

## A View of Manchuria from Pu-yi's Imperial Quarters

Nora Wain: In the *May Atlantic*

In February 1933, when I was in France, I received the following letter from a Manchurian princess in residence in Manchukuo:

"If thou couldst come to us now, thou wouldst find us different yet the same. Pu-yi sits at the opposite end of the table on which I am writing. He wears his horn-crowned spectacles and the Amber Goggles. He is this hour occupied with various reports concerning matters politic, from which he is preparing what he will say tomorrow morning at the State Executive Council; but in all possible leisure now he studies Japanese and Russian, to make himself easy in these tongues as he did in English and French. Pu-yi and I thrive in this which is our natural climate. The Empress, who was in such frail health when we traveled, suffers much from the bitter weather. There is sun this afternoon and she is sleeping in a long chair set where the golden warmth comes by the western window.

"I would tell thee of this Manchukuo wherein we are established. Our geography is all north of the Great Wall (built in fear by the Chinese two thousand years ago) which divides Manchuria from China. Our land is land which belonged to our Banners when we conquered China.

"During our dominion over China, which endured from 1644 to 1912, we protected the purity of our race by an edict which forbade a Manchuan clan member, male or female, to mate with a Chinese. We protected Manchuria, our clan homeland, from assimilation by the prolific Chinese people with another edict. No Chinese person was permitted to pass over the Great Wall, or to enter by any route, for any excuse whatsoever, except he possessed a permit. Such a permit was a highly privileged possession. It was "by leave of the Imperial Manchu Household," "by permission of the Council of Hereditary Manchu Princes," "by membership in the Chinese Banner Corps." Membership in the Banner Corps was the privilege only of sons of those families which were regularly domiciled in Manchuria before the sixteenth century and which had persons in our ranks when we sallied south. We vigorously enforced these restrictions safeguarding the place of our origin until 1906. Then, alas, we did not!

"We have not completed a census of our present population. From round figures, from available statistics, we know that we are 16,000,000 Manchuan clan members, 750,000 registered Koreans, 250,000 domiciled Japanese, and 100,000 royalistic Russians who have sought sanctuary here from republicanism in their birthland. The Chinese population is difficult to estimate.

"The Chinese Professor of Economics, to whom thou and I listened together at Nankai, counted 37,000,000 of his race as migrated here since 1906. By observation I surmise 14,000,000 as more correct. But if we continue to permit Chinese entry, his total will soon be full. The migration ceased for some months following the Japanese seizure of the Chinese Government offices. It is a voluminous flow now. My intellect tells me that it must be stopped. My heart tells me to blanket my mind in pity for these bewildered Chinese farm families, who tell of the continued cruelties of civil war in Shantung, and of unmerciful treatment from the unpaid and undisciplined soldiers quartered on Hopei.

"While on this subject of Chinese migration, I must thank thee for the lantern light thou hast thrown on our affairs for us by sending me *The Pacific Area—An International Survey*, by George H. Blakeslee, World Peace Foundation. In the chapter, "Manchuria," I observe: "It was stated by some experts at the Institute of Politics at Williamstown in 1928 that Manchuria could support a Chinese population of 100,000,000."

"I am eager to be informed as to how many of these unwary Chinese citizens who are migrating from China to every foreign land that will permit them entry, the United States of America is giving sanctuary to. I have been informed, incorrectly I now presume, that thy

country has an edict shutting the gate in the Chinese face.

"It has been interesting to observe the behavior of our self-invited guests. On pilgrimages to temples and our ancestral tombs, I have traversed a considerable part of Manchuria during the last ten months. When I first journeyed I found the Chinese sullen. Twice during my first pilgrimage I was called "Japanese Toad," and once my senior bearer was spat upon. Later, after Japanese and Manchukuo troops had begun the anti-bandit raids we are conducting, I found these squatters on our countryside so apprehensive that they ran and hid in their miserable baked-mud hovels as I approached. Some weeks later I discovered that they ventured shyly to return my smile. On my last tour abroad, farmers, wives, and

### Background Facts

When the emperor Kwang-su mounted his death couch in November 1908, Pu-yi was chosen Emperor of the Banners in his stead. This made him ruler of China too, a Manchuan conquest of 1644, which with the expression "we have exhausted the mandate of Heaven" he relinquished in 1912 for specified imperial quarters, courtyards, in Peking, the forbidden city, and an annuity of 4 million dollars in silver—an agreement with the Chinese broken by Feng Yu-hsiang in his capture of Peking and a pursuit of Pu-yi and his family which caused them to throw themselves upon the proffered mercy of the Japanese legation and eventually to reside in Tientsin under the security of the Japanese garrison in the Japanese concession.

