

THE INTERNATIONAL SPY

BY DENYS P. MYERS

Drawing by George G bbs

It is popularly supposed that Antorvitch is a spy; but the authorities say that no incriminating papers have been discovered," was the most significant sentence in a cable despatch to a news service not long ago from Singapore, Straits Settlements. But it was so typical a statement that seeing it in the despatch seemed to brand the man as a spy. Perhaps he wasn't Russian, as the name he gave—Vladimir Antorvitch—suggested; but that he was a spy the fact that no incriminating papers were in his possession apparently proved.

That is always the case with the real spy,—no evidence on him, usually no nationality, and, if he is in a tight place, no Government to plead for him. Paris was asking a couple of years ago, "Who is Ellis?" But no one answered, and Ellis has not been heard of since, probably having been sent across the frontier.

Edward Smythe Gordon was arrested not long afterward charged with making plans of a French fortress for the British Intelligence Office. He was a cool one, his presence having been noted in the perimeter of the Lorient fortifications and himself defined as a suspicious person. He went to Quiberon, then to Belle Isle, where, thinking the detectives had left his trail, he began making a water color sketch of the Gros-Rucher battery.

The French soldiers pounced on him from behind. Gordon in custody, they found a water color sketch of the fort in a cleft between two rocks.

"I put it there so that the wind wouldn't blow it away," observed Gordon.

When the officers jostled him, a pencil sketch fell to the ground which showed the exterior of the fort. It was a sketch to help his water color, he said. "I am an English tourist," he continued. "I like to do water colors."

"Water colors or fortresses?" they accused him. "The fort was picturesque," he protested. "Being a retired English army officer, I thought it interesting to include the fort in my sketch, which, you see, is a marine view."

Audaciously he furnished a London address, mentioned his rank of Colonel, his former command, and all the personal questions the resourceful Frenchmen could think of were answered with superficial frankness.

The English authorities did nothing. Gordon remained in prison, explaining that there could have been no harm in what he did, for he was arrested once before for a similar offense—and let go! A month elapsed. It had been found that Edward Smythe Gordon had been arrested two years before for making water color sketches; which, be it noted, are not plans. The French were sure that England would appear behind the man should he be given a trial. The British did not stir. The French held him "in secret" so that what evidence they had should not leak out. The British did not stir.

Then from the Embassy of Great Britain it was asked when the man Gordon would come up for trial. Only that; but it made the French show their hand, which was woefully lacking in good cards. The evidence was too shadowy to bring Edward Smythe Gordon to trial, and so he was put on a Channel boat.

