JAPAN FINDS DEMOCRACY IN RICE POT

Recent Riots Show People Are Trying to Leap Upon the Seats of the Ancient Gods

Old Princes Practised Brotherhood as Aesthetics but Made Their Slaves Kiss Their Feet Just the Same

By Adachi Kinnosuke

THE recent rice riot in Japan is really the electric display advertising board, literally as broad as the empire, of a more or less sensational leap which democracy has taken in that sacred moss-coated land of the gods. That is about the only meaning worth while bothering about in connection with the riot.

It was not the advertisement of the birth of democracy in the land, as some good American friends of ours believe. Asia is an old, old home of democracy—although this must be scandalous news to the American who has come to believe that democracy is the one sacred commodity on which the white race has always had permanent patent and exclusive manufacturing rights.

As a matter of sober historic fact a Hindu—therefore colored—prince who sat upon the throne of Delhi essayed to establish an Indian Empire "broad-based upon the people's will," as Achmed Abdullah once told the American reading public. And that Hindu prince had lived ages before Voltaire, Rousseau, Robespierre or Beaumarchais became acquainted with their own mothers or one Mr. Benjamin Franklin could set a line of type.

"Oh, to Feel What Wretches Feel!"

In Japan democracy, in the sense of a government for the people, existed in the days of the ancient Mikados, who were wont to walk out into wintry, snowy nights bare to the skin in order that they might remind themselves of the hardships their beloved people were enduring. It has been the boast of the chronicles of Elder Nippon that her sovereigns "from ages eternal" have always built their governmental policies upon the principle called "Mimpon Shugi." And the *mimpon shugi* means, if it does mean anything at all, that the people are the whole thing and the state is all for the people.

In democracy, in the sense of a society which offers equal opportunity for successes and achievements to all the people of every standing and station, Asian states have been a good deal more advanced than Europe, and quite as much so as the United States of North America. To one Napoleon who flared as the one sensation of five centuries of European history Asia can name quite a number—Tamerlane, Attila, Ghengiz Khan, Runjeet Singh, Shi-Hwang-ti, Hideyoshi.

The last named gentleman lived in Japan in the latter half of the sixteenth century. He was the son of a humble peasant and a sandal bearer; he attained the position of Shogun under the proud title of Taiko, the military chieftain of the country and the de facto sovereign of the empire.

One need not go so far back into history if he does not wish to. There is Yuan Shih-kai in China; there is Prince Ito in Japan. Yuan was a low-caste Honanese adventurer. When he died he was the dictator of China, although he did not quite succeed in establishing his own imperial dynasty. Prince Ito was once the janitor of a small private school, the famous Matsushita Bijiku, taught by Yoshida Shoin. He travelled all the distance between the bare-legged, penniless student to a prince of the empire, and was perhaps the most trusted adviser of unquestionably the most remarkable sovereign who ever sat upon the throne of the Mikados.

But democracy, in the sense of a government by the people—that, also, the people of Japan did have once. But that was in the misty days lost in the twilight of history, when our august ancestors were running about clothed mostly in atmosphere and partly in animals' skins. Since then, with the introduction of culture and with social and political progress, they have never had it, until—until the present Count Itagaki dramatically introduced it into the fervid fancies of the young politicians of the New Japan.

At Gifu, while Itagaki was delivering his fiery speech on popular rights (political), a young man—not a fanatic, as any standard history would tell you, but a sincere devotee of the imperial house and the imperial system of government—attacked him with a dagger and wounded him. It was before a large audience, more or less excited with this new doctrine of popular rights. It made a splendid scene, vivid with the flow of blood. And as the orator fell he cried: "Itagaki may die, but Liberty, never!"

The strange and eloquent thing about the exclamation was that it was not theatrical in any sense whatever. Count Itagaki had formed a political party of his own and christened it "Jiyu-to"—that is to say, "the party of liberty." And the Japanese have always looked upon Itagaki as the father of popular political rights in Japan.

