

men. Goethe had in mind the frightful consequences of multiplying beyond measure the number of half-educated men, when he inclined in his latter days to the belief that Martin Luther was responsible for setting back the civilization of Europe by two hundred years, because when he translated the Bible into the German tongue, he opened the way for dispensing with Latin among the truly educated gentlemen of Europe, and rendered easier the education of the multitude which cannot profit by culture; thereby enabling the latter to take a part in the direction of the world's affairs which they were not competent to assume — with the consequences which we see to-day.

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A JAPANESE SOLDIER'S DIARY

BY TAMIKI HOSODA

[Tamiki Hosoda won literary fame in his country first by his graphic descriptions of the barrack-room life of Japanese soldiers, based on his experience while serving in a cavalry regiment. The following translation, from the *New Year Taiyo* (Sun), affords a glimpse into the mind of the Japanese soldier on service; and is published as an extract from a diary recording a true incident.]

AN order had arrived to evacuate Peschanka, where we had been staying for about six months, and to withdraw to the town of B —. The joy of the soldiers was indescribable. During roll-call, they all shouted with delight. Russian residents came to see us off with the presents of salt herring roe.

When we left the town forever and started our forced march, we did not know why we must hurry, but a feeling that an enemy was at our heels disturbed every soldier's mind. I was serving as orderly to an infantry Colonel, with two privates under me. When we were in barracks at home, we

used to look upon the officers of other regiments as persons with whom we had no connection and to assume an indifferent attitude toward them. But here, we regarded them as the superiors in whose hands our life and death reposed.

A battalion of infantry, a company of cavalry, and a section of artillery formed our column. Our commander, mounted on a chestnut horse, took the rear of the detachment, followed by his orderly on foot. We mounted orderlies rode on either side of the commander. Gazing at his profile, with its high cheek bones and sharp nose, I noticed that he was much thinner than when we first arrived in Siberia. He may deserve the fourth order of the Golden Kite, I thought. Just as I was making this observation to myself, some one cried that a plane was in sight. Everybody looked up. An airplane was flying above the spruce trees, which seemed like mere shrubs on the distant horizon. Our commander fixed his glass on it. No one supposed that it was the enemy's, but none the less we were uneasy. To our great relief, we at last distinguished a red mark on the wings. The distant drone became distinct and the plane hovered over our heads. If a bomb were to be dropped, or to fall by accident! . . . We gazed at the plane with mingled perturbation and pleasure; for it drew near above us. Just then the flying officer gave a shout and dropped a green tube with a red and white ribbon. The tube contained a note cautioning us to be on our guard at R —; for soldiers belonging to another detachment, which evacuated U — yesterday, had had an 'incident' there. 'At any cost we must keep on,' remarked our commander with the sharp nose. We continued our march, the advance guard being reinforced and a reconnoitering party sent ahead.

We had been on the move for three days when we arrived at a long, wooden bridge at the entrance of R —. Already the yellow evening of Siberia was beginning to enfold us with its sombre orange twilight. Only half a year ago we had crossed the frozen surface of the river without difficulty; now, its black bed was bare and almost dry. The former bridge, destroyed by the enemy, had fallen into the river, and the sound of the shallow water dashing against it was faintly audible.

An adjutant, guarded by cavalry, was dispatched to the mayor, to inform him that we intended to pass through; and that any opposition would cost the lives and property of the residents.

The yellow evening of Siberia spread over the sloping town. Faint blue smoke curled from numberless square chimneys. I stood by the commander waiting for orders, while other soldiers rubbed the legs of the horses with straw. The river forked at the entrance of the town, and on the left bank black and white cows were seen in a pasture. There was a cemetery and a small church surrounded by white birches on the opposite bank of the river, and another red-roofed church stood in the middle of the town. I knew that the commander did not intend to reduce the place to ashes, in spite of his severe message to the mayor; but when I thought of the unrest and agitation which our warning might cause the people, I could not help a melancholy feeling. The golden roof of the church glittering in the sunset reminded me of Peschanka which we evacuated. Every evening, when the trumpet sounded through the barracks announcing the end of the grooming hour, the silvery melody of its bell used to vibrate through the silence.

I remembered a cold Sunday morning in Peschanka, when a boy in a

fashionable gray overcoat and a beautiful green *shaika* (hat), leading by the hand a little girl about eight years old with a pretty pair of red *basmeik* (boots), came to the gate of the barracks.

'I will take your photo, soldiers from Japan,' he said with a smile.

We accepted the offer, and after a few days the boy brought us the photographs. He told us that he was a son of a judge of the town and invited us to come and see his parents. Afterwards the boy came often to the barracks, and at last I called on his father with a comrade who knew some Russian.