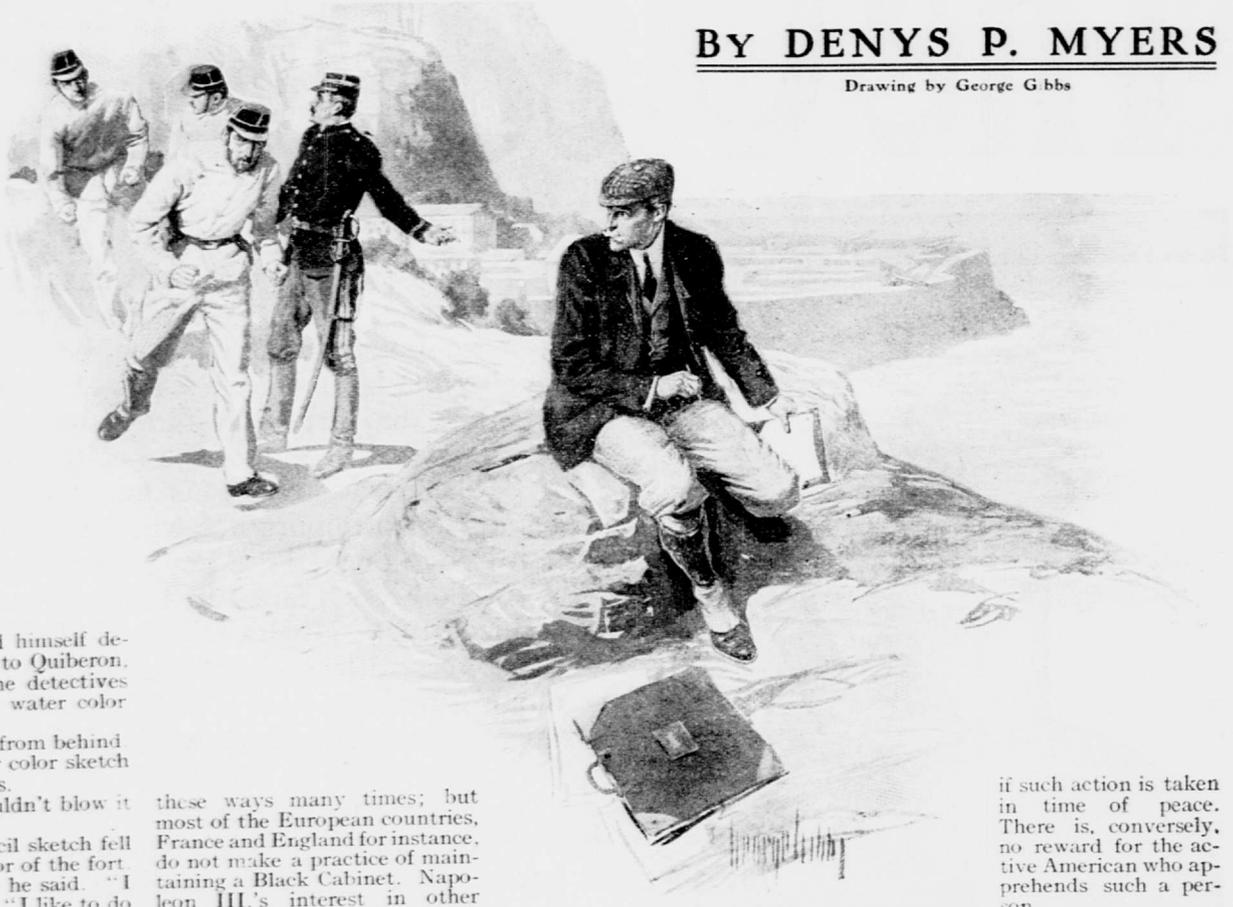
But how much information concerning French military positions he who styled himself Edward Smythe Gordon gained, only the British Intelligence Office knows.

That little game is going on all the time, not only in army and navy circles, but in the realms of diplomatic politics. I am assured that at Washington the American State Department sometimes knows the contents of despatches to foreign Governments by their representatives before the Foreign Secretaries abroad receive them.

Few Governments acknowledge that their postal service supports a Black Cabinet. In France it is abolished as an institution, but still the opening of private mail is occasionally resorted to. Neither Germany, Italy, nor Austria admits the existence of a *cabinet noir*; but in Turkey, Russia, and Servia it flourishes. The Black Cabinet in Servia in the days of King Alexander was the means of leading to the sudden arrest and mysterious death of many prominent people, and even yet King Peter's Government finds it useful.

The operators of the Black Cabinet all use about the same methods. An ordinary envelop is opened by inserting a pencil into a corner of it beneath the flap and following it round, revolving the pencil during the process. Sometimes steaming is employed. If an envelop is sealed with wax, a thin knifeblade, heated, gently passed under the wax, will enable one to raise the flap. Or a thin pair of pliers may be passed into the envelop to grip the contents, which are then rolled into a spiral and withdrawn.

Secrecy in correspondence has been violated in



these ways many times; but most of the European countries, France and England for instance, do not make a practice of maintaining a Black Cabinet. Napoleon III's interest in other people's affairs put the French department in the highest state of efficiency it ever attained; and England has ceased to pay much attention to others' correspondence since the Fenian outrages. But England does not repose too much confidence in some of her neighbors; for the Foreign Office still maintains the King's messengers, who, on their two routes from London to Teheran and from London to St. Petersburg, are able to deliver in person most of the diplomatic correspondence. Downing Street sends out, Anarchists, criminals, and other undesirable citizens, of course, enjoy no assured privacy for their letters, and Scotland Yard frequently violates epistolary seals for the public good.

