

INTRODUCTION

IN the foregoing chapters we have examined briefly the development of the Oriental policy of the United States. We will now consider the subtle undercurrent that directs, in a large measure, the course of that policy.

When Germany violated Belgian neutrality and invaded France in 1914, the whole world raised its voice in indignant protest. But when Japan absorbed Korea in breach of faith and covenant to the latter Power, and in spite of her solemn declarations to the world at the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War that she was fighting Russia to safeguard the political independence and territorial integrity of Korea, the Powers of the West apparently connived at the perpetration of the crime. The national crimes that Japan committed during the course of her imperial expansion on the Asiatic mainland are not less horrible nor less excusable than those committed by Germany in Belgium and in northern France. Yet Japan has received practically no censure for what she has done in Korea and China; on the contrary, she successfully maintains her position as a worthy member of the

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family of the democratic nations of the world. One reason for this situation lies in her marvelously complete and skillful control of publicity, a control that enables her to manipulate easily the public opinion of the Western Powers and to mould their diplomatic policies in the Orient. A study, therefore, of the nature and extent of Japan's control of publicity will throw much light upon the diplomatic relationships of the East and the West and will result in a clearer understanding of the Oriental policy of the United States.

As early as the close of the Russo-Japanese War, before the destruction of Korean independence, Thomas F. Millard, the distinguished American publicist, wrote concerning Japanese activities in Korea:

"Nothing could display greater cleverness than the manner used by Japan through the propaganda to steadily shift her ground in regard to the main propositions involved in the settlement, while at the same time remaining carefully posed in an attitude of self-sacrifice. Something of a shock will be felt in the Western world when the mask, having served its purpose, is dropped. Meanwhile, pretense is piled upon pretense, without being able, however, to conceal the undercurrent of reality."¹

The mask has served its purpose and is

¹ "The New Far East," p. 102.

dropped. But the act was performed so skillfully and imperceptibly, like the transition of magic pictures on the screen, that the Western world felt no shock at all. Japan knows the publicity game and plays it well. She knows the value of honourable intentions in the public opinion of the West, and she employs every means within her power to create a most favourable impression of herself and her aspirations in the Western world,—especially in the United States and England.

To this end, she has many agencies working constantly. They form an elaborate system of interior and exterior espionage, publicity propaganda, press censorship, control of the news both as to its sources and its distribution, skillful governing of the impressions made upon foreigners who visit Japan.

I

THE OFFICIAL ESPIONAGE

I. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SYSTEM

THERE is a wrong impression in the West that *all* the Oriental peoples are generally cunning and sly. Nothing could be further from the truth. Although the Westerner may condemn the Chinaman for his fogysm and low standard of living, he certainly may not condemn him for dishonesty. The credit system was firmly established in China long before it was known in Western Europe. There were no contractual laws in China; they were not needed, as the Chinaman's word is as good as his bond. It is a well-known fact that the Western banks in the Far East prefer Chinese cashiers to those of any other nationality. Even in Japan, the majority of the cashiers in large banks were Chinese, because of their superior commercial integrity and high code of honour, until the Japanese found out that this fact was considered a reflection on the honesty of the Japanese people before the Western public.

The Japanese themselves, before coming into

contact with the Western world, were not so subtle as they are now. The Samurai were professional warriors. They despised wealth and manual labour, and upheld honour and bravery. But the swift abolition of the feudal system and the "gulping" of Western culture,—the product of more than five thousand years of slow progress,—in a single generation, has made the Japanese civilization of to-day a peculiar structure, in which the sense of proportion is almost utterly lacking. They have copied the material achievements of the West without absorbing the underlying spiritual truths; they have adopted the policy of expediency rather than principle. The military, educational, and industrial systems of Japan are modelled after those of Germany. Their slogans, *Banzai* and *Dai Nippon*, are other forms of "Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles, über alles in der Welt." There is a remarkable similarity between the Japanese spy system and that of Germany, as was revealed at the opening of the European War; only the Japanese system is more elaborate, and carried out to finer points. It is more than probable that the aggressive Empire of Asia learned the dishonourable but expedient trick from the military bureaucracy of Europe, and has become a greater master of the game.