The father was a melancholy gentleman with a bushy moustache; but he greeted us cordially. The mother was especially kind to us. She gave us a dinner in a warm room and boiled the tea in a samovar for us. But apparently they were poor. A shy daughter about seventeen was always working at a sewing machine with her mother, who explained to us that she were obliged to do so to make ends meet.

The father observed: 'Life in Siberia is not so bad for those who know how to take its hardships. But most of the Russian officials could not endure the latter, and after their three years service they would return home, giving Siberia an ill name. I don't think it is a bad place for me. I was young when we came here from Moscow. I was tempted by the high salary. But at present, when Russia is in such an agitated state, we must bear poverty. I dare not go back to Russia. I am content to stay here so long as we can find means to sustain us.'

I regretted my ignorance of Russian, for we had to speak in poor English. Before our departure I sent my dagger, which I carried with me, to the family as a memento. We had talked of *hara-kiri* one evening when we gathered before the stove.

'I have nothing to give you in return.' So saying the mother handed me a plain wooden case of cigarettes. When we marched away, they stood in the street to wave us good-bye.

'Good-bye, Mr. Kato,' the judge and his wife bowed to us with a smile, speaking in English.

'*Peroschai, kavaleristsu,*' shouted the young lad, Mischa, taking off his green hat, approaching my horse, and offering me his hand to shake. Turning back, I saluted repeatedly. I saw the mother wiping her eyes with a white handkerchief.

The lonely figure of the judge, like some exiled prisoner, the lively countenance of little Mischa, the silent, pretty daughter Lisa — all these impressions did not leave my mind for a long time. The memory of Lisa's apron bending over the sewing machine added to the sorrow of departure, though I never spoke with her, and do not know why.

The high roof of the church at R—— reminded me of the family of the judge; and also of an honest old Tartar who used to come to our barracks with rye packed on horseback. He had a yellow turban and wore a leather belt. He was always singing a song which we could not understand. He would carry the rye from the back of the horses to the barracks, which ought to have been done by us. I thought that there lived in the town of R—— many a kind family like that of Peschanka, and many honest and good-natured workmen; and so could not but heave a deep sigh at the cruel order of the commander, to reduce it to ashes if any opposition should be made to the passage of our troops.

Dusk was closing in when the adjutant came back, followed by a priest in black robes and a representative of the town, who was a schoolmaster. They said that they had been preparing supplies for the Japanese troops. Our

soldiers grumbled at missing the chance to carry out their cruel project. When the night came, men in short *jiraitis* (blouses), bringing *tereiga* laden with hay and straw, came to our camp, which was pitched on the bank of the river. Little boys and poor women came to see the Japanese troops, just as if it were a festival evening. Some soldiers murmured that there was no need of sleeping out in the fields, as the residents showed so much good will. I lay myself down on hay in a tent, listening for a time to the sound of the spurs and boots of the soldiers on sentry duty, and then slept soundly until the morning bugle called us.

That day I met with a misfortune which I cannot forget, and which cost the life of a young soldier.

At four o'clock I got up at bugle call, and after eating my biscuits, went to the wooden bridge where the horses were tethered. I sent back my two soldiers, saying, 'You two attend the roll-call; I will go to the commander to report that all is ready.'

I fastened my horse to a willow tree on the bank, and reported at the tent of the commander. I ought first to attend roll-call; but as I was on duty as chief of orderlies, the sergeant of my company would not reprimand me for the omission. Since our arrival in Siberia formal discipline has not been so strict as in the barracks at home, and the soldiers have become more or less careless in such matters. I was no exception.

The commander came out with a cigarette in his mouth.

'Three orderlies belonging to the cavalry company are ready to march,' I reported formally, standing at attention. The commissariat carts could already be heard, rolling over the bridge far down the river. It was still dark.

'All right, thank you. You will have

under your orders extra orderlies from the artillery, as we are to pass through a dangerous district,' he replied familiarly, as if he were a civilian.

I returned to the willow tree to bring my horse, which was hanging his head in the darkness. To my surprise, I found his bridle had been stolen. I searched in vain, groping in the long grass with my boots. My first thought was that some bargeman, or some resident of the town who harbored hostile feelings toward us, had stolen my bridle. I did not know what to do, and said to my horse:

'Tell me, good beast, who stole your bridle?'

Just then soldiers of the other regiment passed over the bridge, which had been temporarily repaired by the townspeople. There was not a moment to be lost. Should I ride the horse without a bridle? . . . That would be both undignified and dangerous — through a perilous section, especially as chief of orderlies to the commander. If there had been time, I could have got another bridle from the heavy baggage of the company; but the commissariat had already started. I looked around for one to steal from some other soldier.

