

# Incident of The War

I have received from a Russian sailor, recently returned from Harbin, some hitherto unpublished details of the execution of the two Japanese spies arrested by some Cossacks as they were about to blow up a bridge on the Manchurian Railroad, writes M. Pravdine in Le Petit Temps, of Paris.

My informant is a young man who was severely wounded during the bombardment of Port Arthur. He obtained permission to go to Italy to convalesce from his wound, but before his departure he made a short stay with some officers, relations of his, at Harbin, where he arrived just at the time when the Japanese were arrested, taken in the act, condemned and executed.

"You were present at the execution of the two Japanese?" I asked him. "Alas! I saw them die," answered the young sailor.

And so I looked at him with astonishment as he hastened to add: "Do not take me for an anarchist. I am, on the contrary an ardent patriot, and I eagerly longed for the war with Japan; I longed to see the Japanese exterminated, and I desired that we might be able to dictate terms of peace to them at Tokio. But, like all my comrades, on seeing those two Japanese officers die by the bullets of our soldiers, courageously sacrificing their lives for their country, I could not but think their execution cruel."

"Were you present at the trial?" "I saw the two spies arrested; I was present at the trial, and at the execution; I can give you all the details of it, for the dreadful spectacle haunts me, and I cannot forget it."

And in half an hour the wounded officer, pausing only when the pain of his right knee, wounded by the bursting of a Japanese shell, and from which the splinters had not yet been removed, became too keen, narrated to me the following events: "I can give my testimony that, when the two prisoners were brought into the little room of the Chinese fansa, transformed into a courtroom by the Harbin council of war, both the judges and the public—the latter composed almost exclusively of officers—could not avoid manifesting openly their enthusiastic admiration for them.

"And indeed, those men were actuated by the most noble sentiments; they had resolved, as patriots, to make use of any means to assure victory to their side, and, as soldiers, under superior orders, they went to meet certain death.

"The trial took the ordinary course; the arguments on either side offered nothing of interest, the prisoners having loudly, and not without patriotic pride, assumed the responsibility of the crime of which they were accused.

"They gave their names and their titles without the slightest tremor of the voice:

"Tchomo Jokoka, forty-four years of age, colonel of the General Staff, graduated with honors from the Military High School of Jeddo," said the elder of the prisoners, a short, stout man, with a strong face. "Teisko Jokki, thirty-one years of age, captain, attached to the General Staff," said his companion, who was taller and more slender in figure than the other, with angular features and a very dark complexion, casting a slightly disdainful glance around the courtroom.

"Buddhist," he added, after a moment's silence. "And you, colonel," asked the president of the council "you are of the same religion as your fellow prisoner?"

"No, president; I am a Christian. And observing the astonishment produced on every one by this declaration, he hastened to add:

"But I am a true Japanese, born of Japanese parents. Only in my youth I was captivated by the gentle teachings of Christ, and I became a convert to Lutheranism."

"Col. Jokoka spoke English, and it was a subject of King Edward, an employe of the Russo-Chinese Bank, who translated to the court the declarations of the prisoner.

"Capt. Jokki was interrogated by means of a Chinese interpreter.

"The accused were shown the explosive materials which had been found upon them; they did not attempt to defend themselves, or to deny in any particular the statements of the Cossacks who had arrested them.

"The interpreters translated to the prisoners the military prosecutor's speech, asking the punishment of death by hanging.

"I watched the countenances of the two men, and I could not observe in them the slightest indication of fear. They remained impassive; the painful working of their minds was betrayed by no sign.

"The counsel of the two Japanese asked that the sentence of death should be commuted to imprisonment with hard labor; the accused men having made a complete confession.

"The two officers remained un-

moved by their counsel's warm appeal; they did not utter a word.

"Since the law allowed of a lighter punishment we all expected a commutation of the sentence.

"The deliberations lasted for half an hour, and the court condemned the two officers to the maximum penalty, the scaffold.

"Col. Jokoka and Capt. Jokki heard their sentence with as detached an air as if it had concerned indifferent persons. It is probable that if the sentence had been less severe they would have shown some surprise.

"The sentence was to be executed on the following morning at one o'clock; all that was waited for was a despatch from Gen. Kouropatkin confirming it.

"The telegram arrived promptly; the generalissimo approved the condemnation, but spared the Japanese officers the humiliation of the scaffold, and granted them the grace of being shot, according to a soldier's death.

"I was present when the commandant read to the prisoners Gen. Kouropatkin's order.

"It is well," responded Col. Jokoka. "I am ready."

"The captain said nothing; his expression, that became every moment more disdainful, showed his indifference to the manner of punishment reserved for him.

"Col. Jokoka asked permission to write to his family; then he embraced the captain.

"I die more tranquil than you, colonel," said the latter.

"Why do you say that?"

