

## XIV.

*CREATION OF THE DUAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.*

MEANWHILE Yoritomo was strengthening his power at Kamakura, and initiating that dual system of government which has puzzled so many modern writers on Japan, and has given rise to the supposition that Japan had "two emperors, one temporal, the other spiritual."

The country at this time was distracted with the disturbances of the past few years; robbers were numerous, and the Buddhist monasteries were often nests of soldiers. Possessed of wealth, arms, and military equipments, the bonzes were ever ready to side with the party that pleased them. The presence of such men and institutions rendered it difficult for any one ruler to preserve tranquillity, since it was never known at what moment these professedly peaceful men would turn out as trained bands of military warriors. To restore order, prosperity, revenue, and firm government was now the professed wish of Yoritomo. He left the name and honor of government at Kiōto. He kept the reality in Kamakura in his own hands, and for his own family.

In 1184, while his capital was rapidly becoming a magnificent city, he created the Mandokoro, or Council of State, at which all the government affairs of the Kuantō were discussed, and through which the administration of the government was carried on. The officers of the Internal Revenue Department in Kiōto, seeing which way the tide of power was flowing, had previously come to Kamakura bringing the records of the department, and became subject to Yoritomo's orders. Thus the first necessity, revenue, was obtained. A criminal tribunal was also established, especially for the trial of the numerous robbers, as well as for ordinary cases. He permitted all who had objections to make or improvements to suggest to send in their petitions. He requested permission of the mikado to reward all who had performed meritorious actions, and to disarm the priests, and to confiscate their war materials. These requests, urged on the emperor in the interest of good government, were no sooner granted, and the plans executed,

than the news of the destruction of the Taira family at Dan no ura was received. Then Yoritomo prayed the mikado that five men of his family name might be made governors of provinces. The petition was granted, and Yoshitsuné was made governor of Iyo by special decree.

Here may be distinctly seen the first great step toward the military government that lasted nearly seven centuries.

The name of the shōgun's government, and used especially by its opposers, was *bakufu*—literally, curtain government, because anciently in China, as in Japan, a curtain (*baku*) surrounded the tent or headquarters of the commanding general. *Bakufu*, like most technical military terms in Japan, is a Chinese word.

The appointing of five military men as governors of provinces was a profound innovation in Japanese governmental affairs. Hitherto it had been the custom to appoint only civilians from the court to those offices. It does not appear, however, that Yoritomo at first intended to seize the military control of the whole empire; but his chief minister, Ōyé no Hiromoto, president of the Council of State, conceived another plan which, when carried out, as it afterward was, threw all real power in Yoritomo's hands. As the Kuantō was tranquil and prosperous under vigorous government, and as the Kuantō troops were used to put down rebels elsewhere, he proposed that in all the circuits and provinces of the empire a special tax should be levied for the support of troops in those places. By this means a permanent force could be kept, by which the peace of the empire could be maintained without the expense and trouble of calling out the Eastern army. Also—and here was another step to military government and feudalism—that a *shiugo*—a military chief, should be placed in each province, dividing the authority with the *kokushiu*, or civil governor, and a *jito*, to be appointed from Kamakura, should rule jointly with rulers of small districts, called *shōyen*. Still further—another step in feudalism—he proposed that *his own relations* who had performed meritorious service in battle should fill these offices, and that they should all be under his control from Kamakura. This was done, and Yoritomo thus acquired the governing power of all Japan.

It seems, at first sight, strange that the mikado and his court should grant these propositions; yet they did so. They saw the Kuantō—half the empire—tranquil under the strong military government of Yoritomo. Hōjō, his father-in-law, was commanding the garrison at Kiōtō. The mikado, Gotoba, may be said to have owed his throne to

Yoritomo, whose ancestors had conquered, almost added to the realm, all the extreme Northern and Eastern parts of Japan. This portion, merely tributary before, was now actually settled and governed like the older parts of the empire.

In 1180, Yoritomo made a campaign in that part of Japan north of the thirty-seventh parallel, then called Mutsu and Déwa. On his return, being now all-victorious, he visited the court at Kiōto. The quondam exile was now the foremost subject in the empire. His reception and treatment by the reigning and cloistered emperors were in the highest possible scale of magnificence. The splendor of his own retinue astonished even the old courtiers, accustomed to the gay pageants of the capital. They could scarcely believe that such wealth existed and such knowledge of the art of display was cultivated in the Kuantō. Military shows, athletic games, and banquets were held for many days, and the costliest presents exchanged, many of which are still shown at Kamakura and Kiōto. Yoritomo returned, clothed with the highest honor, and with vastly greater jurisdiction than had ever been intrusted to a subject. With all the civil functions ever held by the once rival Fujiwara, he united in himself more military power than a Taira had ever wielded.

