

curious contrivance something like a miniature telescope, which I afterwards learned was a secret Chinese invention, and enabled soldiers to use their rifles in the dark, almost as well as in the daylight.

In answer to a question regarding our destination one of the officers pointed silently to the mountains far ahead. There, then, I was to realize all my hopes. I was to see the man in quest of whom I had come to China. For I did not doubt by this time that the unknown leader had arranged the attack on the boat, the guide's treachery, my capture, and that we were now being taken to his stronghold. The ride for the mountain confirmed my belief, but, try as I would, I could not see how we were to climb the great rocky cliffs. I had once more underrated the shrewdness of the Oriental mind. No opportunity was given to learn how the obstacle was to be surmounted, for, as we drew close, one of the officers gave a sharp command, and a soldier placed a thick bandage over my eyes. This being done we made our way as through a great tunnel, rocky in some places, but generally well cared for. It was probably a natural tunnel through the mountain which the Chinese took advantage of. Possibly it led a short distance into the mountain and opened out into a great rift that slashed the inner side completely.

As we emerged from the mountain the bandage was taken from my eyes, and by the remaining light I saw that I was in a wonderful fortress, a great plain completely enclosed by the surrounding mountains, and occupied by the camp. It was impregnable, and impossible of attack. Judging by the size of the encampment the army must have been one of the greatest ever gathered together by any general. But little time was given me for observation. Although my quarters were comfortable enough it was far into the night before I could compose my mind for sleep, in spite of the fatiguing ride of the day. The events of the past twenty-four hours crowded themselves through my brain in rapid succession. The great camp in the mountains made it impossible for me to doubt

that I had been taken by a troop belonging to the army of the mysterious general. What was going to happen next? What did he intend doing with me? Would I ever get back to America? Even if I did see the man would I ever be able to give the story to the world? The public was interested in this man to a marvellous degree, and his must be a powerful personality to gather around him such an army.

It was almost noon before I awoke the next day and had barely finished breakfast when an officer and two soldiers entered, and I was briefly told that I was to go with them. I was conducted to a dwelling much larger than the rest in the centre of the host of tents. Outside the men stopped and one of them drew a heavy bandage over my eyes as before, while the officer went ahead, evidently to announce our coming. As we entered the dwelling it seemed to be full of men but when we passed the threshold all conversation ceased. I felt that I was at last in the presence of the man whom I had come in search of. What would I not have given to have lifted the bandage from my eyes, even for a minute! For one glimpse of the man! But I was not given much time to reflect. A sharp military voice, speaking English with an awkward foreign accent, that caused me to start when I heard it, broke the silence:

"Your paper will doubtless contain an accurate description of me," it said, in a half-amused, half cynical way.

"Under the present conditions that will be impossible," I answered.

"It always will be impossible, sir," was the reply.

"May I ask what your intentions are regarding me?" I asked.

"You will be conducted in safety from here, as you are a white man," was the answer.

"Is it because you are a white man yourself that you are considerate of the safety of a white man?" I asked quickly.

"Perhaps," was the unguarded answer, and this time the foreign accent had been forgotten. But instantly the general was on his guard, and his tone changed as he gave a rapid order. If I could have