

# Suicide of Nogi Was In Keeping With the Whole Life of the Man

A Spartan, Trained For War, He Was Unsparring of Himself and His Men.

Success In War With Russia Gave Him Rank Among Great Captains.

THE suicide of General Count Nogi and his wife on the occasion of the funeral of the late emperor Mutsuhito of Japan, strange as it sounds to western ears, was, after all, in keeping with the whole life and character of the man. In all that he did, in what he required of himself no less than of those who served under him, the dead soldier represented a sterner age and a more self-forgetting principle than are common under occidental civilization. He was samurai born, and as a samurai he died, carrying out to the last extreme that devotion to the memory of his master which is summed up in that curious doctrine of Bushido.

The man who could hear without re-peating that his two sons had been slain in one battle and could order through all the long months of the siege of Port Arthur wave after wave of his gallant little soldiers to certain death before Russian guns and bayonets was only carrying out the teachings of his creed when he refused to survive the monarch by whose virtues his own military glory had been won.

Count Maresuke Nogi was born in 1849 a Choshu samurai and was grown to manhood before the great Japanese awakening. His birth destined him to the profession of arms, and like a Spartan had the whole of his training was directed to train him in hardihood and valor. When he was only fourteen he was studying the art of war at the capital of the lord of the Choshu, and to fit himself for the service of his superiors he set himself to subdue every natural desire. He schooled himself to disregard pain, to think little of personal pleasure, even to seem indifferent to his own family, and above all to scorn the fear of death.

With this end in view, he fasted for long periods, traveled barefoot on frosty mornings and took long journeys in the fiercest summer heat. It is even said that in order to harden himself to the sight of blood he attended executions and dabbled his hands in the blood of the victims. So it came about that when the Satsuma rebellion began he was one of the sternest of the fighters. He was in command of the Fourteenth regiment and before the revolution came to an end had been twice wounded severely.

During the period in which Japan was preparing herself for the great struggles which have raised her to a front place among the nations General Nogi was studying the art of war and imbuing himself with all that modern science could add to the wonderful training in hardihood which was his by racial tradition. During the China-Japanese war he was in command of the First brigade and took part in an attack on Port Arthur, which was afterward to be the scene of his great military exploit. The place was then nothing like as well fortified as it was by the Russians, and its defense was feeble in comparison with the resistance of General Stoessel, but it is a fair supposition that when Japan crossed swords with its northern neighbor it was the experience and the knowledge that he gained in the earlier war which partly caused General Nogi's selection to assault the Russian stronghold with the third Japanese army.

### Siege of Port Arthur.

The history of the great siege of Port Arthur is one of the most notable in the history of war. Nogi landed at Petsiwo on May 4, 1904, and occupied Dalny four days later. The communications of Port Arthur with the north were thus cut, and from that time on the grip of Nogi on the fortress began to tighten. The actual investment was not complete before July 30, but for two months the Japanese commander had been skillfully driving the Russians back and resisted successfully every attempt of Stoessel to break through his lines.

It was not till the first day of the new year that Nogi was victorious, but in all his operations one characteristic stands out—his absolute remorselessness use of his men. Twice before the final assault on the 203 Meter hill, which determined the fate of the garrison, there were three days of general assaults. To the Russians, hidden behind their breastworks and covered by their redoubts, they were terrible enough, but to the Japanese army they were almost incredible trials of courage.

An eyewitness on the Russian side thus describes the third attack of Aug. 21, 1904, after the Japanese assault had been beaten off at 11 p. m. and 2 a. m.:

"At 3 a. m. a third attack commenced, and it seemed as if the passionless, cold hearted Nogi had sentenced the last of his troops to death. The signal was given, and a fresh wave of living flesh and blood rolled forward. This time it was the attack—the spring—of a maddened, wounded, blood-drunk herd of tigers, not men. Our truly awful fire was of no avail. The mass roared forward with the strength of a tidal wave."

