked his way, his natural yellow colour turned to saffron. Nervously, he protested that he was in Shanghai on other business and that he had no intention of bothering me in the least. I gave him the same warning my friends had given the Tauz brothers.

Two days later, I received a visit from a Japanese who told me that he had been employed by his superiors to come to an agreement with me. . . . On condition that I gave them the names of the Chinese and Russians who formed part of the organization against the Japanese in Manchoukuo, my family was to be allowed to leave. I told him that such a thing was an impossibility, that not only did I not know of such names, but that in my opinion such an organization only existed in the minds of the Japanese authorities. Furthermore, I warned him that if my family was not set free promptly, I was going to publish what I knew about the Japanese outrages in Manchuria.

"That does not worry us one bit," he said. "Whatever you write we shall deny, and no one will believe you." We got nowhere.

In early November a certain Consul advised me to write to Viscount Motono, who stood high in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo. I followed his advice. In the meantime, Mr. Premet, my attorney, made a number of visits to the Japanese Consulate General, but without any success; they simply told

him that they had nothing to do with Manchoukuo. Viscount Motono replied with a very nice letter expressing his deepest sympathy in my trouble, but stating that there was no way of taking effective action in Tokyo.

And all this time I was terribly worried about Mrs. Vespa's condition. I knew that her delicate health would be seriously impaired in the hands of her captors. Now, after all my efforts, legal and peaceful, to have her set free had failed, I decided to resort to other means.

I wrote to a friend of mine in Harbin and requested him to look up a certain individual whom I trusted and tell him to come to Shanghai right away. This trusted messenger arrived on November 10, and was on his way back to Harbin the next day carrying with him a letter from me to Colonel C. of the Irregulars, in which I asked that he do something to save my family, or at least to get my wife out of prison, where she was slowly dying.

Arrived in Harbin, this messenger lost no time in getting in touch with C.'s agent, who informed him that C. was somewhere in the interior and hard to find. He directed him to Muling to another agent who might give more exact information as to C.'s whereabouts. This my messenger did and, after several days of search, succeeded in finding the Colonel and handed him my letter.

Two days later, November 23, Colonel C. with a strong band attacked Hailin, a small town 60 kilometres from Muling, and captured 31 Japanese,

nine of whom were women. On the 25th, he sent word to the Japanese Military Authorities in Harbin, informing them that he held 31 Japanese hostages, and that he was ready to give them their liberty on condition that the Vespa family be permitted to leave Manchuria safely. To this the Chief of the Japanese Military Mission answered that he would have to ask for instructions from Tokyo.

On December 3, Colonel C. demanded that while awaiting an answer from Tokyo, the Military Mission allow Mrs. Vespa to go and live with her mother and children, and that in case this was refused he would shoot half of the Japanese hostages.

The following day Mrs. Vespa left her prison for the Hotel Siberia.

Negotiations dragged on. The Japanese made all sorts of propositions. Instead of letting my family go, they offered to free two bandit prisoners for each Japanese hostage. But Colonel C. was unyielding, and he won in the end. Then came the difficulty of knowing how the Japanese hostages were to be set free, and how my family was to leave Manchuria. The Japanese insisted on their side being freed first, and Colonel C. held a contrary opinion. Finally it was agreed that half the hostages would be allowed to go free when my family had reached Dairen, and the other half when they had arrived in Shanghai.

The agreement was kept and after six months of suffering my dear ones arrived in Shanghai on February 25, 1937.

A month after their arrival a Japanese, called Amato, came to see me, representing himself as acting on behalf of the Japanese authorities, who, having heard that I intended to write a book on Manchuria, were requesting me not to do so, because Tokyo had looked into my case and found out that very serious injustices had been committed against me and my family by the Japanese authorities of Manchoukuo, that I was to be indemnified for the loss of my property, that they would return to me what they had confiscated from me, and the four years' salary due me would be paid. It was now only a question of waiting until Tokyo had finished the investigation.

In the early part of June, Mr. Hayton Fleet, Director of the Fleet Telegraphic Agency of Shanghai, informed me that Mr. Charles Bishop Kinney had arrived from Manchuria and wanted to see me. Mr. Kinney's father is an American of Danish extraction and his mother Hawaiian. His wife was Japanese, and he holds an official position in the publicity department of the South Manchurian Railway.

