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# Dr. Morrison on Korea.

In the last issue of this magazine a brief mention was made of Dr. Morrison’s report of the condition of things in Korea, a report which caused the Times to say that England’s work in Egypt would not compare favorably with Japan’s work in the peninsula. We have now received through the foreign press of Japan the full text of that report. But before reviewing it we wish to say one word upon the work of a newspaper reporter or correspondent. As we understand it, his office is simply and solely to ascertain and transmit facts to his paper uncolored by theories and uninfluenced by the policy which that paper adopts. He may know very well what his paper would like to hear but if the facts do not coincide with that desire he has no option. It is the main purpose of this Review to place before the English reading public the facts of the case as regards Korea. The statements made by Dr. Morrison are diametrically opposed to many statements we have made. Either he has been sadly misled or else we have. We propose therefore to examine briefly the main statements of the famous correspondent in a perfectly dispassionate way and see if we can get the issue squarely before the public. We need not reiterate that our position is one of entire sympathy with every legitimate aspiration of the Japanese. The development of the resources of Korea depends upon their initiative and we shall welcome every attempt [page 202] to develop these resources, provided Japan will recognize the personal and property rights of individual Koreans.

Dr. Morrison says that “Reforms already effected are remarkable and an unmixed benefit to the people.” One would suppose that the Times would be interested in publishing a list of these remarkable reforms or at least a list of them, even if there be no particulars given. But Dr. Morrison does not give a single reform already effected, not one. He has much to say about the railway, but a railway is not a reform. We admire it as much as anyone but we see in it a business proposition carried out solely for the benefit of the Japanese. It must, incidentally, be of great advantage to the Koreans along the route but we cannot include it in any list of reforms. Near the end of his communication Dr. Morrison does speak of some genuine reforms. He says the reform in currency will begin on July 1st, that the Japanese Bank will reorganize the currency, and collect the land tax and will handle all state finance. It is all in the future tense and these prospective reforms cannot be put in the list of those remarkable ones which have already been effected.

He says that these reforms that have been already effected are causing dismay to the Emperor and his “corrupt Court of eunuchs, soothsayers, fortune-tellers and foreign parasites.” It may be granted that considerable dismay is being caused by the Japanese occupation, although it should be noted that the latter had it well within their power to handle affairs here in such a way that there should be no dismay; but when it comes to asserting that the Emperor’s court is composed chiefly (for this is the plain implication) of eunuchs, soothsayers, fortune-tellers and foreign parasites we simply say the language is contemptible. Does he mean to tell us that the Minister of the Household and the various officials under him are so low in the scale of society that eunuchs, mountebanks and foreign parasites are to be mentioned before them? This matter of foreign parasites, too, deserves attention. One unacquainted with the circumstances [page 203] would judge from these words that there must be at least a half dozen foreign parasites about the person of the Emperor. Now we are acquainted with every foreigner near the person of the Emperor. There is one German lady who has charge of, or has had charge of, the preparation, and serving of collations and dinners in European style. Her duties are arduous and they are performed to the utmost satisfaction both of her employer and of his guests. There is an English lady employed as tutor to the Crown Prince, but she does not attend the Court. There is an American in charge of the electric lighting plant in the palace but his work is solely that of an electrician. Now these three people, English, German and American are stigmatized as parasites and are said to form a part of the Court of the Emperor. They are all salaried employees of the government and people of irreproachable standing in the community. If they are parasites then every foreign employee of the government is a parasite.

We are told that “the Japanese are paying liberally for everything.” Now at the beginning of the war when speed was essential the Japanese Government paid Korean coolies a comparatively large wage for transporting provisions. The coolies left their homes and followed the track of war. Their wages were high and their expenses were also high. We are prepared to say that under the circumstances the coolies were in no way benefitted by the sudden demand and the high wage. When the pressure was removed these high wages did not continue. Today the Japanese pay a Korean coolie thirty sen a day, out of which he has to pay for his food. But the regular coolie wage in Seoul is one Korean dollar which is at least equivalent to forty sen. The Japanese are not paying liberally for everything. In Wonsan and in many other places the people’s houses and fields have been appropriated, ostensibly for military purposes and they have received only a fraction of the current market price. We have reliable correspondents in nearly every province in Korea and the same story comes from every direction.

[page 204] We can hardly be charged with hypercriticism when we say that, having obtained from the government a grant of the land for the railroads, the Japanese should have seen to it that the people were paid at least a minimum market price for the land. We must leave it for the casuist to decide whether it was not distinctly immoral to secure such a concession from the government when it was notorious that the finances of the country made it impossible to secure the right of way except by enormous confiscations. By this process the Japanese identified themselves with an act of spoliation that in any other country of the Far East would have been the signal for instant and sanguinary protest. We do not say that none of the people were paid for the land but we do say that many of them were not.

We are told that “order is preserved with the smallest evidence of force.” Some Koreans near Seoul were deprived of their fields and when they protested they were told to look to the government for their pay. There was not even a government commission or bureau whose special duty it was to attend to such claims. These men were desperate, and in the night they tore up some rails of the track which was being constructed across their land. They knew nothing of martial law and a few days later they were taken out and tied to stakes and riddled with bullets. This was effective, and no more Koreans have protested but if Dr. Morrison calls this the smallest possible evidence of force we would like to hear what he would call a fairly large exhibition.

We are told that there is a great contrast between the policing of the Korean railway and that of the Russians in Manchuria “where the people were set at enmity by the harsh treatment that they suffered.” Well a few days ago some American gentlemen were travelling between Seoul and Pusan. At a certain station a Korean gentlemen about seventy-five years old came on the station platform leaning heavily upon his long staff. As he was looking with interest at the train a Japanese employee of the station about eighteen years old and nearly nude, came up behind the old man and threw him heavily on his [page 205] back and then stood aside and laughed. The old man painfully regained his feet and then the young Japanese threw him off the platform onto the track. The old man was unable to rise and his Korean friends hastened to pick him up. We can bring irrefutable proof of this transaction. It would be well if the ‘mere handful of gendarmerie’ mentioned by Dr. Morrison could be largely increased in order that the Koreans could be secure from such wanton acts of brutality as this.

The most astonishing statement made by the correspondent of the Times is that “The Korean police have been suspended and a Japanese gendarmerie has undertaken since January the maintenance of order in Seoul and the surrounding country.” To our certain knowledge there has never been a day that the Korean police were suspended. They are in evidence everywhere in Seoul and its vicinity and Dr. Morrison could not have walked two hundred yards along any thoroughfare in this city without passing the little sentry boxes where they are stationed.

We do not think the extremely one-sided view presented by Dr. Morrison is accurate nor will it do Japan any real good. The latter have acquired certain rights in Korea which all are bound to respect. Railroad building is a thing of national and international importance and the impulse given to the development of the country’s resources and industries is wholly praiseworthy; but that, connected with this work, there should be no mistakes, no practices that are questionable is hardly to be expected. As well-wishers of Japan as well as of Korea we indicate the bad points as well as the good, feeling that this is best for everyone concerned.