"I have fulfilled my duty to my country and to the Deity. You have done yours to your country only."

"What do you mean, captain?"

"I have reflected a good deal on what you have said to me about Christianity. You are always vaunting its superiority. Well, I think you are not in accord with Christ; while I have nothing to reproach myself with."

"Perhaps you are right, captain. And I, I have a favor to ask of you. Give me your authorization to perform the first truly Christian act which it has been given me to perform during my life. You know I have a number of Chinese banknotes, to the value in all of about a thousand Russian rubles. Well, I desire to send this money to the commandant, to be given to the Russian Red Cross for the poor wounded among our enemies. Do you consent to this gift?" Jokki reflected an instant.

"I have always had a great affection for you, colonel, and if it will give you pleasure, I am willing that you should give this money to our enemies."

"When the commandant came for the prisoners, Col. Jokoka gave him a bundle of white banknotes with red signs, saying:

"There are here about a thousand rubles, and we beg you to give them to the Russian Red Cross."

"But would it not be better for me to send this money to your families?"

"Oh, no," cried both the condemned men together. "The Mikado will not forget our wives and children."

"Do not refuse us this satisfaction," said Jokoka. "Distribute this money among the Russian wounded."

"The commandant again urged the officers to let all they should leave behind them be sent to Japan.

"Jokki appeared to hesitate for a moment; he looked at his companion in misfortune, who reiterated his desire to make this compensation for the evil he had done on this earth, and the captain bent his head in acquiescence with the wish of his brother in arms.

"The Russian commandant yielded, and asked the two Japanese if there was anything in which he could be of service to them.

"I should like to have a bath, if it were possible," said the Buddhist.

"After that we shall be at your orders."

"A bathroom being an object of luxury unknown in Harbin, the commandant caused tubs of water to be brought and ordered the sentinels to go to one side so that the unfortunate men might be able to perform their ablutions at their ease.

"The want of a bathtub was felt much more keenly by the Buddhist than by the Christian colonel, whose desire was to see a priest before going to execution. As there was no Lutheran pastor, the chaplain of the regiment was sent to him. The colonel begged the priest to read to him the Sermon on the Mount. The chaplain read in Slav, and Jokoka followed the text in his Japanese prison. When they came to the words: 'For if ye love them which love you what reward have ye? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others?' he closed the book, folded his hands and cast down his eyes for a moment while his lips moved.

"Jokki," he said, "you are right; Bible which they had left him in you will die more tranquilly than I, for I have never felt more keenly than now how little in accordance my life has been with the teachings of Jesus."

"The vehicle which was to convey the two men to the place of execution was already waiting. Outside surged the crowd, the hideous crowd of the lowest class, everywhere the same; idle tradesmen, business men come to the extreme Orient to avail themselves of any chance windfall.

"The two Japanese officers arrived

at the place of execution, impassive as ever. Still, it could be seen that the colonel was a prey to painful reflection.

"Both of them lighted cigarettes and asked that they should not be bound to the stakes. The commandant took two handkerchiefs from his pocket and handed them to the Japanese officers.

"The colonel bound his eyes himself; Jokki disdainfully refused to do so, saying he desired to see how they manoeuvred.

"A dozen soldiers were posted in front of the colonel, a dozen others in front of the captain.

"If you have pity for these two unhappy men," said the commandant to the platoon detailed for the execution, "aim straight at the heart—death will then be instantaneous."

"The soldiers fired.

"Jokoka went to the left; Jokki, without having winked an eyelash, fell forward.

"Both had been killed instantly; our good soldiers had had pity for them."

My companion punctuated these last words with a groan. He had involuntarily moved his wounded knee.

"Confounded Japanese!" he cried. "In what way have they dressed my wounded knee. But no matter. That does not prevent my regretting the death of Jokoka and Jokki."

And seeing this victim of Japanese bullets so strongly moved by the death of the two spies of the enemy, I recalled the words of the Russian painter Verestchagin, that the valor of both combatants was the most serious obstacle to the war. And, indeed, why kill one another when either side esteems the other?

## GLEAMS OF LIGHT.

Bits of Information from the World's Four Corners.

In Mexico hot tea is served in glasses without milk.

The French army is three times as large as it was in 1870.

The soldiers of the Mexican army are recruited from the prisons.

The average number of billiard balls cut from the tusks of an elephant is ten.

Soldiers in the Italian army are allowed cigars as part of their daily rations.

Ten pounds of good hay will keep a horse alive as long as 50 pounds of green clover.

The British Museum Library increases at an average rate of 100 volumes a day.

Russia takes nearly half the agricultural machinery that the United States export.

The Nile is the only river in the world that flows 1,500 miles without a tributary.

The albatross has been known to follow a ship for two months without alighting.

In Buenos Ayres horses are so plentiful that even the beggars beg on horseback.

Only twelve men in a hundred have dark eyes, as compared with twenty women.