While in Shanghai he lived in the Broadway Mansions, one of the largest hotels.

Before calling on him I found out that many Japanese officials and certain Russians often paid him visits.

From the lobby I called him on the guest phone. He asked me to come up; I requested that he come down.

As we sat in the reception room, he was very profuse in expressing his deep grief at the disgraceful and

shameful treatment accorded me . . . he informed me that various Japanese officials, among whom were Sace and Shoinigi, had been severely punished for the ill-treatment of my family . . . that the Japanese authorities were conducting an investigation, and that I should be rewarded for all my losses.

Then suddenly he said:

"I have heard that you are writing a book on the four and a half years you spent with the Japanese in Manchuria. I cannot believe it; you are too smart to do such a foolish thing. Although you are a naturalized Chinese, you are Italian by birth, and Italy and Japan are good friends. If you write against Japan you write against Italy."

"Mr. Kinney," I replied, "the Japanese have compelled me to work four and half years for them for almost nothing. In return they have confiscated property of mine worth at least \$50,000, and they have held my family as hostages for six months, three months of which my wife spent in a dungeon. Have you ever heard of a red-blooded man allowing himself to be robbed, insulted and outraged without in some way reacting? Japan's promises have no more meaning for me; their threats do not scare me in the least. I have a task and duty to perform. Nothing can make me change my programme. I have in Japan's name and under the compulsion of the Japanese been party to too many frightful acts to leave my conscience free. The least I can do to atone for my part, however unwilling, in the crimes of my superiors, the least I

can do for those who remain under the most barbarous oppression in history, is to tell the world the truth, that is my reply."

MY WIFE TELLS HER STORY

Within a few hours of my husband's departure for Dairen by plane, I had made arrangements to follow him next day by train. I was thankful to think that he was out of danger and had no fear for myself. His departure would not be known for 24 hours. Accordingly on the following morning my daughter Genevieve, aged 14, and my son Italo, aged 8, and I took the train for Dairen. We had an anxious day waiting before we could go on board the S.S. *Tsingtao Maru* bound for Shanghai.

Towards 2 p.m., a Japanese entered our cabin, representing himself to be an officer of the Japanese police, by the name of Shoinigi. He asked to see my passport and showed me a telegram just received from Harbin which contained an order to arrest me and bring me back to Manchoukuo, where I was to be kept until my husband's return. Then he made a thorough search of our baggage and took everything he could find of value: 1,000 yen, 665 old Russian gold rubles, 345 U.S. dollars, two diamond rings, two brooches, two necklaces, a sapphire ring, two gold wrist-watches and miscellaneous gold objects. When I refused to hand him over my wedding-ring he struck two hard blows on my shoulder and called me a swine in Russian.

My children, not being able to control their anger at the sight of such brutality, threw themselves upon him crying and pleading.

Calmly he put his loot in his pocket-book and left the cabin.

While he had been busy searching, my daughter, profiting by the moment when he was stooping over my trunk, managed to hide in her corsage \$390 which belonged to her. A little later, on the voyage, I entrusted that sum to a fellow-passenger, Mr. Baerensprung, a Shanghai attorney, but a Japanese spy spotted us and Shoinigi took the money away from our friend.

When our ship docked at Tsingtao, my husband came on board, but before the Japanese police could notice him, Italo cleverly warned him that we were all arrested and that he should get off quickly. At 10 a.m. that same day we were driven to the Japanese Consulate General where a Japanese Colonel told me that if my husband did not return to Manchuria we should all be taken back to Harbin.

I protested against my arrest which I called arbitrary and illegal, especially considering the fact that Tsingtao was Chinese territory, "You are not arrested, madame, you are our guest," said the Colonel. Then I expressed my just indignation at having been struck by Shoinigi, and the Colonel turned to the latter, saying in Japanese (which my children understood):

"You have made a serious mistake; this woman is not Russian, and, according to the telegram from

Harbin, she is a highly educated woman who speaks several languages and is a newspaper correspondent. We might get into trouble . . . you had better beg her pardon." Shoinigi made a deep bow at me and said in English: "I am very sorry to have struck the lady, I beg your pardon, I thought you were Russian."