# A Possible Protectorate.

As we announced in a previous issue, it has been intimated to us in unequivocal terms by a gentleman intimately connected with the Japanese regime in Korea [page 206] that upon the conclusion of peace Japan will declare a protectorate over Korea.

The question forthwith arises what the excuse can be. We use the word excuse advisedly for at the beginning of the present war Japan concluded a special agreement with Korea guaranteeing the integrity of the country and therefore Japan must show good cause why that agreement should be impaired.. The reason must be something more than mere convenience and, since peace will then have been declared, it must be something besides military necessity.

The first possible reason may be that at heart the Korean government has never been loyal to that agreement, that it has always wished for the success of Russia. This excuse will not stand the test of critical examination. At the time it was made the Japanese knew very well where Korea’s sympathies were. But it is well recognized in law that action cannot be brought against a man on account of his mental attitude unless that attitude results in overt acts of hostility. Now we shall hardly be called in question if we say that Korea has, in practice, lived up to her agreement. She has given the Japanese everything that has been asked for so far as it was in her power; military occupation of the country for strategic purposes, supplies, labor, land. She has actively cooperated with Japan in this war. That this is so may be seen when we try to imagine what Russia might have done to Korea had she been successful. She could rightly have charged Korea with being the active ally of her enemy and she could have rightly annexed the territory of the peninsula without any sort of intermediate protectorate. What certain men in the Korean government wished has nothing to do with the question. It is what the government did that would have justified Russia in taking the final and irremediable step. Without making any claim to special knowledge of the finer points of international law we think this statement is unassailable.

There must therefore be some very strong reason that would justifA^ Japan in depriving Korea of her [page 207] independence since, in law, Japan’s success was Korea’s success as well, and in case of failure Korea would have lost everything. It has been said that Japan has acquired special rights in Korea because of her successful military operations against Russia. It is said that Japan has staked so much and spent so much that she has a right to look to Korea for part compensation. We consider such a statement to be pure sophism. Two men, A and B, form an alliance to overcome an enemy of B’s. When that end is attained B claims that A must sacrifice his private rights and his personal property to reimburse B for his expenditure. A has a right to reply that it was not his enemy, but B’s, that was being fought and that, having risked his own life and aided B in every possible way, he, A, should be exempt from further impost. Not only so but in all fairness he has a right to demand that a certain proportionate part of the fruits of victory should be turned over to him. If the loan of Korea’s territory hastened the end of the war by ten days (and it surely did this) then the very least that can be said is that Japan owes her hearty thanks and unlimited good will. If anyone is to be mulcted to pay Japan for her losses surely Korea is the very last. If this is not law, morals and common sense then we have missed the essential meaning of those words. If there is any one thing that has marked Japan’s military operations throughout it is foresight. If then Japan intended or desired to follow up a successful war by appropriating the territory of Korea, she should have assumed at the outset, as she well might have done, that the Korean government was in secret alliance with Russia and that the peninsula was to all intents and purposes Russian territory. Knowing what the world knows of Korea’s attitude immediately before the war can anyone be hardy enough to deny that such action would have been legally sound? But this is not what Japan did. Knowing full well where the sympathies of the Korean government were she said in effect “you had better reconsider your position and make friends with us, lend us your territory and facilitate our work as best you may.” Korea [page 208] acquiesced and by this act and by her subsequent scrupulous observance of her duties as an ally she took from Japan all semblance of an excuse for such action as seems now to be contemplated.

But the advocates of a protectorate may say, and have said, that it is necessary to the development of the resources of Korea. Here we come to something tangible. Waiving the question as to whether a government has a right to determine for itself in what way, and indeed whether, its resources shall be developed, we must ask whether it is true that a protectorate is necessary for the development of Korea’s resources. We think a negative answer should be given. What stands in the way of such development? An American company is mining gold in the north on a large scale and in a most successful manner without any thought of impairing the autonomy of the government. Japanese have fishing concessions. To say that the Korean government is blocking the development of Korean wealth is a falsehood. They put no stumbling block in the way of monetary reform. Foreigners of every nationality have acquired the indisputable right to buy and hold real estate anywhere in the country subject to their own consular jurisdiction. It is utterly untrue that a protectorate is necessary except upon one single hypothesis.

If Japan intends to allow her subjects to swam into Korea and occupy the country everywhere, forming a considerable fraction of the whole population, then steps must be taken looking toward the government of these immigrants. If the Korean government is unable or unwilling to provide the administrative machinery necessary for such jurisdiction then some other plan must be adopted. Here seems to be the strong point in the argument of the protectionists. But there are one or two observations in this connection that are perhaps worth making. Such wholesale immigration presupposes the acquirement of agricultural land, since it is well known that a very large proportion of the immigrants must be farmers. This land can be acquired in either one of two ways, government grant and private purchase. Let us [page 209] consider these separately. The Korean Government has certain land in different parts of the country. Some of it is tilled and some is not. The best of all this land is now tinder cultivation at the hands of tenant farmers. There are other portions which, being inferior in quality and situation, are not occupied. What then would a government grant mean? It would mean either the removal of the present tenants or the relegation of the Japanese immigrants to the less desirable portions of the country. The former of these two courses is a very possible one judging from antecedent cases and the manner in which the government acquired much of the land for the railroads, but it is manifestly unjust and iniquitous. If what European and American papers say of the Japanese is true, the latter cannot descend to such tactics to secure land.

It is well known that all over the country there are large tracts of arable land that lie fallow because of the impossibility of irrigating them. If the Japanese would come in with modern appliances and redeem such land by scientific irrigation the work would be praiseworthy in the extreme. But we have not heard of a single case in which this has been done nor is there any reason to believe that the Japanese would be willing to undertake such arduous and expensive labor while below them in the valleys Koreans are enjoying the use of rich and well-watered fields. The Japanese have demonstrated during the past year that they want the best there is, or none.

We must come then to the second method of acquisition, namely private purchase. If we look at the city of Seoul and note the rise in the value of real estate we shall find that it is caused mainly, by the large influx of Japanese and the heavy demand that followed. The Koreans are very keen to discover the value of their property and they can always be trusted to do so, whether in town or country. Now at first, before Koreans have succeeded in adjusting themselves to the new values of real estate, a certain fraction of them will sell at approximately the old figures, but it will be but a short [page 210] time before they grasp the situation and ask the full value. That time will come before any considerable fraction of the arable land is sold, and when the Koreans begin to put a price upon their land approximately as great as that in Japan the immigrants are going to find themselves in trouble. They will not be able to acquire land by purchase, the cessation of the war will have put an end to the confiscation of property for military purposes and we do not see how it can be obtained by any honest means. If it were the better class of Japanese farmers, men with more or less capital, that came we might expect that they would buy land even at greatly enhanced prices, but even so a limit would soon be reached, beyond which it would be unprofitable to go. In what way would a protectorate aid the Japanese to develop agriculture in Korea except it be by providing means whereby their people could gain possession of the soil. We cannot believe Japan would lend herself to any such iniquitous undertaking.