Almost every town of any importance in Germany has an opera house of its own.

The thickness of the film of a soap-bubble is the 2,500,000th part of an inch.

There are 3,000 words used alike in French and English without variation in spelling.

Lake Baikal, in Siberia, is the deepest lake in the world. It is 4,500 feet deep.

Matches to the value of \$125,000,000 are annually consumed throughout the world.

The surface of the moon is about as great as that of Asia and Australia combined.

So strong is the Bank of England notepaper that a single sheet will lift a weight of 100 pounds.

Most of the railway stations in Russia are about two miles from the towns they serve.

An elephant can detect the presence of a human being at a distance of a thousand yards.

The British Post Office employs nearly 30,000 women, among whom are over 5,000 postmistresses.

The starfish has no nose, but the whole of its underside is endowed with the sense of smell.

The Chilean officer uses his sword as a walking-stick, and even has it on whilst bicycling.

There are more words in the English language than in any four foreign languages combined.

In all their wars, the British have won the splendid average of 82 per cent. of the battles.

The Bank of England has usually about \$125,000,000 to \$150,000,000 of its notes in circulation.

The longest canal in the world is the Imperial Canal, of China, which is over 1,000 miles long.

Not until Henry VIII's time were raspberries, strawberries, or cherries cultivated in England.

Many Chinese temples have windows made from the white mother-of-pearl found in oyster-shells.

The eel has two separate hearts. One beats sixty, the other one hundred and sixty times a minute.

The lyre bird of Australia is the biggest song bird in the world. It is nearly as large as the pheasant.

In many villages of the Tyrol the use of red parasols is prohibited, as they irritate the grazing cattle.

In marching, soldiers take seventy-five steps per minute; quick marching, 108; and in charging, 150 steps.

## CANADA'S NEW GOVERNOR

CHARACTER AND HISTORY OF EARL GREY.

The New Governor-General Is No Stranger to This Country.

Earl Grey has been appointed to succeed the Earl of Minto as Governor-General of Canada, says the London Times. Although with the exception of his short period of service as administrator of Rhodesia, Lord Grey has not filled any public post either at home or in the colonies, he has made sufficient mark to make this appointment welcome both in this country and in Canada. It is an interesting one on personal grounds. It is equally interesting from the historical point of view. The connection between Canada and the Greys may be said to date back at least three-quarters of a century. The second Earl Grey, the Reform Premier, was not in office during the Canadian crisis of 1837-39, but he was profoundly interested in it, especially because his second son, Colonel (afterwards General Sir Charles) Grey, was sent there in command of the 71st regiment. A more important connection between Canada and the family of the ex-premier was established when his daughter, the wife of Lord Durham, went out with her husband, the author (with Charles Buller) of that famous report which was so hotly debated at the time, and which has counted for so much in the political history of Canada. The Colonel Grey mentioned above, who afterwards became so well known as the private secretary first of Prince Albert and then of Queen Victoria, was the father of the new Governor-General. Another link with the colony and with the empire is to be found in the last Earl, who was secretary for the colonies from 1848 to 1852, and who from that time to the end of his long life remained the sleepless critic of his successors on both sides. Mansard and the columns of The Times alike bear witness to the third Earl's

ENDURING ACTIVITY;

while as those who remember him are fond of recalling, he dissented as often from the policy of Liberal as from that of Conservative secretaries of state. As far as home politics are concerned, the present Earl has to a certain extent the same disposition. Party leaders have never been able to count on him with complete certainty. He has the cross-bench mind to perfection. If we remember aright, his last speech in the house of lords—on the position of the crown agents—was directed against the policy which, in the end, was adopted by the government. Nobody, however, will think the worse of Lord Grey, for that, or of Mr. Lyttleton for having gone outside the ranks of the thick-and-thin supporters of the government to find a Governor-General. The essential thing is that Lord Grey is a believer in the imperial mission of Great Britain, and in the maintenance of the tie which so happily binds together the different parts of the empire.

The new Governor-General is no stranger to Canada and the Canadians. Twice at least he has visited the Dominion; and, as it happens, he is brother-in-law of the very successful out-going Governor, Lord Minto. It may be added without indiscretion that no small part of Lord Minto's well-deserved popularity is due to his wife, Lord Grey's sister, who early won the hearts of the Canadians by her kindness and their admiration by the beauty of her skating. Whether the new Governor-General or the ladies of his family share this last accomplishment we cannot say; but it is easy to understand that a nation of skaters, like the Canadians, thinks all the better of its chiefs for possessing it. As to Lord Grey's more serious qualifications he has shown his interest in colonial work in a very practical way. In 1896-97 he was administrator of Rhodesia, taving the post at the critical moment which followed