Since the days of Count Itagaki's activities for the promotion of popular political rights the history of political Japan teems with facts which testify to the growth, to a sensational and almost scandalously rapid growth, of democracy. Time was when the men of the two powerful clans of the South, which had more than any other influence helped to bring the Emperor back to the actual power of the government—the men of Satsuma and of Chosu—held the power of the government in their hands. But that is a thing of the past now. Time was when the so-called Elder Statesmen—mostly men of the Satsuma and Choshu clans—used practically to dictate the major policies of the government. That time is also gone. When the Yamamoto Cabinet fell, in March, 1914, the political Japan thought that it heard the knell of the so-called clan cabinets. It was not mistaken.

One of the most sensational events in the history of political Japan was the coming of Okuma out of the classic quietude of his Waseda estate and into the Premiership following the downfall of the Yamamoto régime. When Count Okuma retired, in 1898, from the Premiership he was sixty years of age. At that time the prevailing opinion was that the political career of the count was closed. More than anybody else the count himself thought so. He retired to Waseda and devoted himself to his two big hobbies—the Waseda University, one of the greatest universities in the empire, and to trees and gardening. Sixteen years he spent in the scholarly atmosphere of his library and of his university, which he had founded with his own private funds. Then, at the age of seventy-six, he was summoned to form the ministry. But that was not the thing which impressed his country and his people.

Count Okuma has always been looked upon as the leader of the people. Foreign reporters invariably style him the one democrat of Japan. And there is no gainsaying the fact that he has said a good deal on the subject of popular government and the rights of the people. At any rate, his return to power was interpreted as a distinct triumph of democratic ideas by all the politicians in Japan.

But, after all, the most significant triumph of democratic ideals among the people of Japan is not in the realm of politics. It is in a more permanent, a more vital realm of social structure of the people and their sentiment toward it. More especially in the sentiments of the men and women who compose the nobility of the realm toward class distinctions and oldtime usages connected with them.

Early in the summer of 1917 a new naval attaché to the Japanese Embassy at Washington was appointed. When he landed at San Francisco in fact, before he had the chance to land—an enterprising reporter from a Japanese paper published there nabbed him aboard the steamship Tenyo-Maru, one of the crack trans-pacific liners, which had brought the attaché over.

The reason for this prompt and unceremonious attack on the newcomer was that he bore the title of viscount. But, of course, a mere viscount is nothing at all whatever in these days, even in Japan. But the particular title in connection with the particular naval attaché meant something more. The young gentleman was to the manner born, and the title in his case meant that he was the present head of the House of Hotta, the ex-Daimyo of the famous Clan of Sano. At the first mention of his title the nobleman fired this shaft at the reporter and felled him to the floor senseless with amazement:

"Iyamo, kwazoku no sanzoku no shishaku no goshaku no to yuyona hanashiwa doka yamenishite kure-lamae!"

Annihilating Class Distinction

Which, as all my American readers can see for themselves, is at once the most deadly as well as the most humorous anathema on any such anachronism as aristocracy that ever came from a pair of human lips. Only thing about the expression is that it is so finely flavored with the magic of Japanese words that it cannot be translated into any other foreign tongue. And because it cannot be, I shall not be guilty of attempting it here. But it simply annihilates the very sense of class distinction. It does more than that; it laughs it out of existence. And the reporter dévotes a good part of the interview to the description of the sack coat and straw hat of the nobleman, which so beautifully and scandalously tuned with his ultra-democratic sentiment and behavior.

But an incident which points out and demonstrates this tremendous and profound growth of democracy among the people of Japan in, perhaps, the most extreme and dramatic and positive manner took place but a few weeks ago in this very City of New York.