Another argument is put forth by the advocates of the protectorate. They say the Korean government is so corrupt that it cannot carry on the administration and that it is useless to attempt reform along that line. The only way, they say, is to sweep the whole thing aside and let the Japanese administer the government. Now this is mere assertion and requires proof before those who know the Koreans best will believe it. If the Japanese from the start had insisted that good men be put in office and that every form of official oppression must cease, and even under pressure the Koreans had rebelled against the demand, then it might be in order to make the above sweeping charge; but we are ready to affirm, without danger of contradiction, that there is no evidence to show that the Japanese have made any effort whatever to have good men put in office. Many of the very men who were the most corrupt and whom the Japanese charged Russia with using for questionable purposes have been left in office. The notorious Yi Yong-ik still flourishes and many another man whom we might name. It is a melancholy fact that if only the official [page 211] works in the interest of the Japanese he will not only be left .in office but pressure will be brought to bear to prevent his removal. With what face then can the advocates of a protectorate claim that the government cannot be reformed? The attempt has never been made, and no one knows whether it would succeed or not. Not only so but the Japanese authorities have never seriously demanded reform along this line, and it must be reluctantly confessed that there is no evidence that they desire it. If a determined attempt had been made to do this and had failed, then the argument would have weight; but whatever the probabilities of success or failure of such an attempt may be, the Japanese will commit a great injustice if they consign the Koreans to political serfdom, untried and uncondemned.

But even if it could be demonstrated that at the present time the Koreans are not able to govern themselves in an enlightened manner one would want to know what the conditions and limitations of the protectorate would be. If we understand what the term protectorate means, it is that one nation is taken in hand by another in order to protect both of them from internal or external harm. There may be many secondary considerations which will conduce to the financial, political or industrial benefit of the protector, but the main reason must be the safety of the two. Now no one at all acquainted with the situation in Korea today will deny that Japan already has in this country all the power that is necessary for the protection of herself and of the Korean people from internal and external foes. What the Koreans need is self-respect and education. To take away the semblance of autonomy will be the first step toward the extermination of the nation, for it will take away all incentive to self-improvement. It will destroy their self-respect and render help impossible. Is this what Japan wants? We do not believe that it is what the best element in Japanese statesmanship wants, but there are unfortunately some who look upon the Koreans as the Boers of South Africa looked upon the blacks. We believe there is a strong element among the Japanese statesmen who [page 212] recognize Japan’s obligations toward Korea and who believe that it is to Japan’s interest that those obligations be met in a fair and straightforward way.

If any reader of these lines thinks that he discovers in them any ill-feeling toward the Japanese or lack of sympathy with the best interests of that wonderful people he reads wrong. It is possible to sympathize with both Japan and Korea, and an attempt to discover what equitable basis there can be for the declaration of a protectorate over the latter people implies no hostile bias against Japan but only a desire to arrive at the basic facts of the case, whomsoever these may favor.

# Fragments From Korean Folk-lore,

By Mr. Yi Chong-Wun.

## A Trio of Fools.

Three fools were once invited to attend the birthday festival of a friend. On the day appointed they donned their best clothes and set out in high spirits for the village where the friend lived. It was a hot summer’s day and the blistering heat soon induced that gentle somnolence which is so tempting to the true Korean. Lured by the shadow of a wide-spreading tree they reclined *sub tegmine fagi* and took a nap. But before doing so, one of the fools, knowing in some dim way that his memory was unreliable, and fearing that he would leave his hat behind when he resumed his journey, hung it on a branch of a tree directly over his head, so that when he should wake up it would not fail to be noticed. After wide excursions into the land of Morpheus he awoke, and the first thing his eyes rested upon was the hat. He sprang up and exclaimed :

“What a lucky man! On my way to a festival I find a new hat. It is surely a God-send.” So at the next village he sold the “extra” hat at a reduced price and went along merrily with the money jingling in his pouch. A summer shower came on and they looked anxiously for [page 213] a place of shelter where they could keep their good clothes dry. One of the fools, seeing a hole in a rock, thought to keep at least his hat dry and so inserted his head in the orifice. When the storm was over he found that he could not desengage himself. One of his friends seized him by the heels and pulled so hard that he came away, minus his head. This was awkward. The friend concluded that the rock was to blame and in his anger gave it a vigorous kick which resulted in a broken leg. So only one of the trio was left.

He reached the scene of festivity late and found the company far gone in wine, but there was enough left to befuddle one more.

He arrived home late in the afternoon and threw himself heavily on the mat and slept. Meanwhile his wife, who had succumbed to the blandishments of a Buddhist monk, was planning with her paramour how to get rid of her marital encumbrance. At last, they hit upon a plan. They shaved the head of the slumberer and put a cowl on him and left the rest to his natural imbecility. In time he arose from sleep and called to his wife. There was no answer. He saw a looking glass hanging before him. Peering into it he beheld a shaven monk.

“Very curious,” he muttered. “I thought I was a married man, but here 1 find I am a monk. This is a woman’s apartment and I have broken the law by coming here. I must inquire about this at once.” He hurried out into the kitchen and there encountered his wife.

“Woman, am I your husband or am I a monk?” She fell into a pretended passion, heaped all sorts of abuse upon him and told him to be gone or she would have him locked up in jail.

“Pardon, pardon!” he cried “I have evidently been dreaming; but I will go away quickly if you will only not set the law upon me.” As he climbed the hill to the monastery he pondered sadly in his dim way upon the mutations of fortune.

[page 214]

## A Fox-Trap.

A woman became, in the natural process of things, the possessor of a daughter-in-law. But instead of the preternatural dilligence which is supposed to characterize the daughter-in-law, this one cared for nothing but sleeping and eating So very marked was this trait that the mother concluded the girl must be a fox transformed into human shape. If so, a great danger overhung the house, for at any hour the thing might change to its original and native shape and work havoc in the household. It was necessary to discover the truth without letting the girl know that it was discovered.

That night the mother watched and saw that the girl slumbered heavily and never waked once. At breakfast the woman said to her daughter-in-law :

“Last night two foxes on the hill kept barking so continuously that I could not get a wink of sleep.”

“The same with me,” answered the daughter, “I was kept awake too. That is why I got up so late this morning.”

“So you heard them too? What a queer sound they made – like this,” and she pretended to try and imitate the barking of a fox.

“Oh I can’t do it. I suppose my throat is too old to make the noise. How was it?”

“Oh,” said the girl falling readily into the trap “it is very easy. They simply cried Yu-horang! Yu-horang’!”

Then the mother knew her suspicions were correct, and the next night she had the evil beast in human shape strangled while she slept.

## An Unworded Bequest.

A country gentleman acted for years as the hanger-on and general satellite of a high official in Seoul but never received any *quid pro quo* in the shape of office or emolument of any kind. The official at last came to his end and his sons stood about him weeping. The faithful but [page 215] disgusted parasite was there too, and when for some reason the sons were called from the room and he was left alone with the dying man he vented his anger and disappointment by giving the sick man a heavy kick in the chest and an ugly punch in the face.

The sons came back and the old man who had lost power of speech pointed to the satellite and then at his own face and chest. At first the sons did not know what to make of it but at last they fell on their knees beside him and exclaimed through their tears.