In 1192, he attained to the climax of honor, when the mikado appointed him Sei-i Tai Shōgun (Barbarian-subjugating Great General), a title and office that existed until 1868. Henceforth the term shōgun came to have a new significance. Anciently all generals were called shōguns; but, with new emphasis added to the name, *the* shōgun acquired more and more power, until foreigners supposed him to be a sovereign. Yet this subordinate from first to last—from 1194 until 1868—was a general only, and a military vassal of the emperor. Though he governed the country with a strong military hand, he did it as a vassal, in the name and for the sake of the mikado at Kiōto.

Peace now reigned in Japan. The soldier-ruler at Kamakura spent the prime of his life in consolidating his power, expecting to found a family that should rule for many generations. He encouraged hunting on Mount Fuji, and sports calculated to foster a martial spirit in the enervating times of peace. In 1195, he made another visit to Kiōto, staying four months. Toward the end of 1198, he had a fall from his horse, and died early in 1199. He was fifty-three years old, and had ruled fifteen years.

Yoritomo is looked upon as one of the ablest rulers and greatest generals that ever lived in Japan. Yet, while all acknowledge his

consummate ability, many regard him as a cruel tyrant, and a heartless and selfish man. His treatment of his two brothers, Noriyori and Yoshitsuné, are evidences that this opinion is too well founded. Certain it is that the splendor of Yoritomo's career has never blinded the minds of posterity to his selfishness and cruelty; and though, like Napoleon, he has had his eulogists, yet the example held up for the imitation of youth is that of Yoshitsuné, and not Yoritomo. Mori says of the latter: "He encouraged each of his followers to believe himself the sole confidant of his leader's schemes, and in this cunning manner separated their interests, and made them his own. Nearly all of those around him who became possible rivals in power or popularity were cruelly handled when he had exhausted the benefit of their service." His simple tomb stands at the top of a knoll on the slope of hills a few hundred yards distant from the great temple at Kamakura, overlooking the fields on which a mighty city once rose, when called into being by his genius and energy, which flourished for centuries, and disappeared, to allow luxuriant Nature to again assert her sway. The rice-swamps and the millet-fields now cover the former sites of his proudest palaces. Where metropolitan splendor and luxury once predominated, the irreverent tourist bandies his jests, or the toiling farmer stands knee-deep in the fertile ooze, to win from classic soil his taxes and his daily food.

The victory over the Taira was even greater than Yoritomo had supposed possible. Though exulting in the results, he burned with jealousy that Yoshitsuné had the real claim to the honor of victory. While in this mood, there were not wanting men to poison his mind, and fan the suspicions into fires of hate. There was one Kajiwara, who had been a military adviser to the expedition to destroy the Taira. On one occasion, Yoshitsuné advised a night attack in full force on the enemy. Kajiwara opposed the project, and hindered it. Yoshitsuné, with only fifty men, carried out his plan, and, to the chagrin and disgrace of Kajiwara, he won a brilliant victory. This man, incensed at his rival, and consuming with wrath, hied to Yoritomo with tales and slanders, which the jealous brother too willingly believed. Yoshitsuné, returning as a victor, and with the spoils for his brother, received peremptory orders not to enter Kamakura, but to remain in the village of Koshigoyé, opposite the isle of Enoshima. While there, he wrote a touching letter, recounting all his toils and dangers while pursuing the Taira, and appealing for clearance of his name from slander and suspicion. It was sent to Oyé no Hiromoto, chief

councilor of Yoritomo, whom Yoshitsuné begged to intercede to his brother for him. This letter, still extant, and considered a model of filial and fraternal affection, is taught by parents to their children. It is among the most pathetic writings in Japanese literature, and is found in one of the many popular collections of famous letters.

Wearied of waiting in the suburbs of the city, Yoshitsuné went to Kiōto. Yoritomo's troops, obeying orders, attacked his house to kill him. He fled, with sixteen retainers, into Yamato. There he was again attacked, but escaped and fled. He now determined to go to Ōshū, to his old friend Hidéhira. He took the route along the west coast, through Echizen, Kaga, and Echigo, and found a refuge, as he supposed, with Hidéhira. The spies of his brother soon discovered his lurking-place, and ordered him to be put to death. The son of Hidéhira attacked him. According to popular belief, Yoshitsuné, after killing his wife and children with his own hands, committed *hara-kiri*. His head, preserved in saké, was sent to Kamakura.