We were taken back on board and placed in a third-class cabin. When the ship sailed for Shanghai that night, our names did not appear on the list of passengers. During the two days that the *Tsingtao Maru* stayed in Shanghai we were kept locked in that cabin. Once more in Tsingtao the Chinese authorities came on board but were not allowed to see us. Back in Dairen, we were taken to the Japanese Gendarmerie Command and left 24 hours without food. After much pleading, I obtained permission to telephone to Mr. Luraschi, an Italian businessman, who brought us something to eat, and whom I requested to send a telegram to my husband in Tsingtao advising him that we were arrested and without a cent. It was then that the Gendarmerie told Mr. Luraschi that my husband was accused of not having paid a sum of money allegedly owed to Fotopulo.

Mr. Vespa received the telegram in Shanghai and immediately wired \$400 to Mr. Luraschi for me; the Japanese forced him to give them the money, and I never got a cent of it.

I had been kept in prison eight days when the Chief of the Political Police, Sace, and the agent Zavaroff

arrived from Harbin. Both took me and my children back to Harbin where we were thrown in a filthy cell of the Criminal Department. Two days later Genevieve and Italo were taken to my mother, who lived in Harbin.

One week passed and I was brought before Sace for interrogation as follows:

“Do you know if your husband has connections with the Chinese Kuomintang? . . . Is he a Jew? . . . Is he a Mason? . . . Did he have any relations with the bandits? . . . What did he tell you about the Kaspe case? . . . ”

To all such questions I answered that my husband never discussed Service matters with me; that he never brought any letters or documents to the house.

Nine days more went by and I was again taken to Sace's office where there was also a Japanese major whose name I have forgotten, and who spoke good English. The major asked me:

“Why was your husband so interested in seeing that the kidnappers of Kaspe should receive such heavy sentences? . . . Who gave him orders to exert himself so much in that direction? . . . Was it the Jews? . . . Or the Masonic Lodge? . . . We have been informed that during the last 18 months your husband has received \$200,000 through a foreign bank, and that the money was used to pay bandits for the blowing up of Japanese trains. Who were the former Chinese officials whom your husband used to visit at night in the monastery? . . . Did he ever go out

disguised as a woman? . . . We know that he belongs to an English lodge. . . . Did he ever go to the Masonic Lodge of Harbin?"

I answered that I knew nothing of all these allegations.

"Your husband, in Shanghai, is writing against us Japanese and against Manchoukuo," the major continued. "You write to him and tell him that if he wishes to see his family again he must not write a word of what he knows."

To this I replied: "The best way for you to make my husband say nothing is to set me free and let me go to Shanghai. I won't write to him about your threats."

"You are a very obstinate woman," said Sace. "We Japanese know how to make stubborn people talk. . . ."

In a few minutes a Russian woman was brought in . . . a terrible sight. Not a hair on her head . . . all her fingernails had been torn off.

"See," said Sace, "she refused to talk and we pulled her hair out tuft by tuft . . . and look at the nice manicure she has."

The poor young woman looked so appalling that I thought I would faint. But I pulled myself together, and replied:

"You can torture me, too, but remember that my husband is free . . . and if you know him as you say . . . you will be careful about what you do to me."

I was taken back to the filthy cell.

During the horrible days of my detention in prison, I saw many Chinese and Russians taken out of their cells in perfect physical condition and brought back on stretchers with broken, tortured limbs. I managed to speak to a few of the victims and take their names.

One was a sixteen-years-old Chinese girl by the name of Han Yui-yi, who had already spent six months in prison. She had been tortured several times; twice, her feet had been burned with electric irons, and her eyelids with matches. She was still there when I left. Another Chinese, Mrs. Tso Yi-man, 27 years old, had her feet riddled with bullets to make her talk, and as she kept on protesting that she had nothing to confess, they scattered her brains with a shot at close range. A Soviet Russian woman, Mrs. Klaudia Markovna Zaharchenko, was tortured every day for 40 days in every possible way; every finger of both hands was crushed, all her hair was pulled out by the roots, her eyelashes were burned with matches; she was hung by her feet for hours, then by her bruised hands. In the end, when they became convinced that she knew nothing, they let her go.

At the Soviet Hospital where she was taken, she was told that she would be a crippled invalid for the rest of her life.

Time and again I was threatened with torture if I did not write to my husband begging him to return to Manchuria. Why they didn't carry out the threat I have never discovered.