It is needless to say that Japan reaped great advantages from her spy system during her re-

cent wars. The Chino-Japanese War in 1894 was in many respects like the Franco-Prussian War. Every Japanese officer had a thorough knowledge of the topography of China, her resources and military strength,—all acquired through the laborious and patient work of spies long before the opening of hostilities. The same system was used in the preparation for the Russo-Japanese War. "They had military maps of every nook and corner of Korea and Manchuria; they had spies working as coolies on the Russian railroads, and in Russian ports and shipyards. . . . The collapsible boats, with which a pontoon was thrown across the Yalu, were made for that special purpose months before, when the Korean peninsula was yet to be invaded."¹ Nothing was left to chance when Japan struck the first blow, which, to the ordinary observer in the West, came like a thunderbolt from the clear sky.

In time of war, when a nation is engaged in a death struggle, espionage might be justified under the pretext of military necessity. But Japan maintains her spy system in time of peace as well as in time of war. The most curious fact about it is that so far no serious protest has been raised by *her* scholars and publicists against it. The only explanation of this strange silence is

¹"The Russo-Japanese War," p. 25 (Collier and Sons, New York).

that the oft-quoted phrase of Treitschke, "der Staat ist Macht," is the ruling motto with the better thinkers of Japan, and whatever is done for the benefit of the state is justifiable. This principle was fully demonstrated in the trial and acquittal of Count Miura and his accomplices after they murdered the Korean Queen in 1895.¹ The Japanese philosophy of the state advocates selfishness and deception as motive powers that energize the world.² Only they appear in different manifestations in various activities of life. The forms of deception in business, for instance, are known as shrewdness; in war, they are strategy; in society, cleverness; and in relations between nations, diplomacy. But all these are only different combinations of the same element—deception.

This philosophy may find its echoes among the followers of Nietzsche and Bernhardt; but no believer in liberty and democracy can endorse it. There are a few things in human society that outrage our natural feelings, and espionage is one of them.

2. SPIES IN OTHER LANDS

It is not a hasty generalization to say that

¹ See "The Far East," February, 1896, vol. 1, p. 20; McKenzie, "The Tragedy of Korea," chap. VI.

² See Liang Ch'i-Chao, "Liberty," pp. 148-152 (Korean translation from Chinese text).

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Japan has spies in practically every country on the globe. This does not mean, of course, that Japan is preparing for war on every nation in the world. But it is the Japanese way of finding out what the other people are doing. Although subtle rumours are scattered all over the United States that Japan has no use for the Philippine Islands, and that she would not occupy them under any circumstances, as they would be a burden to her; 'yet it is an undeniable fact that the Malay Archipelagoes are honeycombed with Japanese spies.' In Mexico and South America there are several thousand Japanese, mostly veterans of the Russo-Japanese War. In one year, 1914, 3,675 Japanese entered Brazil.' According to the United States census of 1910, there were 72,157 Japanese in the United States, and 79,675 in the Hawaiian Islands. It is very probable that the number has increased considerably since. Out of this number, 123,425 were men—largely ex-soldiers.

It is merely a matter of opinion how much credence we can attribute to the newspaper reports. But it is certain that constant and repeated rumours cannot be ignored as being utterly false. They may be proofless, but they

' See "Why Japan does Not Want the Philippines," *Review of Reviews*, 51: 494, April, 1915; also, "Philippines No Bait to Japan," *Literary Digest*, 52: 1212, April 29, 1916.

' See S. Henschen, "What is Behind the Japanese Peril," *Forum*, 56: 63-78, July, 1916.

' Figures taken from the *Statesmen's Year Book*, 1916.

are rarely without foundation. It was alleged that some time ago the harbour police of New York were astonished to see a Japanese aviator drop into the bay in his flying machine. He was presumably sent to map the coast defense from an aeroplane. Japanese "fishermen" were discovered near the entrance of the Panama Canal. They were trying to conduct pearl fishing expeditions by taking bearings in various sections of the bays and waters, and incidentally mapping out the forts and approaches to the canal.