Prince Yoshihisa Tokugawa was here then, heading the Red Cross mission. One night the Prince had an entirely informal and quiet dinner with two others on the roof of the Astor Hotel. One of the two while waiting for the appearance of the Prince said to the other:

"How tremendously the old world has changed! I would like to see how my august grandfather would have acted had he heard that his grandson was to dine with the head of the Tokugawa family—of the Shogun's family—vis-a-vis in a close intimacy of a small table! He would have expired on the spot with the shock, or if not that he would have committed hara-kiri right off to apologize for the sacrilege of the very intimation of any such outrageous thing. For all I know the ghost of my august ancestor may be performing the sacred rite of the Samurai in the shadow world at this very minute. Why, my ancestors could not have approached the dais of the Shogun on their hands and knees. And here is their degenerate posterity actually invited to sit with the present head of the Shogun's family, talk with him, eat with him on an absolute equality."

The dinner was good, but by no means pretentious. It did not take much more than an hour—quite long enough, however, to convince the two dinner companions of the prince that they were enjoying the rare fortune of being in the presence of a man who was at one and the same time the bluest of all Nippon's bluebloods and as well the greatest democrat out of that ancient realm.

As though to nail this impression for all eternity, the party, after dinner, descended on Broadway and picked its way to a movie theatre. The men paid the extravagant sum of something like 60 cents each for the seats. And from the rearmost end of the theatre the prince and his party viewed with more or less pathetic humor the moving picture reproduction of the reception given to Prince Tokugawa and his party at the White House at Washington by the President of the United States!

Even more significant and certainly much more picturesque than this incident was an event which took place in Japan not so many weeks ago. The Viscountess Kano is personally conducting wives of the farmers and artisans of Ichino Miya, in the prefecture of Chiba, about the country to enjoy first-hand study and observation of the various industrial activities and enterprises of the empire. It is one of the most effective and extensive methods of liberal education employed in that land of people wellnigh crazed with the fever of education and investigation. And in that there is no particular significance.

What is shockingly startling about this incident is this fact:

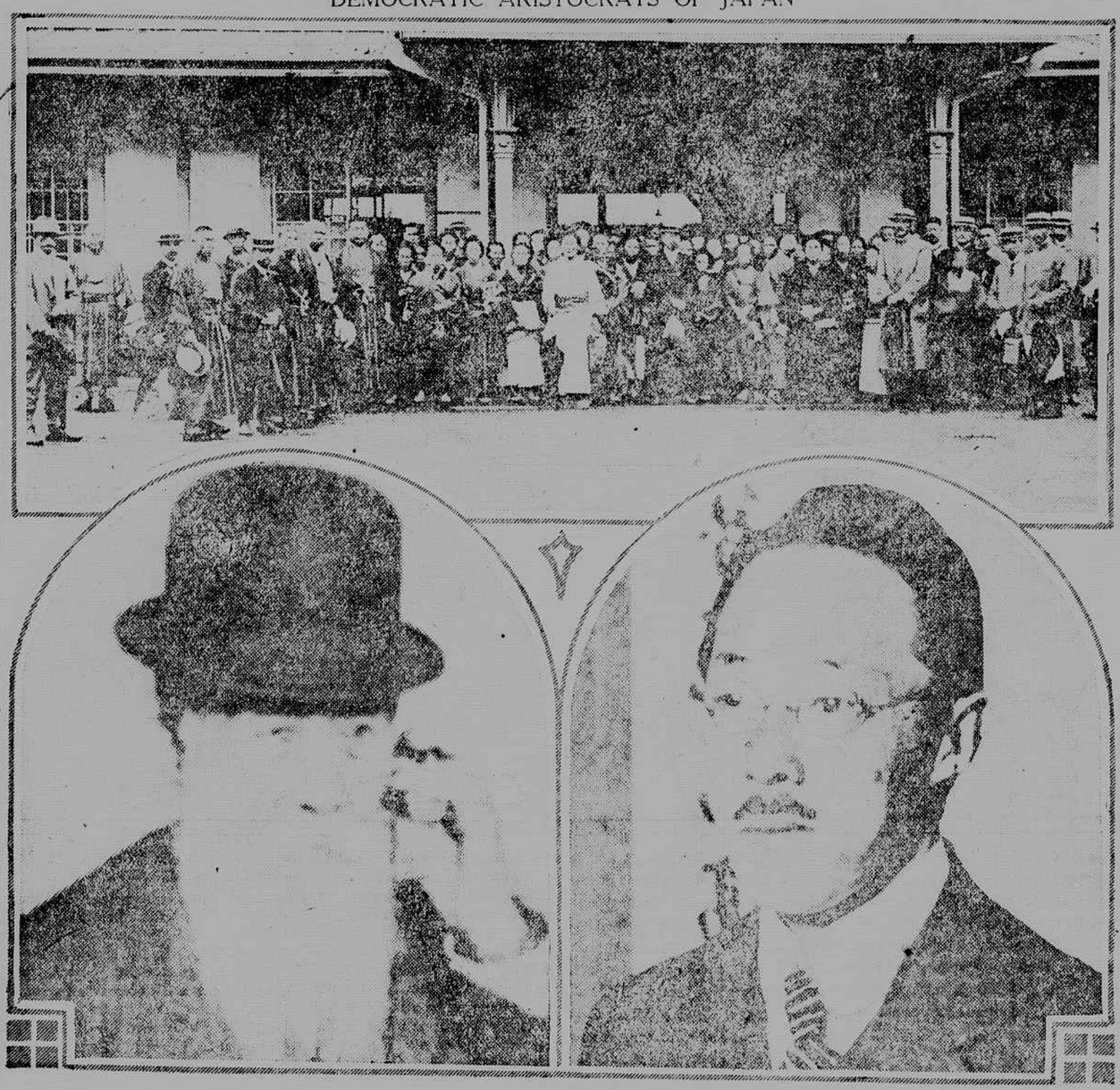
Aforetime They Would Have Kissed the Dust