“Yes, father we understand. You wish us to repay this good gentleman for all he has done. Your parting wish shall be remembered. He shall be one of us and your wealth will be shared between us all as between brothers.” A spasm passed across the old man’s face and he passed away, but the astonished and delighted gentlemen had slipped into the hallway to hide the grin which betokened his joy that the old man had passed away before he had time to add a codicil to that will.

# A Visit to Quelpart.

(continued)

Horses and cattle are very important items of export from the island of Quelpart and a good many of the Korean horses come from there. The cattle are not nearly as large and strong as on the mainland. The average price of a horse is sixteen dollars and of a bull or cow twenty-five. The ponies and cattle are turned loose all over the island and are left to take care of themselves, altho they all have owners. In the winter they feed in the fields and in the spring they are driven into the mountains for the summer. The stone walls built between all the fields are intended for keeping the ponies from running about from field to field. A good many of the horses and cattle belong to the government and an official is kept there for the purpose of taking care of them.

[page 216] Some years ago he had to send up annually a certain number of horses and cattle to Seoul for the use of the government. Since taxes in kind were abolished, he has been selling the animals and sending up money. As there is no watch kept the islanders have no hesitation in catching and utilizing a government cow or horse whenever they have need for it. Not only is the trade in its infant state but the mode of life of the people is quite primitive. Owing to the isolation of the island the people are much more ignorant and much less civilized than those of the mainland. As on the mainland, so on the islands, the people have little religion. A Confucian temple in each of the three cities, six or eight large idols cut from lava and placed outside of each gate, and a few shrines seem to satisfy all the spiritual needs of the hundred thousand people. There is not one Buddhist temple nor a priest on the whole island. It is said that about a hundred years ago a sceptical governor ordered all the temples to be destroyed and all the priests driven out. Since then they have never been allowed to return. The governor was punished, though for his atheism and soon died at Che-ju far away from his relatives and friends.

There are a few interesting sights on the island. Within ten li from Tai-Chung one sees a peculiar rock rising abruptly to the height of some eight hundred feet. On the south side of it at the height of about three hundred feet there is a cave some twenty feet wide at the entrance, twenty feet long and forty feet high. From the opening of the cave the view over the country and the sea is magnificent. We were told that many years ago a Buddhist temple was standing in the cave, but was destroyed at the same time as the others. At a distance of thirty and sixty li from Tai Chung, on the way to Chung-Ui there are two waterfalls formed by two circular holes in the rocky ground, about thirty feet wide and forty feet deep. The walls are quite vertical and two small mountain streams fall into them. When we saw them, one of the streams was almost dry, and the other one had but little water, but in the rainy season they must present a [page 217] splendid sight. It is interesting to note that both waterfalls are exactly alike. Not far from the top of Mt. Auckland there stand up in one place a number of rocks all alike and of the size of a man; when seen from a distance they resemble a company of people and this caused the Koreans to call them O-paik chang-gun (five hundred heroes). Not far from Chung-Ui there is a place with which the following legend is connected :

Many years ago a very large snake lived there, and from time immemorial a yearly sacrifice of a beautiful virgin had to be offered. The snake used to devour her alive. If the virgin was not brought, rains would not fall, strong winds would begin to blow, horses and cattle would die, and sickness and other calamities would befall the people. About a hundred years ago a man had a very beautiful daughter, who was the pride and the pet of the family. Soon her turn came to be sacrificed. The father, however did not care to part with her and made up his mind to try and rid the island of the blood-thirsty pest. So when the time for offering the sacrifice came this Theseus of Quelpart took a sharp ax with him and led his daughter to the sacrificial spot. He left her there and hid himself not far away. Soon the snake came out, but before he had time to touch the maiden, the man was on him and with one blow chopped off his head. After this he cut the snake all to pieces and put it into a large kimchi jar covering it tightly up. The people were thinking they were going to live now in peace. But from that day the snake began to appear to the people in their dreams begging them to take out the pieces of his body from the jar and threatening severe vengeance if they did not do so. The people became frightened and at last decided to do as the snake had bidden them. But when they emptied the jar every piece of the former snake turned into a whole individual snake and the place was filled with them. However the supernatural power of the snake was lost and no more virgin sacrifices were needed. Still, to be sure about it, sacrifices of a pig, rice, whisky etc., are offered yearly on that spot. The ceremony is performed by mutangs, who of course only show the [page 218] eatables to the snakes and afterwards feast on them themselves. These mutangs, or sorceresses, I suppose, would not hesitate to swear to the truth of this story.

We were very curious to see the famous three holes from which the founders of three noted Korean families are said to have come into the world. But I fear that these holes as well as the three heroes are legends. Nobody on the island seems to know anything about either.

Quelpart used to be a place of banishment. The last exiles were sent there about 1895. There are twelve exiles there now, mostly political. Two of them came to see us and told us that they were all free to go wherever they liked on the island. They are supported by their own relatives. To prevent them running away, no Korean is allowed to leave Quelpart without a pass from the authorities.

After finishing our tour around the island, our first thought was to enquire about the steamer. Nothing was heard of her and nothing was certain about her coming. There was nothing left for us to do but to hire a boat which was open and was about thirty feet long and ten wide. The channel between Quelpart and the first island near the coast of Korea being forty miles wide, we had to wait for a favorable wind to cross it. So the boatmen began to watch the winds. In the evening of the second day, just when we were ready to go to bed, a boatman came and said that now was a good time to start. However, we were of a different mind. The night was cold, windy and very dark and to take up our warm, comfortable beds, which were ready to receive us, pack up all our things, and start off in a small open boat was not a pleasant prospect. We told the boatman that we would start the next morning. He tried in vain to persuade us to go at once but had to give in. Next morning after breakfast, we packed up, hired coolies and went to the boat which was half a mile from our house. But there we found that the Chai-Joo custom (*poong-sok*) was for boats to start only after midnight, and that any other time was unfavourable. No amount [page 219] of persuasion could make them go and we had to take a few of our things and go to a fisherman’s hut. In the afternoon it began to rain, and next morning a strong wind from the north was blowing. This wind did not cease for six days, during which we had time enough to repent for not going when we were called. At last the wind changed and one night, according to the *poong-sok*, we started at two o’clock having slept not more than three hours. After sailing for some five miles it began to dawn, and the usual morning breeze began to blow. This being from the north, the boatmen made up their minds to go back, and got ready to turn the boat. But we had also made up our minds that we were not going to go back unless for a very good reason. So I spoke to them very sternly telling them to go ahead and row until the sun was up and then if the breeze did not change, we would go back. My voice and manner must have been pretty suggestive as they took again to the oars and made for the mainland. When the sun arose the wind changed to the east and we unfolded our two sails and went flying over the waves. It was pleasant to think that we were moving toward Korea at a good rate, but to be in the boat was not so pleasant. The boat seemed to be very small, indeed and was leaning on one side and jumping up and down the waves in such a manner that it made us very sea-sick to say the least. In the evening we arrived at the first island, spent the night in an inn, next day had a magnificent sail among the numberless small islands, spent another night on the boat, and next day at noon arrived at Mokpo. There we found a steamer leaving for Chemulpo in three hours. At once we transported our goods from the *sampan* to the steamer, and next noon we were fighting the Chemulpo coolies.