"On April 28, 1916, the Mayor of Los Angeles asked the United States Government to probe the activities of Japanese in his city. Guns and supplies were found hidden in the Japanese quarters, motor trucks had been purchased, aviators were being trained, and many young Japanese had been making surveys of the coast. . . . Several months ago a Japanese was arrested in Los Angeles for drunkenness. A detailed map of the United States was found on his person. It showed landing places for aeroplanes in various parts of the country. A short time prior to this another Japanese was arrested in San Diego. He carried a complete list of all the wireless stations in the United States."

Samuel G. Blythe gives an account of his knowing a Japanese nobleman in a Western hotel as a bell "hop." The films that this Japa-

¹ *Chicago Examiner*, February 4, 1917.

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nese possessed showed " Mr. Togo, the boy who wore the plum-coloured suit and waited on the bell, standing on the bridge of a Japanese battleship, clad in a silk hat and a frock coat, with the insignia of a Japanese order on his breast, and between two Japanese officers, both in full naval uniform. There is a large American military post not far from the place where Togo officiated." "

All these reports and many others of similar nature may be discarded as fantastic and fictitious as no better than the description of the Japanese spies in Louis Joseph Vance's recent novel, "Patria." But there are two sides to every question; perhaps, indeed, this is the case with rumours as well as arguments.

One thing certain is that Japan has made persistent efforts to get a foothold on the Western Hemisphere for her military and naval purposes. In 1912, when it was known that Japanese were making secret attempts to acquire land in Magdalena Bay, under the pretext of establishing a base for Japanese fishing interests, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, of Massachusetts, introduced a resolution in the Senate, which was adopted August 2d, declaring that "when any harbour or other place in the American continent is so situated that the occupation thereof for naval or military purposes might threaten

¹ *Saturday Evening Post*, May 22, 1915, p. 53.

the communications or the safety of the United States, the Government of the United States could not see, without grave concern, the possession of such harbour or other place by any corporation or association which has such relation to another government, not American, as to give that government traditional powers of control for naval or military purposes." Although the name Japanese was not mentioned in the resolution, that it was aimed at what Japan was trying to do was obvious. The Japanese took sufficient hint from this resolution, and gave up the attempt. It is quite clear that the American Government will not tolerate the acquisition of land in the Western Hemisphere by the Japanese for naval or military purposes, much as it is desired by the Tokyo Government.

In China the Japanese spies are not so concealed and unobtrusive as they are in the United States. A paragraph from the description of the Japanese in Manchuria by an unbiased eye-witness may be cited to illustrate the operation of the system there.

"During the Russian occupation prior to the war, the Japanese Government had sent hundreds of Japanese into the country with instructions to adopt the dress of the Chinese and domesticate themselves; and many of these persons succeeded in escaping detection after hostilities commenced, remaining to act as spies

and secret agents. . . . No sooner did the Japanese armies occupy the country, and promulgate their military regulations, than these informers came out of their retirement and quickly assumed a position of importance. They pointed to the Japanese authorities Chinese who were known or suspected to sympathize with or have business relations with the Russians. It mattered little that the men thus accused might be of high standing, and the fact that a majority of them, especially officials, could not have avoided relations with the Russians. Many were executed upon the witness of these professional informers, often without even a semblance of a trial. The regulations provided that Chinese who knew of any infraction of them and failed to inform the authorities were punishable by death; while many were tortured in the attempt to force them to disclose military information.”*

3. ESPIONAGE IN JAPAN AND KOREA

In Japan every foreigner is watched, and everything he does and says is carefully reported and filed in the books of the government secret service office. A paragraph from the pen of the veteran correspondent, Samuel G. Blythe, after his visit to Japan, well illustrates this:

“Any man you meet may be listening for

* Millard, “The New Far East,” p. 146.