Viscountess Kano is the wife of Viscount Kano, who was the daimyo, or the lord, of the Ichino Miya Clan. In the good old days of the Samurai and the sword—not so many years ago, either—these farmers' and workmen's wives would have behaved somewhat differently from the way they are carrying themselves to-day. If they had met the palanquin of our noble Lady Kano on a public highway—in the days of the Old Nippon—these farmers' wives would not have dared to lift their eyes to the palanquin of the noble lady, let alone to her person. More than that, those women would have taken off their wooden clogs or straw sandals, knelt upon them right there on the dusty road, and, what is more, wiped the road with their foreheads as the palanquin passed them by.

There are foreign visitors to Japan who look upon the super-dreadnought fleet of the Japanese navy and lose their breaths in a fit of wonder, recalling the wooden junks with spears and streamers and with no guns whatsoever which tried to stop Commodore Perry's fleet at Uraga. They are silly, those visitors, and wasting their wonder like a spendthrift.

They should open their eyes to this miracle of democratic evolution in Japan presented here through the simple fact of Viscountess Kano and her party of farmers' wives of Ichino Miya. There is nothing as crude and noisy about these ladies as the rice riots reported to be nation-wide in Japan at present. But it is quite as emphatic and illuminating a testimony as the other of the vital presence of the spirit of democracy in Japan of which America has had but the most shadowy suspicion.

DEMOCRATIC ARISTOCRATS OF JAPAN



The group above is remarkable in that it shows Japanese peasants and an aristocrat (Viscountess Kano) standing together. The viscountess is marked by a cross. A few years ago the peasant women beside her would have been required to keep their foreheads against the ground so long as she was in sight.

Below, at the left, is Count Itagaki, father of popular political freedom in Japan, and at the right Prince Keikyu Tokugawa, the heir of the late Prince Keiki Tokugawa, the last of the Tokugawa Shoguns, and greatest democrat among the Japanese aristocracy.