# Korean Business Life

Until recent years the currency of Korea was only the unwieldy cash and this had much to do in preserving [page 220] the immemorial custom of barter. Even today this form of trade has by no means ceased and many Koreans still look upon rice or cotton or linen as legal tender. In the country there are stated places where periodical markets are held. There are few people who cannot find one of these *chang* within thirty miles of their homes. As a rule these are held once in five days but there are many special markets for special objects. Almost every Korean product has its special season. The agricultural products are naturally more in evidence in the summer and autumn. Almost all farmers add to their income by some sort of handicraft during the winter and the products of such work are on sale during the winter and spring months.

For long centuries there existed a peddlars’ guild composed of thousands of men throughout the country who travelled on foot with packs on their backs and peddled their goods from house to house. They had regular circuits and their organization was quite complete. In later days this guild fell into decay and was superseded by a gang of evil men who were used by corrupt officials to do questionable work. They were not peddlars and the unsavory reputation of the “Peddlar’s Guild” should not attach to the genuine peddlars.

It was mainly through the markets and the peddlars that domestic trade was carried on in the country. In the great centers ordinary shops were common and almost every commodity was handled by a separate guild. The freemasonry of trade reached very extensive bounds. Many of these guilds were incipient or partial insurance companies and loss by fire or death became a matter of mutual aid. These guilds were taxed, not regularly but as occasion might demand. Whenever some sudden pressure was put on the royal household for money a draft upon the guilds was always honored,

Korean shops are of two kinds, open and closed! The ordinary shop is hardly more than a stall; open directly upon the street where the purchaser can pick up and examine almost any article in stock. The large merchants, however, who handle silks, cotton, linen, [page 221] grasscloth, shoes and some other goods have nothing whatever on view. You enter and ask for what you want and it is brought forth from the store room or closet. This seems very strange to foreigners who always want to compare and select their goods. Often enough a truculent merchant after showing one shade of silk will refuse to show more and say that if this is not what you want he has nothing that will satisfy you. You arc expected to state exactly what you want and when that is produced and examined the price alone is expected to require consideration. Shopping in Korea is not reckoned one of the joys of life, as is so often the case in the west.

The sale and purchase of real estate in large towns is always effected through house-brokers but fields change hands very commonly by direct communication between the parties interested. The legal rate of commission to the broker is one percent of the purchase price of the house and is paid by the seller. The purchaser furnishes two pounds of tobacco to be consumed during the process of negotiations. There is a house-brokers’ guild and the name of each member is registered at the Mayor’s office. If a broker falsifies the amount demanded by the seller and “eats” the extra money, he is very likely to be found out, in which case he will be expelled from the guild and his license will be taken away.

Until very recently there have been no banks in Korea, but the copper cash is so unwieldy and the cost of transportation so great that various devices have been hit upon to save the expense of handling. Large firms in Seoul, especially the guilds, have been accustomed to put out private notes of land which are uniformly honored. The credit of these houses is well established and it is very seldom that a Korean loses by using these notes. When taxes were paid in rice an enormous amount of labor was entailed in its transport to the capital, but since taxes have been paid in money it is much simplified. Yet the difficulty of bringing up the money to Seoul has resulted in a sort of exchange which is mutually beneficial to all parties. A man with capital will pay in to the central government the entire taxes of a district and receive [page 222] an order on the prefect for the amount. Having received it in the country he buys goods or produce and markets them in Seoul or some provincial center and makes a hand- some profit. Of late years the government has accepted their own depreciate nickel coins in payment of taxes. It takes upwards of four dollars in this currency to equal an American dollar. But in the country the payment must be in copper cash since the nickels do not circulate there. But it takes only three dollars of the cash to equal an American dollar. It follows then that the operation is an immensely profitable one for the speculator. For this reason the prefects themselves generally finance the thing and reap the profits. In no land is there a more practical application of the adage that to him who has shall more be given and from him who has not shall be taken even that which he has.

The rate of interest is everywhere proportionate to the safety of the investment. For this reason we find that in Korea money ordinarily brings from two to five percent a month. Good security is generally forthcoming, and so one may well ask why it is so precarious to lend. The answer is not creditable to Korean justice. In case a man has to foreclose a mortgage and enter upon possession of the property he will need the sanction of the authorities, since possession here as elsewhere is nine points of the law. The trouble is that a large fraction of the remaining point is dependent upon the caprice or the venality of the official whose duty it is to adjudicate the case. In a land where bribery is almost second nature and where private rights are of small account unless backed up by some sort of influence, the thwarting of justice is extremely common. For this reason the best apparent security may be only a broken reed, as the creditor often finds to his cost, when he comes to lean upon it. Let us take a concrete case. A man borrows a sum of money giving his house deed as security. He then makes out a false deed and sells to a third party and leaves for parts unknown. The mortgage becomes due and the mortgagee proceeds to foreclose. It is now a question of which deeds are the right ones. The owner [page 223] may have gone to the mayor’s office and obtained a new deed on the ground that the old ones were lost. There should be no difficulty in adjudicating the case but the occupant having purchased in good faith is naturally loath to move out. He is willing to put down a neat sum to secure his possession. It all depends, now, upon the character of the official and is no longer a matter of mere jurisprudence. Herein lies the uncertainty. When money is loaned at the minimum rate of two percent, or in exceptional cases one and a half percent, a month, the borrower, besides giving security, generally gets some well known and reliable merchant to indorse the note. As the merchant cannot afford to have his credit brought in question, the chances of loss are very small.

Considering the great inequalities in commercial ethics here, the Koreans trust each other in a really remarkable manner. The aggregate of money placed in trust is very large. The average Korean would scorn to ask from his friend more than a simple receipt for money turned over in trust and it is my deliberate conviction that in all but a small fraction of cases the ordinary sense of justice and decency is a far greater deterrent to indirection than any legal restraints could possibly be.

# Unknown Land.

“You are the first foreigners who ever came to this city.” So said the hotel keeper with whom we staid over Sunday in Sanchung City.

It is a matter of much regret that so great a part of Korea is as yet unknown to the foreigner. As soon as we leave the ports and large centers and the connecting main lines of travel hardly anyone, save perhaps one or two missionaries, ever penetrates, and even the missionary knows very little of the country except that part which lies on the road to and from his churches. I was greatly impressed with the white man’s small knowledge of Korea when last November I took a trip with Rev. E. F. Hall [page 224] into the northwestern part of South Kyung Sang Province. After crossing the lazy Naktong River some eighty miles from Fusan we traveled through six magistracies before we reached the Chulla border, and careful enquiry seemed to indicate that not more than one foreigner had ever been seen in any magistracy. We thought we were able to identify Mr. Adams as the foreigner who had sold tracts and preached some eight years ago in Chogei and Hapchun; Mr. Ross as the one who had been seen in Samga some six years ago, and Mr. Hugh Miller as the white man on a two wheeled machine who had passed through some four years ago on the main road from Chunju, capital of North Chulla, to Chinju, capital of South Kyung Sang Province. Besides these three men seen in the districts named, no white visitors were reported to us. Even the French fathers whom I had considered ubiquitous in Kyung Sang Province seem to have left these magistracies out of their travels, though indefinite rumors led me to think perhaps three out of the six had been touched.