Pu-yi then asked the president of China and the emperor of Japan to help secure him the return of Manchuria, held under the autonomous government of a Chinese, Chang Tso-lin. He then got no help from either quarter, but got help from Japan last year, and his new government of Manchukuo set up by aid of alliance with Japan was recognized by Japan on the eve of the advent at Geneva of the Lytton report adverse to Japan's contentions concerning Manchuria.—Ed.

children cheered me with "Good! Good! Good!"

"But there is much to be done! Good! Good! Good! Our territory is more than three times the size of France and has been badly conducted for twenty-one years. To set it in order is a tremendous task. Manchuria has seemingly been the favorite hunting ground of the scum of the Russian and Chinese revolutions. Our land is overrun with bandits of both races, who have organization threads running up every river channel and over every mountain. We hope, now that we have made an example of those arch-villains Su Ping-wen and Ma Chao-shan, we shall have no further disgrace in the northwest.

"The Harbin land is an ulcer on our countenance. No woman of any race is safe there. Murder and kidnapping happen with the same

frequency as in China. An Englishwoman was recently killed in broad daylight, attempting to protect her three little girls. She was taking them the short distance from her home to the morning school. We need a competent force to send there, but we do not yet have men to spare, as all our strength is called to protect our China border.

"We have sufficient to occupy us within our own land, and no desire to be entangled in the affairs of our civil-war-riven neighbor. But we desire haste to occupy the Chiu. Gate eight miles north of Shanhaikuan and send armed men into Jehol. We shall, if necessary to protect the integrity of our birthland, occupy all the Great Wall from where it runs into the sea to the farthest reach of our southern boundary. Quarreling is an extravagance neither we nor China can afford in this era. We each need all our resources to put our own place in respectable condition.

"The rounding of the year brings us the following balances. We have control of the Salt, the Customs, and the Postal Services. Those employees in these organizations, of whatever nation, who refused to obey our edicts have been deposited below the Wall.

"The Salt, in which the workers were principally Chinese, and Chinese, was comfortably arranged. The Japanese are our allies. The Chinese were found to be of sound common sense and glad to have salaried positions.

"The Customs Service gave trouble. These officials were for the most part American and English—a race I find peculiar. But these affairs have smoothed. They should soon be correct. We remembered Mr. Edwards. He was Director General of the Chinese Customs Service (which was established for our Aunt Yehonah by Sir Robert Hart) until he was dismissed by the "little dragons" at Nanking when they came into possession of the republican seal in 1928. We had Mr. Edwards's London address. We used the telegraph to speak with him. He answered "yes." He is here.

"The Postal Service we have made what I think are lovely stamps. Thou canst judge for thyself, as I will enclose a set. One hundred and four main post offices and ninety-seven branches offices are staffed. Letters and parcels are traveling by train, by air, by motor, by cart, by boat, by camel, and by man-foot. The outer world is waking to consciousness that we have a Postal Service. Japan and Russia see us bags of mail; also France, Norway, Italy, Holland, and Sweden. The Post Office of Canada has sent us a Verification Certificate regarding postal matters. We have signed and returned it. More recently we have received a questionnaire from the General Post Office in New York, which we have gladly answered.

The Southampton, England, Postmaster sends us letters and parcels with commendable regularity. China does not see our stamps. We have the same blindness for China's stamps. Communication is by hand-passage.

"As we have already written to thee, we want thee to visit us when the ice goes out of our rivers. Thou art of simple taste, so we feel we can invite thee, but I must warn thee that our life is more frugal than thou canst perhaps imagine. Even the luxuries of the times here must be possessed and done without. Our court draws no salary and spends nothing beyond what is necessary for food and shelter. We have not had a foot of silk since we came up; our garments of state are the clothes we had when thou last sawest us. Thou knowest well, and sharest, my delight in Chinese theatricals. We do not spend a cent in the hire of actors. But the flowers of our land are exquisite in their brief season. The rippling waterfalls and our many birds make sweet music.