WOUNDED FROM FRANCE ARRIVING AT AMERICAN HOSPITALS

Three Base Units Here Will Distribute Men to Twenty-Seven Institutions Throughout Country

Ellis Island, Staten Island and Manhattan Stations Ready—Central Palace Will Have 4,000 Beds

THE glorious and tragic backwash of the great Allied victory of the Marne has begun to reach America. The great debarkation hospitals in New York, built to care for thousands of our wounded soldiers, are beginning to have real work to do. The thin stream of returning fighters which has been trickling back over our "bridge of ships" has swollen suddenly, though quietly and without attracting the attention of the public.

The first of the vessels carrying sick and wounded Americans from the trenches has arrived. Others are on their way. Sometimes patients are received day after day, where they have been coming at intervals of one, two and three weeks.

On a certain day recently 103 patients from overseas had arrived at Ellis Island shortly after noon, and more were expected that evening.

Aboard the little government boat that plies between the Battery and the island are officers, soldiers, sailors, friends or relatives who have been fortunate enough to obtain a pass to visit an inmate of the hospital, and one or two smartly but simply dressed society women, workers in the Red Cross tent or bent on some errand of cheer to the hospital.

Major Haig is in charge of the island, and it is he who puts the visitor in charge of a guide, some officer stationed at the hospital.

The general impression made by the hospital, formerly the immigration station, is one of well planned space and coolness. It is divided into Islands 1, 2 and 3, the long strips of land where the buildings stand being connected by a narrow strip. The space between Islands 1 and 2, now occupied by water, will soon be converted into a park. The administrative offices and the Bureau of Information are on Island 1. On Island 3 is the Red Cross tent and the motion picture apparatus. Here entertainments are given nearly every Tuesday evening, and many celebrities of the drama and vaudeville world gladly contribute their services.

Near the registration desk, where six uniformed men sit before typewriters, on the dock where they have been landed, are rows of sick and wounded men. Some lie on stretchers; others sit on benches just as they have been carried or helped off the ship. Visitors are not allowed to speak to the patients, but now and then the guide, a friendly lieutenant, exchanges a commonplace but kindly greeting.

In spite of the visible appeal to sympathy made by the surgical cases the men destined for the psychopathic ward inspire the most pity. Eighty mental cases had been brought in that noon—enough to make necessary the opening of a second psychopathic ward. Shell shock cases, manifested in various nervous ailments, are included in this class.

When the patients have registered and been classified they are led or carried to their new quarters. The visitor is permitted to follow them. There are various wards for surgical, general medical, psychopathic and tubercular patients.

In one ward alone 250 vacant beds were awaiting occupants. No doubt the mattresses, although of the usual hospital variety, will seem soft to a weary sufferer who has been forced to endure a hammock on his trip across the ocean.

All the wards are cool and wind swept. In those that were occupied phonographs were cheering the invalids with gay and favorite tunes.

The hospital is provided with a magnificently equipped laboratory. Here rows and rows of bottles filled with every conceivable drug needed in the practice of modern medicine line the shelves. Here piles upon piles of test tubes line the drawers. Here tests are made. Two sterilizers are the special pride of the department head, Captain Clark.

Another feature of the hospital is the immense kitchen, where a small army of cooks was engaged in making omelets for the evening meal. These omelets, by the way, are not of ordinary size, but are allowed to spread over the bottom of the huge pans. On a table in the kitchen stood two great bowls of dried pears. They were soaking, preparatory to being used for supper on the following day. "Food as it is understood in the army" or any such contemptuous description of meals would be out of place if applied to this institution.

Passing through wards glimpses of bed patients were caught as they ate a substantial supper with evident relish.

After looking over the wards, the quarters for the staff and the officers next invited inspection. These fare no less well than the other inmates of the institution, and the quarters are both comfortable and airy.