At the end of my first month's incarceration, due to

starvation and trying to sleep on the bare, damp ground without any covering, I had lost 25 pounds, and had begun to have frequent fainting fits. The prison doctor, Mr. Yasinsky, told the Chief-of-Police that if they did not treat me better I would die. In answer to the doctor's warning I was allowed to receive from home some blankets and a pillow, and twice a week only, some food.

On the morning of the eighty-eighth day of my imprisonment I was told that I was free and could go and live with my family in the Hotel Siberia, but that I could not leave Harbin.

As I left the prison Sace told me:

"You write to your husband and tell him not to make any scandal in the Shanghai papers. Tell him also that if he has friends among the bandits of Manchoukuo, we have agents in Shanghai and in any part of the world where he may go."

I remained three months in the Hotel Siberia, and Sace came to visit me several times. He was now very polite and solicitous about my state of health, always insisting that I should write to my husband assuring him that I was feeling well, that the Japanese were treating me fine, and begging him to be sure not to write anything against the Japanese or against Manchoukuo.

On February 18, 1937, I was called to the office of the Director-General of the Police. I was still so weak that Genevieve, my daughter, had to accompany me. As we had been told that the director, whose name was Arai, spoke only Japanese, Baron Mazuno's

daughter came with us as interpreter. After having requested us to be seated the Chief said:

"I have the pleasure to announce to you that you and your children may leave Manchuria whenever you like. When you arrive in Shanghai tell your husband that the fact of his having been forced to work for the Japanese does not absolve him for having betrayed us by allying himself with the bandits."

I asked to have the money and jewellery which the Japanese police officer had taken from my cabin on the *Tsingtao Maru* returned, but I was told that they did not know anything about that in Harbin.

Finally, we left Harbin for Dairen on February 21. All our friends were delighted to hear the news, but did not dare to see us off at the station, fearing that they might get into trouble themselves. Several sent down flowers to place in our compartment on the train. The Japanese gendarme officer, learning for whom the flowers were intended, had them thrown out, and the unfortunate youth from the Hotel Moderne who had been asked to deliver two bouquets to us was slapped across the face, both he and the bouquets being pushed out of the railway coach.

On February 23 we sailed from Dairen on the *Dairen Maru* for Shanghai. That same Japanese police officer, Shoinigi, who had robbed us six months before was on board; I asked him to return me my property, but with a sarcastic smile, he said:

“You ought to thank God that you are leaving Manchoukuo alive after what your husband has done to us. Don’t forget to tell him that he must not think that he has licked us yet. Japan will get him just the same.”

EPILOGUE

“GOD WILL PROTECT you. He will help you to get back to China safely. He will not permit any misfortune to overtake your family.”

These are the words one of my best Chinese friends addressed to me. He was a gentleman of the old school, sturdy as the oak, the soul of honour.

One hour before, I had been secretly informed that the Japanese Military authorities had decreed my arrest and I had come to say good-bye to this old friend. As I stood before him, both his hands clasping my shoulders, his eyes looking straight into mine, he said:

“My friend, I am an old man now. There is nothing more that I can do for my people and for my beloved Manchuria. But you are strong, and you know! You are the only white man who, for nearly five years, has been an eye-witness of the abominable atrocities which the Japanese have committed against the Chinese people of Manchuria.

“No one is better qualified than you to describe the crimes and brutal deeds which this horde of armed barbarians has committed against a peaceful and labouring people. If, as I hope and believe will be the case, you succeed in returning safely to China, you must do all in your power to let the world know the truth concerning the tragedy of Manchuria. The truth

undistorted by interested News Agencies, undisguised by a Press under the control of Japanese money.

“The naked truth . . . Do you promise?”

“I promise—the whole truth.”

“*Remember!*” This was his last word to me.

Months passed . . . six months of arduous effort to free my family from the clutches of the Japanese Military authorities.