To be a spy one must be an adept at many things, including languages and the ability to disguise one's features. The Japanese are for these reasons the best material for espionage service. Having mastered their own language, they find most others easy, and it is a *sine qua non* of education in Japan to know thoroughly at least one language besides the national one. But where the Japanese has the greatest advantage over those of other races when he applies himself to spying, is his entirely different ideas as to exhibiting emotion. Professor Wernich of the Tokio Surgical University in 1874 analyzed these differing signs of emotion scientifically, and the results are extremely interesting as showing how innately easy it is for the Nipponese to conceal his thoughts from the Occidental.

The surprised Japanese puts his head slightly to one side, shaking it at intervals, frequently draws the air sharply between his teeth with an F sound, wrinkles his forehead, and lets his mouth open. Turning the face to one side with a single bitter laugh, or a single smile—such as Press Agent Sato used at Portsmouth—signifies supreme disdain. Their countenances do not change, and it is that which bothers the Occidental. Sputtering forth words to a superior signifies bad humor. A guilty child will allow its head to sink; but the grown-up keeps erect and keeps his face a blank. They do not wring their hands in great grief, shake hands, throw up the head, or do lots of accidental things of that kind. Yet the authorities say they are not stoical; that a deep sinking of the head means great sorrow and a shrinking of the body together is a prelude to weeping.

The Japanese obviously possess a great advantage in spying on the Occidental, and, considering the recent alarm concerning alleged Japanese spies in United States forts, these things are interesting to note. Not less so is the fact that while a spy in this country may get information, he can scarcely obtain glory. For a spy's glory—outwardly—results from his getting caught. And it was found, when some one hoped to reap a reward by furnishing the Government tips with a view to leading to the arrest of oriental intruders, that the statutes of the United States make no provision for the punishment of persons who may attempt to gain information of possible value to a country unfriendly to the nation,

if such action is taken in time of peace. There is, conversely, no reward for the active American who apprehends such a person.

Racial rivalries of one sort and another

have brought these Orientals into the public eye as getters of forbidden information. A few years ago there was a tremor in some quarters because it transpired that Admiral Evans's valet was not a mere Japanese coolie but an educated man. It seems that the officers laughed at the public astonishment and fear that ensued; for it likewise seems that there are no secrets on battleships. Their measurements are public property, the number of their guns, their detailed plans, are readily accessible, and any other information can be procured in the manner in which it had its genesis,—by a little expert figuring.

The Japanese, however, are inveterate in their thirst for knowledge about other nations. Most of them abroad send home information of presumed military value. It is well known that spies swarmed in Manchuria and Korea prior to the Russo-Japanese War, and that every hill, mountain, road, well, and town was on the military maps. That information was valuable, because charts of the districts were lacking. But our cartographical publications can be obtained anywhere.

The itinerary of a Japanese in the Far East is frequently elusive. An American naval officer met one in Korea, apparently a naturalist, in Korean costume. Later in the day he was sketching streams and roads. The same officer far up in China some years later was introduced at a club to a Japanese in European dress who spoke nothing but French. He was in a section devoid of cities to establish banks. The officer thought he recognized the man, and, finding him alone, spoke in English. The Nipponese dropped his pretense, told what he was about, and pledged the American to secrecy. That game is going on all the time in the Far East. One of Kipling's longer works tells how a lad became a most expert member of the secret service that England maintains along the Indian frontier.

But here in America the same game is going on. One leading New York society woman long had a German nobleman for a coachman, and the telephone girl of a well known hotel has been a trusted agent of the Belgian secret service since she was a child. The immigrant sections of New York are full of foreigners despatched here to keep tabs on people. With the military and naval "secrets" of the Government below par as secrets, and with the open face policy adhered to in diplomacy at Washington, the reason for spies in America is naturally not clear at first sight.

But European royalty and nobility have not always led virtuous lives, and there are more of their descendants in real life than are dreamed of in the Almanach de Gotha or the peerages. And there are many ticket-of-leave men. Few of these leave royal or baronial halls of their free will to meet the world face to face. Many of them are despatched to America, to live, unknowable in their true dignity and unknown, on stipends paid regularly. A good many of the spies here are charged with paying over this

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