

Noshi smiled. "If we were fighting just out of murder-just, Mr. Craig," she said, "then we might be thinking only of how to kill our enemies, but because we have taken up arms for the enlightenment of the East, I believe our battles were won before they were fought. I know your soul is laughing at me, Mr. Craig, yet being a Christian and a Saxon, you must believe in the might of national righteousness. And then, because we are treating the people of Korea with careful honor, they have become honorable towards us. You can observe, for one thing, the large bodies of guards that Russia needs to protect her railways in Manchuria, in strange contrast with the perfect order we are able to maintain here, with so little evidence of force."

Craig looked across the garden to where the little soldiers were still quietly admiring the flowers, and comparing them with the fierce fighters among the Russians, he felt afraid that Nippon's victories would never exist outside her imagination.

Then a tiny boy came slowly out from among the shrubbery. Walking unsteadily on his fat little legs, he looked like some tropical flower himself, in his gorgeous raiment of red and yellow, blue and pea-green. His funny little head was shaven, except for a little black tuft in the middle, and he smiled very broadly at Craig.

"It is Botschan" (baby boy), said Noshi, "O Kabokusai Sama's grandson."

Craig stepped down into the garden, and went towards the child, who smiled and stood still. Then, with a funny little shuffling run, a small girl darted out and stood defiantly in front of the baby. She did not look much bigger than he, though her stiff sash showed she was over seven, and her elaborately dressed hair, and dress of flowered silk made her look like a miniature woman.

Craig stood still in amused surprise as she faced him, her thin, sickly little face set in tense lines, and a narrow bit of steel flashing in her hand.

Then Noshi spoke in her own tongue, and the child's face flushed crimson, her knife disappeared, and she was on the ground at Craig's feet, hitting her forehead on the path in an agony of shame and embarrassment.

"Will you condescend to pardon her contemptible rudeness, Mr. Craig," said Noshi, softly; "she is most foolishly young, and without much manners, a

Farmer Ricefield's daughter, we would call her, something the same as your term 'hayseed.'"

"I'll forgive her. I'll do anything if you will only tell her to get up," said Craig. "But what have I done? Is it against the law to look at babies in war-time?"

Little Tasshee stood up then, though she kept very close to Botschan, and Noshi said: "We are taught that mistakes are never excusable, but Tasshee has just come from Port Arthur, and not knowing you were here, foolishly thought you were a Russian, and might hurt Botschan."

"Poor little thing," said Craig, "I suppose your people in the Russian ports suffered a good deal when this war broke out, Miss Toshio?"

"War is—hell," said Noshi quietly, "but as long as civilized Christian men talk of its glory, so long will it be carried on in spite of the sufferings of innocent non-combatants like Tasshee. Her father was a small trader like all his family, and he opened a store in Port Arthur some years ago. There was quite a colony of our people there, living in their own quarter, and when this war threatened, the Viceroy Alexieff was spoken to about them, and pledged his word that they should be protected. But on the afternoon following that first naval attack, a mob of Russian soldiers, under no control, entered our quarter and completely looted the stores and houses, returning to their barracks laden with plunder, before the eyes of their officers lounging round the cafés. There was not even a word of reproof spoken to the men, and no attempt made to prevent further outrages. So other soldiers, excited by the sight of the booty, went down to our quarter, and, enraged at finding only empty houses, they searched the people for money and jewelry, and in many cases stripped them of even the clothes they wore. Our people fled to the seashore, where the women, many of them without clothing, went into the water, where they thought the soldiers would not follow them, and stood there that February night, holding their little children above the waves. Young Madame Kabokusai was one of these, and so she saved Botschan. Tasshee was with her father, and the drunken soldier who shot him bit the child's ear off with his teeth. Really I think the Russians are uncivilized."

Craig glanced at the child, whose care-