The part of the country through which we passed, traveling by the main roads from city to city, seemed more mountainous than that nearer Fusan and Taiku. Certainly the valleys grew narrower and the aspect of the mountains more forbidding. As the valleys shrank more and more until they became mere farrows in the gigantic back of the mountains, the arable land rapidly decreased and the population decreased in like proportion. We were led to believe by our own observation and by diligent inquiries as to markets, etc., that there were comparatively much fewer people in that western district than in the richer district through which the railroad passes. For the first time in my Korean experience I traveled twenty li without seeing a house.

Our trip brought us within view of the famous mountain, Chirisan. This is the highest mountain in southern Korea, and is on the border between South Kyung Sang and the Chulla Provinces. The voluble Korean, who was anxious to tell us everything, insisted that its foot rested on eight different magistracies, that [page 225] it was 600 li around it, that it was 50 li from bottom to top by the shortest road, that it abounded in bears, tigers and wild boars, and that its summit could only be reached in the summer months, for as he said, even then—it was Thanksgiving day—the snow would be up to one’s neck. This mountain with its numerous spurs is certainly a formidable barrier to travelers, and by its height has won for itself a place of prominence in Korean mountain lore.

Entering the district of Hapchun from the eastern side we came upon the prettiest natural scenery I have found in Korea. It was a gigantic mountain cliff overhanging for perhaps half a mile a delightful little stream. About halfway up the cliff was a winding natural road about eight feet wide, while above, the rocks towered up a straight column and below, there was a sheer drop of two hundred feet or so to the glistening stream. But not only was this natural roadway a wonder to us, but we marvelled at the rich verdure on that rocky prominence. Large trees a foot in diameter sprang sideways out of solid rock and then coming upwards sent out their branches as naturally as if the roots were imbedded in rich earth. The November weather had tinted the leaves with every autumal hue, and the colored foliage was so thick we hardly saw the sun from one end of the beautiful walk to the other.

Toward the end of the walk which we named “The Cliff Walk” we came across two huge boulders which nearly blocked the way. They had dropped down from the mass of rock above, and the sight of them added to the fear which had lurked within us from our entrance into those scenes lest we should be struck by some falling rock. The inhabitants of the village nearby say that whenever a rock falls some one in the village dies within a few days. Not long since an old man passed away ten days after a piece of rock had broken loose from the cliff and fallen.

Towering cliff, shining stream, romantic path, curious trees, glorious foliage, appalling height;--if it were in some more favored land, it would be bought at a [page 226] fabulous price as a national park and fast railroads would convey the multitude to see this wonder, and lovers to whisper secrets in its deepest shade.

Our trip was not without its amusing experiences, and many were the cows which created fun for the on- lookers but consternation for their owners. Just as we were entering Hamyang City we came upon a young man plowing with a cow. The cow did not like our appearance and began to look wildly alarmed.

“Hold the cow tight,” I shouted.

“There is no cause for worry,” came the response.

But as the cow was worrying, whether I was or not, I shouted again, “Take hold of the cow’s head.”

“It is all right. Don’t you see I have hold of this rope”—a rope about 15 feet long.

But the cow, being sure it was not all right, made a lunge, the rope broke, and away she went, over a low wall, through a stony bottomed creek, across the sandy plain, terror pictured in every jump, while the plow turned somersaults and handsprings, poked its nose into rocks, smashed its handles on the cow’s back,—away and a never slackening speed until it was lost to view behind a sheltering strip of woods.

The young man immediately began to howl, “Aigo! Aigo!! Aigo!!! It was a borrowed plow and will cost me thirty nyang and I only get thirty nyang a year;” and with huge sobs and mighty crying the young man followed us to the entrance of the city, where he left us to search for the truant cow.

The next morning he came bearing several pieces of the shattered plowshare that we might look on the ruin. We lectured him—we had to do something—on not seizing the cow when told, but to make the lecture sit easily we gave him a little present. He warmly protested he had not come for money, only to show the damage, but he took the gift without much urging. However in the evening our hotel keeper handed us ten eggs.

“We have enough eggs, thank you, we do not need these.”

“But these are the eggs the young man with the [page 227] broken plow left as a token of his gratitude for your unexpected present.”

So we ate them, and have never heard of the cow, plow or young man since.

We were somewhat of a curiosity in that unexplored region, but the Korean who never sees a foreigner evidently has not much of an appetite for a vision, for tho they were curious as to our food and did swarm the doors at times, yet we were not as badly beset by gaping natives as we used to be a few years ago almost in the streets of Pusan.

We did not repeat the robber experiences I had enjoyed five years ago on the way to Taiku, tho we were not free from alarms. On the highest mountain slope, we passed a body of men just emerging from a village while the cries of distress arose wildly from the place. They had no visible arms, but our Koreans assured us they were a lawless band given to robbery and violence. We were allowed to pass unchallenged. That whole western region swarms with highwaymen, and fifty soldiers were quartered near by to seize them, but the influence of the soldiers spreads visibly only a few miles. In Sanchung we were told that not long before, at night, twenty nine men had come into town stark naked, who had been seized one by one as they came over the high mountain we had just crossed; and then after hours of hungry waiting they had been stripped of their all and let go. We sincerely hope the Japanese in their many reforms will discover a way of suppressing highwaymen.

Our trip ended pleasantly after we had touched half the districts of south Kyung Sang Province, and had seen more of this part of the world than any other Protestant missionaries. Would that we all might travel more. A reliable knowledge of Korea’s interior could be thus most rapidly gained,

R. H. SIDEBOTHAM.

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# Editorial Comment

In spite of all criticisms that may be made of the actions of a certain class of Japanese subjects here in Korea there is a brighter side to the picture. We have consistently held to the view that when the authorities in Japan get some far weightier matters off their minds and have time to attack the Korean problem they will discover the unfortunate trend of events and find a remedy for them. We have more than once expressed the belief that the condition of affairs among the common people here is but vaguely understood by the legislators in Tokio. We have just received a striking proof of the truth of this surmise. We are told on the best authority that a number of Japanese Members of the Diet recently came overland by rail from Wiju to Seoul and when they arrived expressed themselves as astonished and disgusted with the deportment of the lower classes of Japanese in the North. Their language was much stronger than any we have used. One of these gentleman was very rudely treated by a Japanese coolie on the train and the M.P. called a policeman and had the fellow put off. This was something of an eye-opener and it would be a very good thing if every member of the Diet could make a personal inspection of the state of affairs here. We firmly believe that all that is necessary is that the facts should be stated, and a remedy will be found.

