

that O'Shea cared to know concerning the operations of *The Sect of the Fatal Obligation*. It had worked in secret to remove enemies for a price. If a merchant wished a business rival obliterated, if an official found others in his way, if it was advantageous to create a vacancy in some other quarter, the murder guild directed by the departed Chung would transact the affair, smoothly, without bungling. And those who knew and would have disclosed the secret were frightened into silence by the sight of the brand that was called *The Dreadful Messenger of Chung*.

"It will interest you to learn, as an American, Captain O'Shea," said the missionary, "that among these documents is a list of persons proscribed or sentenced to be slain. The most conspicuous name I find to be that of the Chinese ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Hao Su Ting. It is probable that this terrible fate would have awaited him upon his return to his own country."

"They potted his brother," exclaimed O'Shea. "And he was sick with fear of the thing, for I talked it over with him meself. Well, he can thank Bill Maguire for letting him die in his bed when his proper time comes."

Three weeks later Captain O'Shea sat at his ease upon the piazza of the Grand Hotel, that overlooks Yokohama Bay. He was thinner than when he had put to sea in the *Whang Ho* steamer, but he appeared to find the game of life quite worth while. It was his pleasure to enjoy the tame diversions of a tourist before boarding a mail-boat for the long run home