

SIEGE AND FALL OF PORT ARTHUR

and men bowed in solemn obeisance before the altar erected to the memory of their fallen comrades. No religious ceremony could have been more profoundly impressive, and no temple could have been more splendidly appropriate. The invocation read by General Nogi was—

“I, Nogi Maresky, Commander-in-Chief of the Third Imperial Army, celebrate a fête in honour of those brave officers and men who fell during the siege, with saké and many offerings.

“From the date of our army's landing in the Kwantung peninsula, over two hundred and ten days since, you have gone forward with such bravery and fought battles with such gallantry that you have met death from fire and sword. Others of you have died from sickness and disease. I wish to tell you that your noble sacrifice has not been in vain. The troops of the enemy inside the stronghold of Port Arthur have been utterly defeated and the fortress has at last surrendered. This glorious victory is due in a large measure to your indomitable courage and bravery.

“I, Maresky, with many of you, took a solemn oath to achieve victory or accomplish death. Surviving the struggle, I have received the warmest thanks from our Supreme Commander the Emperor. It is not meet that I should monopolize all this glory. With you, the spirits of those who fought and died to win the great result, I desire to share the glory. My heart is oppressed with sadness when I think of all you who have paid the price of our victory, and whose spirits are now in the Great Hereafter.

“I have chosen the place for this fête so that it commands a view of the hills, the valleys, the