governmental purposes to what you say or because of that natural curiosity; but in case you say anything you should not, whether the listener is a secret agent or not, he goes and reports your conversation to somebody, for that is the first duty of all Japanese—to tell what they hear. There are always some of these agents about the big hotels. They act as room-boys, as bar-boys, as waiters, and in any other capacity that will put them in contact with the guests. In the days of the Russian war the correspondents who were held in Tokyo were accustomed to relate their opinions of the Japanese in front of a certain bar, and each night complete reports of what they said were transmitted to the war office. The bar-boys were secret agents. . . . Let a man whose business is not definitely stated by him the moment he arrives go to any city in Japan, and there will be secret-service men set after him immediately. Every petty detail will be communicated to some secret head and set down painstakingly in some secret record. His trunks are likely to be opened. The boy in his room at his hotel is likely to be a spy. Every move will be watched. A man whom I know could do it told me he would get me a complete record of my comings and goings in Japan for a hundred yen. I told him it was not worth it.”²⁰

²⁰ *Saturday Evening Post*, May 22, 1915, p. 53.

The organization of the Japanese spy system in Korea is pretty nearly perfect. It is a part of the military administration in the peninsula, and is used most effectively to denationalize the ancient kingdom. A Korean is not permitted to go to Europe or America, and even within Korea the people are not allowed to travel in large groups. "Every one must be registered and is given a number, which is known to the police. Every time he leaves his village or town he must register at the police station and state fully the business he intends to transact and his destination. The policeman 'phones to this place, and if his actions are in any way at variance with his report, he is liable to arrest and mistreatment. A strict classification is kept on the basis of a man's education, influence, position, etc. As soon as a man begins to show ability or qualities of leadership he is put in class 'a,' detectives are set on his trail, and from thenceforth he becomes a marked man, hounded wherever he goes. Even children are watched or bribed for information. If a man escapes the country his number is traced, his family or relatives arrested and perchance tortured until they reveal his whereabouts. A man is likely to disappear any day and perhaps not be heard of again."²² Officially authorized spies are sta-

²² J. E. Moore, "Korea's Appeal for Self-Determination," pp. 9-10.

tioned in every town and village; they force their presence even into private household parties. Their acts are backed by the Japanese gendarmerie, and woe to the native who dares to resent their intrusion! He will be charged with treason as opposing the government authorities! The Japanese enlist as sub-spies a large number of the worst scoundrels in the country. These incorrigibles are paid good salaries and in many cases given rewards for the merit of their work; not infrequently the well-to-do natives are blackmailed by these spies, and the government winks at the crime. It is not only an opportunity for petty and venal natures to vent personal enmities and spite, but also a chance to gather a handsome fortune for a scoundrel who is not fit for anything else.

Such abuse of the method might naturally be expected, but the worst feature of it all is that it is often used as a machine by the government in relentlessly crushing out the spirit of nationalism. If a Korean is suspected of keeping alive the spirit of his forefathers,—not rebellion, for that would be a hopeless thing at present,—the government instructs its spies to bring certain charges against him. Upon the witness of the spies, he will be imprisoned, his property will be confiscated, and he will be punished in such a way as to be disabled for life; or he may even be

executed on the charge of treason." Like the mediæval "Ironwoman" that crushed its victim without bloodshed, this spy system of the Japanese administration in Korea removes from the country the ablest and best educated Koreans without technically violating the regulations of the colonial policy of the Japanese Empire.

The sad feature of the Korean case is that, although the Korean suffers the same hard fate as did the Poles and the Armenians before the European War, his story is unknown to the outside world. The only time when he had a partial hearing before the world's court of public opinion was during the late wholesale arrest and trial of the Korean Christian leaders on the charge of conspiracy against the life of Governor-General Terauchi. This time the news leaked out because it involved several prominent foreign missionaries."

"For Japanese prison tortures in Korea, see the *Continental*, June 13, 27, 1912; Sengman Rhee, "The Christian Persecution in Korea" (Korean, published in Honolulu, T. H.).

"For full account, see the Report sent to the Continuation Committee by the missionaries in Korea. Also, consult Arthur Judson Brown, "The Korean Conspiracy Case" (1912); Sengman Rhee, "The Christian Persecution in Korea" (Korean); "A Korean View of Japan's Policy in Korea," *Missionary Review of the World*, 36: 450-453, June, 1913.