On this occasion the little brown soldiers recoiled, leaving behind them on

the fire swept heights no fewer than 22,000 of their comrades. It was the apparent callousness of Nogi's strategy which staggered the world, and yet in it could be discerned a deliberate design.

Under the guns of Port Arthur lay the Russian fleet, and half around the world was coming the fleet of Rostevensky to unite with them. In the north of Korea the Russians were growing daily stronger in spite of many defeats, and day by day the exchequer of Japan was feeling the effects of the war. It was absolutely necessary to capture Port Arthur at all costs as quickly as possible, and Nogi coolly, but not earnestly, determined to spend his men lavishly in completing the task which it was their duty to perform.

### Death of His Two Sons.

What he asked his men to face he was willing to accept for himself. When the news came of the death of his son at the battle of Nanshan he turned to his wife and said:

"Do not have any funeral ceremonies yet. My sons and I offered our lives

the stern old samurai. He had been created a baron in 1885 and now was elevated to the rank of count. His work over, he retired to quiet life, taking with him the Arab charger which Stoessel had presented him at the fall of Port Arthur and the horses which he had ridden all through the campaign and were now given him by the nation.

He was a member of the supreme military council of Japan, one of the famous elder statesmen, and amid all his honors preserved the same characteristics of the stern, self-restrained soldier to whom discipline was part of his nature and duty his only aim.

Only once did he leave Japan, when he went to England to attend the coronation of King George V. as the representative of the emperor, whom he has refused to survive. In all his private life he remained as unassuming and retiring as if he had not performed one of the greatest military feats of modern times.

### What Harakiri Is.

Harakiri, or self disembowelment, is the national form of honorable suicide. It was originally the method of self destruction permitted to royal offenders in feudal times.

Harakiri is said to have been the growth of medieval militarism. Nobles practiced it in the early days to prevent themselves from falling into the hands of the enemy. As early as the fourteenth century the custom of committing harakiri had become a much valued privilege. Harakiri was of two kinds—obligatory and voluntary. In the first kind, which was the more ancient, a noble who had offended or had been disloyal to his ruler would receive a jeweled dagger from the mikado and a notification that he had a certain number of days in which to kill himself with it. The offender made



Copyright by Underwood & Underwood. THE LATE GENERAL COUNT MARESUKU NOGI.

to the emperor when this war began. One service may in a little time do for the three of us."

With Port Arthur captured, Nogi and the remains of his army were set free to join the main body of the Japanese, who under Field Marshal Oyama were steadily pressing the Russians out of Korea. He arrived on the northern scene of operations in time to take part in the great battle of Mukden and in this case was entrusted with a vast turning movement, which, if it did not require the same relentless determination as the storming of the Port Arthur heights, demanded military skill of the highest order. Nogi's corps was on the left of Oyama's position, and he received orders to march due north, between the Sha river and the Hun to turn Kuropatkin's right. He showed in this march all the dash and energy which had been proved at Port Arthur and carried the feeble Russian resistance completely before him. Nogi showed signs of crumpling up the entire Russian right and establishing himself on Kuropatkin's line of retreat.

To prevent the re-enforcement of the Russian right it fell to Kuroki and Nodzu on the Japanese center and right to sacrifice their corps in fierce attacks on the Russian position, and to them, perhaps, fell the fiercest fighting, but nothing could excel the driving force of Nogi's advance, and the success of this movement has been declared by competent military critics to have been directly responsible for the downfall of the Russian army.

He forced Kuropatkin's men back on themselves till they were crowded into a small position, raked from three sides by artillery fire, and he pressed on till ten days from the time that he had begun his great turning movement he had established himself squarely across the Russian retreat. Only once was he checked, four days before the end of the great conflict, when Kuropatkin himself sent forward first forty battalions and then led himself sixty-five in an effort to break through the enemy's lines.