The confiscation of all my property in Harbin . . . the unrelenting persecution of the Japanese authorities, who stopped at nothing to make my life miserable, even in Shanghai . . . the hard struggle for existence in the face of odds capable of testing to the utmost limit the mettle of the strongest heart . . . all prevented me from finding the time to fulfil the solemn promise made to my old Chinese friend whose face is ever vivid before my inner vision, whose eyes I can still feel fixed upon mine, and whose gentle voice still resounds in my ears: “*Remember!*”

And now I have completed my task. This book has been written in fulfilment of my promise to make the real truth known, to stamp upon the forehead of Japanese Militarism the burning brand of Cain; to expose before the conscience of the entire world the rapacious officers of the Japanese Army; to show the unfathomable abyss of infamy into which these savages in uniform are capable of descending; and,

in the name of humanity, civilization and justice, to tell of the strangling degradation to which the people of Manchuria have been subjected under their crushing rule.

I have here related nothing but actual facts. Facts which I have seen with my own eyes. Events in which I was almost always an involuntary participant. To many readers, the recital of these facts must have seemed like frightful, unbelievable nightmares. Possibly so, to those who have no intimate knowledge of the Japanese; but consistently natural to those whose experience has brought them into close touch with Japanese militarism.

The world's "knowledge" of Japan would form a bulky volume of misinformation. For much of this we have England to thank. At the time before and after the Portsmouth Treaty of 1906 when the British Lion, inspired by fear and prompted by ambition, felt compelled to pull out the claws of the Russian Bear and knock off his front teeth, the nations of the earth were made almost dizzy by the din of Britannic propaganda in praise of that wonderfully brave, industrious and progressive little people of the New Japan. Most of us are still wallowing in the sawdust of that thirty-year-old monumental dummy. British Tories helped create this myth of a heroic Japan; and behind the myth has matured a monster Frankenstein that threatens those who helped to create it.

Japan, as well as all things Japanese, as the propagandists have described them, are comparable to a mirage. A bubble, beautiful to contemplate under the

deceiving light effects; proving but an illusion when you advance toward it. The closer you approach, the more appalling the sham and the emptiness.

Their kow-towing politeness is but a thin veneer; their courtesy a sheet of cellophane. With the Japanese samurai all means are permissible as long as they lead to the end in view. To them it is smart to lie, to cheat, to deceive, to intrigue, to be double-faced, hypocritical, provided it pays or brings power. It is in their nature to be false. I have never met anyone that has once come in contact with their official authorities or military officers, who did not afterwards feel a profound contempt for their ridiculous boorishness. In this respect the Japanese have achieved a world reputation.

And it is for such people that the civilized nations have made possible the use of modern armaments!

Whoever combines the word civilization with the word Japanese militarism produces a fictitious, non-existent compound. Everything they have of culture, arts, ethics, religion, has been either borrowed, copied or imitated, as likewise all they have achieved in the field of commerce and industry. Spiritually, intellectually and materially Japan is led by a band of unconscionable plagiarists.

Japanese literature is a transplanted Chinese product. But whereas the latter is an inexhaustible treasure of philosophy, morality and common sense, the former is but a disfigured parody, an incoherent mass of fabulous nonsense founded on the myth of the divine origin of the imperial family. And what

can be said of the morality of a nation that sells hundreds of thousands of its young girls to slave-traders who supply most of the brothels in the Far East? Where else but in Japan can a young virgin be farmed out to brothel owners under a time contract of years, return home and marry as though nothing had happened?

This rapacious pack of wolves has been allowed to roam about the earth unmolested far too long. You see them masquerading in top hats and morning-coats around all the capitals of the earth, every one of them a devoted emissary of the pack.

As this is being written they have 1,000,000 soldiers and huge quantities of war materials in China; millions of innocent peoples are being slaughtered, milliards of dollars worth of property destroyed. But the real torture and rape of a people is just beginning. If the Japanese succeed in enslaving China, as they have enslaved Manchuria, that system of loot, pillage, murder, kidnapping, brigandage, racketeering and degradation of a great people, which they call "the way of the gods", will then proceed in earnest. It will follow an even more vicious pattern than the one which these pages describe, and which, for years, I witnessed with my own eyes.

Let the world be warned before it is too late.

The real Japan must be exposed in all the horrible nakedness of its preposterous self.

All the names I have mentioned are real. Those which I have omitted are of persons still living in Manchuria and within reach of Japanese revenge.

In applying myself to this task, I have thought of only two things: to serve human civilization and to keep faith with the people of Manchuria according to my old Chinese friend's wish. My conscience at last can rest. Bidding the Far East farewell, I can still face life with hope in the new world that lies ahead of me.

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