The exact truth concerning the death of Yoshitsuné is by no means yet ascertained. It is declared by some that he escaped and fled to Yezo, where he lived among the Ainōs for many years, and died among them, either naturally or by *hara-kiri*. The Ainōs have a great reverence for his deeds, and to this day worship his spirit, and over his grave in Hitaka they have erected a shrine. Others assert that he fled to Asia, and became the great conqueror, Genghis Khan.\* Concerning this last, a Japanese student once remarked, "Nothing but the extraordinary vanity of the Japanese people could originate such a report."

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\* In a Chinese book called *Seppu*, a collection of legends and historical miscellanies, published in China, it is stated that Genghis Khan was one Yoshitsuné, who came from Japan. The Chinese form of Minamoto Yoshitsuné is Gen Giké. He was also called, after his reputed death, Temujin (or Tenjin). As is well known, the Mongol conqueror's name was originally, on his first appearance, Temujin. The Japanese Ainōs have also apotheosized Yoshitsuné under the title Hanguan Dai Mīō Jīn—Great Illustrious Lawgiver. Yoshitsuné was born in 1159; he was thirty years old at the time of his reputed death. Genghis Khan was born, according to the usually received data, in 1160, and died 1227. If Gen Giké and Genghis Khan, or Genghis Kan, were identical, the hero had thirty-eight years for his achievements. Genghis Khan was born, it is said, with his hand full of blood. Obeying the words of a *shaman* (inspired seer), he took the name Genghis (greatest), and called his people Mongols (bold). The conquest of the whole earth was promised him. He and his sons subjugated China and Corea, overthrew the caliphate of Bagdad, and extended the Mongolian empire as far as the Oder and the Danube. They attempted to conquer Japan, as we shall see in the chapter headed "The Invasion of the Mongol Tartars."

Nevertheless, the immortality of Yoshitsuné is secured. Worshipped as a god by the Ainōs, honored and beloved by every Japanese youth as an ideal hero of chivalry, his features pictured on boys' kites, his mien and form represented in household effigies displayed annually at the boys' great festival of flags, glorified in art, song, and story, Yoshitsuné, the hero warrior and martyr, will live in unfolding memory so long as the ideals of the warlike Japanese stand unshattered or their traditions are preserved.\*

\* The struggles of the rival houses of Gen and Hei form an inexhaustible mine of incidents to the playwright, author, poet, and artist. I can not resist the temptation of giving one of these in this place. The artist's representation of it adorns many a Japanese house. At the siege of Ichinotani, a famous captain, named Naozané, who fought under the white flag, while in camp one day investing the Taira forces, saw a boat approach the beach fronting the fort. Shortly after, a Taira soldier rode out of the castle-gate into the waves to embark. Naozané saw, by the splendid crimson armor and golden helmet of the rider, that he was a Taira noble. Here was a prize indeed, the capture of which would make the Kuantō captain a general. Naozané thundered out the challenge: "Do my eyes deceive me? Is he a Taira leader; and is he such a coward that he shows his back to the eye of his enemy? Come back and fight!" The rider was indeed a Taira noble, young Atsumori, only sixteen years of age, of high and gentle birth, and had been reared in the palace. Naozané was a bronzed veteran of forty years. Both charged each other on horseback, with swords drawn. After a few passes, Naozané flung away his sword, and, unarmed, rushed to grasp his foe. Not yet to be outdone in gallantry, Atsumori did the same. Both clinched while in the saddle, and fell to the sand, the old campaigner uppermost. He tore off the golden helmet, and, to his amazement, saw the pale, smooth face and noble mien of a noble boy that looked just like his own beloved son of the same age. The father was more than the soldier. The victor trembled with emotion. "How wretched the life of a warrior to have to kill such a lovely boy! How miserable will those parents be who find their darling is in an enemy's hand! Wretched me, that I thought to destroy this life for the sake of reward!" He then resolved to let his enemy go secretly away, and make his escape. At that moment a loud voice shouted angrily, "Naozané is double-hearted: he captures an enemy, and then thinks to let him escape." Thus compelled, Naozané steeled his heart, took up his sword, and cut off Atsumori's head. He carried the bloody trophy to Yoshitsuné, and, while all stood admiring and ready to applaud, Naozané refused all reward, and, to the amazement of his chief and the whole camp, begged leave to resign. Doffing helmet, armor, and sword, he shaved off his hair, and became a disciple of the holy bonze Hōnen, learned the doctrines of Buddha, and, becoming profoundly versed in the sacred lore, he resolved to spend the remnant of his days in a monastery. He set out for the Kuantō, riding with his face to the tail of the animal, but in the direction of paradise. Some one asked him why he rode thus. He replied,

"In the Clear Land, perchance they're me reputed  
A warrior brave,  
Because I turn my back, refusing  
Fame, once so dear."