The Red Cross tent occupies a conspicuous place on Island 3. One or two workers are always on duty, and these visit the wards to obtain details about certain cases. Some of the wounded men have not received any pay for seven or eight months. It is assumed the pay check is following the wounded men from company to base hospital, and will finally overtake them here. Others want to communicate with relatives or friends. Still others want some little comfort which can be procured for them through this channel.

In spite of the changed objective of the institution about half a dozen immigrants remain. The most attractive among them is a little Spanish girl, some six years of age, who is recovering from a contagious disease.

Two hospitals in New York where patients are now being cared for are at Ellis Island and at Fox Hills, Staten Island. Within a few weeks the alterations at the former Greenhut department store building, at Eighteenth Street and Sixth Avenue, will be completed. Then the Grand Central Palace is to be converted at a cost of $300,000 into the largest war hospital in the country with accommodations for nearly 4,000 men. The Yale Club in this city and the Hotel Nassau at Long Beach will be added to the chain.

In New York 529 officers of the medical, sanitary and dental arms of the Medical Corps, 2,649 trained hospital attendants, ambulance drivers and other enlisted men of the medical service, 342 graduate army nurses and 65 civilian helpers represent forces ready for service.

A fleet of six hospital boats, manned by picked men and with nurses supplied by the American Red Cross, besides two hospital trains, Nos. 1 and 4, with a convalescent capacity of 250 patients in addition to thirty bed patients, are also ready to be called upon. Boats and trains are finely equipped and every comfort for the patient has been installed. The trains are in ten cars. Captain Reitz, Medical Corps, is in charge of train 1, and Captain Corwin S. Mayes in charge of train 4.

Colonel James L. Kennedy, a distinguished medical officer of the regular army, is the head of the great medical receiving and clearing station of this port. A little over a year ago an officer and two men were ordered to New York to set in motion the huge machine which is now in operation. Since then there has been hard work to do. To-day Colonel Kennedy from his headquarters at 68 and 70 Hudson Street, Hoboken, directs the activities of a force that has grown to a total of 8,354 officers, enlisted men, nurses and civilian employes.

"When the wounded and sick arrive from overseas," said Colonel Kennedy one day last week, in describing the method of procedure instituted by him, "they will be taken to one of the debarkation hospitals. From there they will be transferred to one of the twenty-seven general hospitals throughout the country. Whenever possible the hospital nearest the patient's home will be selected.

"Relatives and friends of the wounded soldiers should remember that the government is doing everything in its power for the comfort of their dear ones. In view of this it is the earnest desire of the Medical Corps that no attempts to see wounded soldiers be made during the period of their stay at the debarkation hospitals, until the extent of their injuries has been satisfactorily determined and their condition permits them to be transferred to the general hospitals."

The Ellis Island Hospital is called by the Medical Corps Debarkation Hospital No. 1. The Fox Hills institution on Staten Island is No. 2; Greenhut's old store, No. 3. The respective bed capacity of each is 1,075, 1,576 and 3,000.

In addition to the hospitals for the care of overseas patients, Colonel Kennedy is also in charge of three great embarkation hospitals for the treatment of men who are under orders for overseas service. These are at Hoboken, N. J.; Secaucus, N. J., and Hoffman Island, N. Y. The capacity of these embarkation hospitals is, respectively, 763, 374 and 694.

Then there are the base hospitals at Camp Merritt, N. J., and Camp Mills, L. I. These are for the care and treatment of soldiers training at home.

The normal bed capacity of hospitals now ready or soon to be in operation is 90,095. In an emergency this can be increased to a capacity of 99,243 beds.

The normal capacity of the general hospitals to receive overseas patients is 14,573 beds, and the emergency capacity 17,447. Other hospital construction now going on will add 7,027 beds.

WOUNDED SOLDIERS HOME FROM FRANCE

This picture shows a group of wounded American soldiers invalided home from France and now recuperating at a hospital on this side. Here are sent incapacitated soldiers who are taught useful occupations so that they may not go out into the world handicapped.