The day has arrived for the beginning of the currency reform. We have never for a moment believed that Japan would be guilty of the monstrous injustice of entirely casting out the counterfeit nickels and leaving thousands of innocent Koreans bankrupt. The government has received these coins as legal tender and has practically legalized them. It has paid salaries and wages in them and the Japanese, as everyone knows, have done more than their share in furnishing counterfeits. We hear that sharpers have been buying Korean nickels, culling out the good ones and throwing the rest back upon the [page 229] ignorant people. A man came up from the country the other day with a fat bag of nickels but among them all there were not enough to pay his railway fare from Chemulpo to Seoul! It now appears that we were right in not believing these counterfeit would be repudiated. We are told that a way will be found to do justice in this matter. One suggestion is that the good nickels should be bought in at two dollars to the yen and the others at three dollars to the yen. Even this will entail hardship but it would at least be a partial attempt at justice. Our feeling is that the government who, after all, are mainly instrumental in bringing about the demoralization in currency, should bear the brunt of the burden and buy back every nickel at the rate of exchange now prevailing—say 2.30 to the yen. We have great faith in Mr. Megata’s good judgment and whatever is done: we feel that the antipathy of the Korean people will be roused as little as possible. Meanwhile it is universally acknowledged that the circulation of a single homogeneous currency with a fixed value will be of immense value to the Koreans and Japanese alike. For one thing, it will stop the exchange gambling and the constant fleecing of the common people by the finger-tricks of shysters.

The taking over of the Post Office by Japan is a logical outcome of the situation and one that was to have been expected. It is very unpalatable to the Koreans, for they see in it a definite step toward the absorption of the country by Japan. In other words we have here today all the fundamental elements of a protectorate, but without any formal announcement of such a protectorate. We have elsewhere submitted our views on this subject, but there is one word that should be added. There is one way by which the establishment of a protectorate by Japan over Korea could be effected in a legal manner and without the breaking of any previous promises that Japan has made. The Korean government and people are now thoroughly convinced that something radical will be done by the Japanese in spite of everything. They are looking about anxiously for ways and [page 230] means to reconcile themselves to the inevitable. Now if the Japanese government should approach Korea with a proposition, in which the ultimate independence of Korea would be guaranteed conditional upon the genuine waking up of Korea, but with the understanding that for the time being Korea voluntarily put herself under the tutelage of Japan as a “protected” government, we believe that Korea would acquiesce and that she would even request such action. What Koreans want is the ultimate independence of the country. If this can be assured by a solemn agreement to which all the treaty powers are witnesses we believe that Koreans would enter heartily upon the work of fitting themselves for that ultimate independence. If Japan takes over Korea arbitrarily she breaks her promise and the Koreans will rightly believe that the end has come. This will breed only hatred and rancor without end. The Koreans will be desperate and they will have no ambition except to thwart Japanese interests here. If, on the other hand, Korea could be assured that under proper conditions she could attain to ultimate full independence the mass of the people would be given a powerful incentive to win to that goal. Education would flourish, hope would spring up and we should see a renovated and progressive Korea. She would gradually and increasingly come to see that Japan is her best friend and the two peoples would be welded into a friendship that would last for all time. To such a plan we believe that almost every treaty power would willingly consent. Of course we know that Japan need ask no-one’s consent to form an arbitrary protectorate, but if the other powers should heartily endorse this milder plan and advise Korea to submit to a temporary protectorate for her own good, we believe that the fair fame of Japan would be enhanced, for the consent of Korea would save her from breaking her solemn engagement to uphold Korean independence, and hope would take the place of despair in the Korean mind. Never until the last moment will we give up the belief that Japan will do the broad-minded, the just, the generous thing.

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# News Calendar.

On the 27th. alt the Japanese Emperor sent a message to the Emperor of Korea thanking him for his hospitality to Prince Fushimi. Jr. The Emperor replied in an appropriate note.

The term of contract of M. Cremazy, as adviser to the Law Department, expired last month and the Foreign Office sent notice to the French Legation that the contract would not be renewed. The Government will lose the services of a faithful and diligent and distinguished man, and we wish him all success in his future work wherever that may be.

The Foreign Minister has asked that Japanese be stopped in the work of cutting down valuable timber in the vicinity of royal tombs in the district of An-byun.

The Dai Ichi Ginko has given notice that (1) It will issue bank-notes in Korea.

(2) These notes will be exchangeable for Japanese currency at any time.

(3) The bank will keep in its vaults a reserve equal to the issue of notes and at least one fourth of this will be in gold and silver.

(4) This issue will be secured up to the limit of Yen 10.000,000.

(5) When Korean market conditions require, this limit may be exceeded, but only with the permission of the proper authorities.

Before his departure for America the retiring American Minister, Dr. H. N. Allen sent a communication to the Foreign Office saying that the number of patients of the Severance Memorial Hospital is rapidly increasing and that he hoped the Korean Government would see its way clear to making a monthly grant of five hundred yen to help carry on this excellent work.

It is said that the new Korean currency which has been minted in Japan has arrived at the Finance Department and is ready for the change which is expected to begin on the first of July.

The Korean Minister to Japan requests that Yen 3,000 which he paid out on account of the visit of the special ambassador, Prince Eui-yang to Japan some time ago, be repaid.

News has reached the capital that recently a gang of robbers entered the town of Chung-yang and after looting burned it.

A Korean, Pak Wan-sik, and others have applied to the government for a franchise for a butchers company to carry on business in Seoul as follows :-

All butchers west of Chong-no to remove outside the West Gate and all those east of Chong-no to go outside the East Gate. There will be a competent veterinary surgeon at each of these places to examine the cattle and see that none of them are diseased. A tax of five dollars [page 232] will be paid for each animal slaughtered and one thousand dollars will be paid to the Department of Agriculture, Commerce and Public Works yearly, in the Spring and the Autumn.

On the evening of June 1st. Hon. T. H. Yun gave an interesting lecture before the Y. M. C. A. on the subject of Korean Women.

Yi Keun-ho the Minister of Law has ordered that a box should be placed in front of his office in which the people can place petitions on matters in which they desire redress.

The Japanese Minister has notified that all the postal headquarters in the various districts will be taken over gradually by the Japanese and that the present incumbents in those offices will be paid their salaries as usual until some other arrangement is made.

On June 4th. Mr. Stevens, the Adviser to the Foreign Office, gave an entertainment at the old Palace grounds to all the Korean Ministers and all Foreign Ministers and Advisers.

The prefect of Chung-ju announces that in that district certain Japanese subjects have forcibly seized a large amount of land including many rice fields, ostensibly for the purpose of digging clay. Many Koreans are moving away, having been deprived of their means of subsistence.

The Supreme Court recently sent an order to each of the ministers of state, calling upon them to attend the cabinet meetings each afternoon at three o’clock.

It is reported that Japan intends to place commissioners in each of the provinces to attend to the matter of the monetary change.

By special edict, Hon T. H. Yun has been decorated with the third order of the Pal-gwa and Mr. Ko Heui-sung with the fourth order of the Ta-geuk.

We have received from the Japanese Postal authorities a sample of the new Japan-Korea postage stamp which will go into effect on July 1st. Only one kind is to be issued and the denomination is three sen. It is for domestic use only but will carry a letter to any part of Japan or to any China port where there is a Japanese post office. It is emblematic of the close union between the two countries and there is nothing on it to indicate that the two powers are not coordinate. It is a nicely gotten-up stamp. It is red in color with a double ring in the center, one ring within the other. Between the two rings we find on the right hand and the left the two national flowers, the chrysanthemum for Japan and the plum blossom for Korea. In this same space, at top and bottom there is the representation of two carrier pigeons which are quite appropriate. In the center ring are the Chinese characters meaning three sen or cents. Above the circles is a scroll on which are written in Chinese \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* to commemorate the union of the Korea and Japanese postal and telegraph systems.