THE JAMESON RAID;

and since his return he has been a director of the British South Africa Company. Of course, the problems to be solved in Rhodesia are not the same as those which arise in a country like Canada, which has been settled for more than a century; but there are, nevertheless, certain analogies. The pioneer work of Rhodesia bears some relation to the work that has to be done in the great un-cultivated regions of the Northwest, though the one stretches away towards the tropics and the other towards the Pole. It will count for at least something that the representative of the sovereign in Canada has had a hand in the actual working of a vast region lately opened to the energies of Englishmen. As to the problems nearer at hand, the problems which are common to town life all over the world, Lord Grey may claim to have felt a life long interest in them. He has long been a public man, though not a party man. From the early movement in church reform to the more recent one in favor of the Public House Trust, many—perhaps too many—causes have attracted him, and at some of them he has worked hard. Nobody ever did much without enthusiasm of some kind; and Lord Grey's has always been in the right direction, and has been supported by an advocacy that always attracted sympathy.

Under the steady influence of a great responsibility, Lord Grey may be trusted to concentrate his activities upon the right objects. In that

cess, we may expect for him a success not inferior to that which has attended his brother-in-law, Lord Minto. He combines two essential qualities—those of an earnest belief in the empire and of an eminently conciliatory temper. He will hold the balance even between parties, and will also, we doubt not, be able to maintain with firmness the position that a Governor-General of Canada, as the representative of the crown, is

BOUND TO MAINTAIN.

He will be liked and respected by French-Canadians and by English, Roman Catholics and by Protestants. Moreover, he will maintain cordial relations with the United States, which he knows well; while at the same time he will know how to treat those petulant demonstrations of a separatist spirit which now and then in a few obscure quarters, claim a certain notice. Moreover, his African experiences will lead him to look with sympathy upon those movements of expansion towards the Northwest, which are such an important feature of modern Canadian life. He has what the professed politician lacks, the gift of imagination; he realizes the greatness of Canada's future and the possibilities that await development. Regions as large as states are ready for the plow; vast rivers and vast forests are asking to be made serviceable to man. Much has been done of late years to develop Canada as a field for British emigrants, and no Canadian problem will appeal more strongly than this to the mind of Lord Grey. If he can succeed in carrying this movement still further, and in making it more systematic and thorough, his tenure of his high post will become memorable in the history of the Dominion and of the empire.

HAVE USELESS SWORDS.

British Officers Buy Their's at the Tailor Shops.

A large proportion of the officers of the British army carry swords which are as useful for war purposes as the scabbards that hold them, says a London despatch.

A director of the Wilkinson Sword Company stated recently that since the South African war British officers are of the opinion that the sword is nothing more than an article of dress, and that, under modern conditions of fighting, it would never be brought into use.

The sword which the British cavalry take into action is subjected to the most rigid test that can be devised. But no such provision applies to officers, who provide their own swords, and, in the majority of cases, buy them from their tailors.

The military tailors import large quantities of soft, or brittle, blades from Germany, which are worthless, and sell them for \$5 each. A trustworthy sword could not be obtained under \$15.

The exhibition was given recently of the Government tests for swords to which all Messrs. Wilkinson's blades are subjected. They are of the severest nature, and are applied to the side, back, edge, and point.

The company offer to test officers' swords free of charge. But if the test is to be that now used the German ornamental weapons will come to a sudden end.

The new cavalry sword, which has just been approved by the Government, is lighter than the present pattern, and has a scabbard of leather instead of steel. It is straight, and not intended for cutting, the idea being to teach the soldiers the deadliness of the thrust.

JAPAN'S V. C.

Of all decorations in the gift of the Mikado, none is so highly prized by his valorous soldiers as that of the Distinguished Service Order of the Golden Kite. The decoration is a small, indented-edged oval of a beautiful green enamel, upon which is placed a golden kite, surmounting crossed swords of purple enamel. The medal is suspended from the breast by a green ribbon; and its gift is as rare as that of the much coveted Victoria Cross of our own country.

There are seven classes of the order, and each grade dignifies some more valorous act of the recipient. Its bestowal generally raises the decorated to the peerage, if he be not already there, and sometimes carries with it a substantial bounty in the shape of a pension.

The various countries of the world use three thousand four hundred different kinds of postage stamps.

The shortest span of life is that of the mayfly, which hatches, mates, lays and dies within a few hours.

Nearly all the natives of Mexico have a hammock, in which they pass the larger portion of their time.

Man attending the pans in salt works are never known to have cholera, smallpox, scarlet-fever, or influenza.

Some thirty villages on the outside of Mexico have each an old, solid-built Spanish church, but no priest.

The skin of the whale is from two inches to two feet thick, and the skin of a large specimen weighs thirty tons.

Sealing wax does not contain a particle of wax, but is composed of Venice turpentine, shellac, and cinabar.

Rain falls more frequently between three o'clock and eight o'clock in the morning than at any other time during the day.