My men called to me: 'First Private Kato, our commander is going.' They had been waiting for me on the wooden bridge.

'Well, go ahead, I will catch up with you,' I replied. I re-doubled my search for a bridle, when I found several saddles set on a dry log of the bridge. 'That's it,' I cried involuntarily. I took a bridle at random from under the saddles and hastily put it on my horse.

'First Private just arrived, your honor,' I saluted formally from behind.

'Why are you so late?' asked our commander without turning back.

'I was repairing my harness.'

'All right.'

But when the horse slackened its pace, I felt a sudden sinking of my heart, remembering the loss of my bridle. My irritation and perplexity at the discovery of the theft gave place to repentance for my crime. It is an incurable habit of soldiers in barracks, to steal from their comrades when they lose any article supplied by the government. We call it in barracks' slang, 'managing.' Things lost by the soldiers will be supplied again after due formalities, but the privates do not like to make troublesome explanations, and 'manage' to make up the loss by stealing. And now I had been guilty of that disgraceful practice.

It was a fine day, but the soldiers on foot were exhausted by the forced march. We had to reach B — by seven in the evening at latest. Most of the men swung along with spirit; but some began to drop out of the ranks from exhaustion. Tottering privates, gasping, followed in the rear, urged on by non-commissioned officers.

Thus we passed through the R — neighborhood without meeting any opposition.

'Pooh! Not a shadow of a Bolshevik! We must carry back these accursed shells to Japan,' murmured some soldiers.

They began to sing barrack songs. All the soldiers were happy that we had passed safely the danger point. But as for me, the theft of the bridle weighed on my mind.

When we reached the summit of the mountains behind the city of B — all the soldiers yelled 'Banzai.' The commander ordered a halt for thirty minutes. We orderlies dismounted and wiped the sweat from our horses with straw.

Just at that moment my eyes rested on the horse of one of the orderlies from the artillery regiment, who was of

the same rank as I was. And I looked at the bridle on his horse to find out that it was mine. I felt my heart stop beating. It was unmistakably mine, with my initials cut on the strap.

'You have stolen my bridle,' I was going to say, and would have struck him on the spot. But I refrained, for I could not blame him, as I had also in my turn stolen another's. I stared in his face with indignation, but I could not speak a word. I, too, would be compromised by the disclosure of his crime, and I feared even to look at the bridle which had belonged to me.

When we reached B —, we were greeted with the shouts of 'Hurrah' by ladies with Japanese flags or red handkerchiefs.

After supper, I called on our commander at his lodging in the busiest quarter of the city, where I met the commander of the company to which I belonged. He was talking with the commander of the expedition about a soldier who was shot during the march.

'Just as we were leaving R —, a few shots were heard behind us,' said he. 'A first year private said to another that he was shot. They galloped for about three versts, and there the young soldier suddenly fell from his horse. His comrade tied him to the horse and they hurried after the rear guard. The poor soldier had got a bridle from a kind peasant, but it was so damaged he could not manage his horse well.'

I could guess everything. It was one of the privates of my own company from whom I had stolen the bridle. He remained at R — as one of the rear guard after we started in the early morning. And when he discovered the loss of his bridle, he had to stay behind with one of his comrades to search for it. The other soldiers had already left, and there were no Japanese except

those two soldiers, when some one out of pity gave him a poor bridle of the kind used by the Russian peasants. He was shot in the side and was dying in the Japanese hospital in B —, though the presence of mind of his comrade had saved him from capture by the disaffected Russians.

The next evening at the billet, the orderly from the artillery regiment said,

'I say, First Private Kato, some one "managed" my bridle yesterday morning and I managed another's. But I am afraid that it was the one belonging to that first year private who was shot. This is a secret. But I am so sorry for him. Ha, ha, ha.' . . .

I was about to say, 'You did not take his, but mine. The one which I stole is his. It is I who shall have killed him if he dies of his wound.'

Instead of that, however, I reproved him:

'Then it may have been his. You have done wrong. You may have killed him, one of the young soldiers of my company.'

I felt hot tears in my eyes before I finished my words.

When I arrived at our barracks in Japan, the body of the dead soldier was just being sent home from the hospital in B —. His name was Shininchi Uyemoto, a conscript from Okayama prefecture.

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VILLAGE AGITATORS

BY MAURICE TALMEYR

Ah, that pretty village inn, white and coquettish, its brown shutters just revarnished, its snowy embroidered curtains, its shade tree extending a hospitable branch across the way, and its naïve, freshly painted sign-