The valor of the Russians caused real anxiety in the Japanese headquarters, but the stern determination of Nogi was checked, not defeated. He reached Kuropatkin's rear, and the Russian army became a mob.

To no general returning from the war was a greater welcome given than to

elaborate preparations for his suicide and disemboweled himself on a raised dais while his friends sat around in a semicircle and watched his death.

The operation consists in plunging a dagger into the stomach on the left side and drawing it to the right and upward. The victim's dagger in ancient times was taken to the mikado as evidence that the heroic act had been committed.

Voluntary harakiri, which has long survived in Japan, is committed by persons as proof of loyalty to a dead superior, and sometimes as a public protest against what the suicide believed to be a false national policy.

In 1891 Lieutenant Takeyoshi killed himself by harakiri near the grave of his ancestors because he felt that his national government was not sufficiently vigorous in taking precautions against possible Russian encroachments in the northern part of Japan.

It has been no uncommon thing for Japanese women to kill themselves for similar reasons, but instead of cutting their stomachs they slash their throats.

It is asserted that in Japan each year at least 1,500 harakiris are committed, nearly one-half being voluntary. Friends of the victims take much grim pleasure in relating stories of the brave manner in which the deed is done.

### A BILLION DOLLAR CROP.

Northwest Harvest Will Net \$160,000,000 Over Last Year.

The value of the crops and live stock products of the farms of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, northern Iowa, Montana and western Wisconsin this year will aggregate a billion dollars, according to careful estimates made by the Farmer. The publication also looks forward to the biggest demand for machinery and supplies in the history of the northwest.

It is estimated that the farmers of the Dakotas, Minnesota and Montana are harvesting field crops worth \$550,000,000 at present. If this estimate is true the year's earnings will show an increase of \$100,000,000 over the crop value for this section in 1911.

### Pay-as-you-enter Cars in England.

The first pay-as-you-enter cars in England were introduced last June on the Gateshead, Newcastle.

**Inclosing a Stamp.**  
Touch your tongue to the center of the gummed side of a stamp, press the latter gently to the corner of a letter sheet and the recipient will be able to remove it readily without damaging the stamp. This plan leaves the mailage intact all around the stamp, and it can be used without danger of its dropping off the envelope.

**Assurance.**  
Strictly, "assurance" is applied only to the contract for life insurance, the other term, "insurance," being reserved for the remaining forms of contract for insurance.

**Aluminium.**  
One of the most widely distributed elements is aluminium, for it is estimated that about a twelfth of the earth's crust at least is composed of that material. The metal exists only as a compound in nature. One of its most interesting properties is its extreme lightness, for its specific gravity is only 2.56, about one-third that of iron. It resists corrosion well and is a good conductor of electricity.

**Denmark.**  
Nearly one-half of the people of Denmark live exclusively by agriculture.

**Clay Pipes.**  
Justin McCarthy went to London in 1852 and found clay pipes in fashion. "It was thought quite the right thing for a man of fashion to appear in the broad day with a clay pipe in his mouth," he wrote. "Many a young man stuck a clay pipe in his mouth and pretended to be a real gentleman."

**Many of Them Do.**  
It is easy enough to be pleasant. When everything goes just right, But the girl worth while Is the girl who can smile When her shoes are much too tight. —Chicago Record-Herald.

**Usual Way.**  
Mrs. Powers—I will never forget the things you said to me before we were married.

Mr. Powers—Bet a hundred you won't! Had I known that you had such a good memory I wouldn't have married you. —Philadelphia Telegraph.

**Unhandicapping.**  
Maed—Why does Kate take off her wedding ring whenever she sits down to read a novel?  
Ethel—Because she enjoys reading one better if she can temporarily forget that she's married.—Boston Transcript.

**Turned Down.**  
Ella—That young farmer tried to kiss me, saying that he had never kissed a girl before.  
Stella—What did you tell him?  
Ella—That I was no agricultural experiment station.—New York Press.

—The fair, the great fair—soon.

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