"This year we have taken tiny taxes from the farmers and shopkeepers. In cases beyond count we have had to forgive default of payment. This must be our policy for a generation. We want our land to be again a land of prosperous people. The race bred here must be virile and strong to survive the stern climate and to maintain our three-cornered position between Japan, Russia, and China. Our children must be well fed and properly clad. The standard of their living must be high. Dur-

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ing the (regime of Chang-Tso-lin and his son, in which both "government" and bandit taxes were recognized as a part of the cost of living, our people had a starvation diet and poor shelter. They must be nourished.

'Our foreign trade is flourishing. We now have a trade balance of more than \$1,000,000—all in less than a year. We have also a great many Western visitors bidding extravagantly against each other for purchase of our minerals and our forests. This may make us appear rich. But there is no money for pleasure. Our receipts must be spent in equipping a police and a defense force.

'We have no expense along our thousands of miles of seacoast. This is assured by our friendly relation with our cousin-race, the

Japanese. It would be fatuous to pretend that Manchukuo has been established and is maintained by our own volition. We could not have returned to our rightful place without Japanese consent. Manchukuo men, women, and children were massacred in every province in China in 1911 and 1912. Our homes were leveled, our wealth taken. We were thus shattered in numbers and in strength. But twenty-one years have passed. A new generation has sprung from "us who survived." I myself have given life to nine healthy sons.

'Even so, as long as Japan was content with a Chinese Governor north of the Wall, we could not take our rightful place. Japan was content with Chang Tso-lin, the daring Chinese ex-bandit, who seized control and made himself Dictator of the autonomous state of Manchuria. He was a man who kept his word. But when his heir failed to respect Japanese treaties, causing Japan to make a military occupation to protect her investments, the Emperor of Japan was willing to confer with us.

'We have made a treaty of mutual benefit. This treaty is public paper for all who wish to read. It does not give any concession or right which Japan did not already possess by pre-existing treaties and agreements, but it assures Japan that the government in Manchuria recognizes these treaties. In return for our signature, Japan agreed to give us military assistance in the establishment and maintenance of national security.

'Thou knowest the persuasion by which Pu-yi and his Empress arrived here. But perhaps thou dost not know that, while the carrier was a Japanese gubboat, his transport had the sanction of Princes and Princesses of each of our eight Banners. Pu-yi had been bitten by the flea of republicanism. Drastic treatment was necessary to remind him that he is Emperor of Banners.

'Now that he has come to his rightful place as leader of his own people in the land of Manchou origin, he understands much that bewildered him a year ago. He is content with circumstance. I think that thou wouldst immediately notice that, although he has retained his natural simplicity, he has developed amazingly.'

362,295, according to E. W. Wilson, Manager of the Corporation.

More than 2,160 applications out of a total of 3,600 received by that office have been approved, amounting to over \$7,000,000. Over \$3,000,000 of this amount has been advanced to growers and livestock owners and the balance is being disbursed on a budgetary basis, as needed. Loans made by the Credit Corporation cover every kind of fruit and field crop grown in California, as well as vegetables and livestock.

'The material strengthening of prices to growers on many California crops is encouraging to growers and will help toward rehabilitating California agriculture,' says Mr. Wilson. 'Prices for dried fruits have been strengthening materially. Growers are being offered prices for their dried apricots substantially above last year's. The successful drive of the California prune industry to maintain the California Prune Pool keeps this important stabilizing factor in the prune industry. Our prune borowers report considerable interest by packers in contracting their unsold lots. The low stocks of canned fruits, of which there is a total of less than one and a quarter million unsold at this time in the hands of all canners, including cherries, pears and peaches, has brightened the canning fruit situation.

'Canning peach borowers report to us a decided activity and interest on the part of canners to contract their 1933 requirements at substantially firm prices. Activities of various cannery groups toward the formulation of an industry program taking advantage of the new Federal Industry control legislation to embrace peaches and probably all canned fruits, will undoubtedly lend strength to the canning fruit situation in California, especially as the pear growers in many districts are working toward some control of the shipments and elimination of low quality pears, and any surplus of canning peaches would be small compared with the surplus of previous years. In line with general present governmental policy applied to crop and farm activities, this Corporation is lending its aid in a reasonable way to all constructive marketing movements.

'Prices of beans, rice, barley, wheat and hops have all improved. Wool has nearly doubled in price the last sixty days, and many other farm products are taking strength from the general improvement that all business is feeling. The year 1933 promises improvement to the California farmer.'



From Judge.

Youthful One (Standing):—I just called up home and junior answered the 'phone—*imagine!* four years old and his voice is changing!

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