[page 233] It is stated that the Japanese have definitely decided to build a railroad from Wonsan to Pyengyang rather than to Seoul.

His Majesty has issued a special edict.to the effect that education, must be fostered and that the whole people must have an opportunity to acquire knowledge; that the laws must be so administered that no one shall be unable to secure redress in case he is injured; that men shall be appointed to office who will not squeeze the people’s money. This sounds very well and we know of one case at least that will prove whether the officials have heeded this edict or propose to let it pass—as so many have in the past, as a dead letter.

The Governor of Whang-hai Province reports that the Japanese military have asked him to give the figures as to population, school, monasteries, area of rice-fields and amount of taxes throughout = his province. He asks what he shall do about it.

The Japanese Minister has demanded Yen 3,000 from the Korean Government as payment for the repairs of the road from the South Gate to the Imperial Altar at the time of the coming of Prince Fushimi, Jr.

The retiring American Minister, Hon. H. N. Allen, had a final audience with His Majesty and announced his departure from Seoul. The Emperor spoke of Dr. Allen’s long residence and complimented, him upon his diplomatic success, and he expressed his regret at seeing a friend of so many years’ standing leave the country.

On the sixth of June the German Legation was besieged by callers who wished to offer their congratulations upon the marriage of the Crown Prince of Germany.

A number of Songdo people have complained to the Foreign Department that Japanese subjects in that town have seize upon two large business houses there to establish a bank and a postal telegraph office. They petition that the Japanese be made to return the property.

It has been settled that one Japanese inspector and a number of police be regularly stationed at many of the important prefectural towns such as Pyengyang, Hai-ju, Hamheung, Suwun,Taichun, Taiku, Chunju, Kongju, Yungbyun, Kyungsung, Kwangju and Chinju.

The Department of Agriculture, Commerce and Public Works has been busy drawing up a scheme for the taxation of industrial enterprises in Korea. It has determined upon ten different grades of business.

The hot springs at One-yang have been greatly improved by the Japanese, a hotel has been built and it is said that there are many visitors to the place.

On June sixth occurred the opening ceremony of the Masanpo branch of the Seoul-Fusan Railway.

His Majesty has presented to the Empress Dowager of China a gold finger-ring, a pair of silver vases, four embroidered panels and twenty pounds of red ginseng.

[page 234] The Japanese military authorities demanded the use of the government silk farm for use of the Japanese soldiers. The Minister of Agriculture &c. requested that they wait about ten days till the silk- worms had spun their cocoons, but the request was unheeded and the Japanese forthwith removed the worms to another place in baskets and cut down several thousand mulberry trees. As was to have been expected most of the worms died in transit, as the time of spinning is a very critical one with them. This is a Korean report. We suppose the Japanese had some better excuse for their action than here appears . Unfortunately the Koreans do not know what that excuse is.

The Foreign Office received from the French Legation a demand for the payment of Yen 8,640. This money is due, according to contract, to the French inspector of the late Railway Bureau.

It is said that the Minister of the Household contemplates establishing a system of water-works in the city of Pyengyang.

A curious story is told of a floating mine which reached the shore of Kangwun Province. The people crowded about it and one of them proceeded to open it with a hammer. It opened. Thirty seven people were killed on the spot, if Korean accounts of the tragedy are correct.

On June 7th. 1,390 packages of ginseng were exported to China from Chemulpo.

A deserter from a German man-of-war is said to have been arrested at Suwun and returned to his vessel.

On the eleventh of June a placard was publicly posted at the Great Bell to the effect that Japan and Russia were about to negotiate peace. This may have been a little premature but we hope it is true

Koreans say that wonderful “water-machines” have been installed in the palace, equal to “nine dragons pouring the water from their mouths.” These marvels were imported from Japan.

An agent of the Japanese Agricultural Department has been making a tour of southern Korea for the purpose of examining the cotton prospect of that region and he finds that the lands about Mokpo and Kun- san are in excellent condition for the growth of this plant.

The police Department determined to levy a monthly poll tax of one dollar on each dancing girl (?) but the adviser overruled it.

Mr. Sin Tai-mu, the acting Korean Minister in Washington has asked to be relieved for the time being because of illness.

A report from Chipyung district says that nine men have been shot down by members of the so-called Righteous Army. Soldiers were asked for and have been sent.

The Seoul Young Men’s Christian Association closed its spring campaign with a rousing meeting at which several of the ministers of state were present. A large number of Koreans took part. As each spoke briefly and to the point it was a most enjoyable occasion. It is evident that the Korean Government looks upon this organization with great favor.

[page 235] Some Koreans have asked the Government to be allowed to form a joint Japanese and Korean company for the purpose of reclaiming the waste lands. Among other things, they offer to pay taxes from the very start. When they furnish water from their irrigation ditches to the people they want to collect in payment two bags of rice from every plot of ground that requires one bag of rice to plant. They propose to raise 500,000 dollars capital, divided into shares of 200 dollars each.

The Law Department has now properly requested the Finance Department to make a special grant of Yen 2,500 as a token of appreciation of the services of the retiring Adviser, M. Cremazy.

The native press gives a very pathetic account of the plight in which all the clerks of the postal and telegraph bureau found themselves when the Japanese took over this department. Throughout the country the number of incumbents was very large, and to be summarily thrown out of employment must have been something of a hardship. Some of them were probably not very efficient servants of the government, but so far as we are concerned we always found the Korean arrangements fairly satisfactory.

The prefect of Yangju reported that the Japanese mihtary authorities applied to him for 500 workmen on the railway line for a month but as it is a busy time on the farms he cannot comply.

It is said that the Japanese authorities pay one dollar and a half for the removal of each grave along the railway line.

The Koreans are much agitated over the fact that a Korean “lady” has opened a shop and attends it in person. She is the former concubine of one of the high officials and the Koreans flock to her shop in great numbers to buy goods. She is said to be making the business venture very successful.

The proposition that the Japanese police inspectors in the various districts take charge of the collection of taxes is meeting with great opposition. The reason may be partly a patriotic one but there is too much reason to believe that less worthy motives find a place here too. It is curious to note, in this connection, how thoroughly convinced a certain portion of the Western public is that the Japanese are not subject to the same pecuniary temptations that ordinary people are.

We are glad to note that the Korean officials are waking up to the fact that Japanese subjects are appropriating extensive plots of land at the foot of Nam-san to which they have no right whatever. This is government property and is not for sale and we hope that something can be done to put a stop to this particular form of theft.

Several prefects have complained during the past month that Japanese have been digging for gold in the country without permits. In Chang-geui extensive operations have been carried on.

The Koreans have been talking about a “rain of dead butterflies” which is said to have occurred in Songdo a few days since. They take it to be a very bad omen .

[page 236] In the district of Siheung Japanese subjects hare been cutting the fuel upon which many Koreans in that region depend for their winter supply. The prefect has appealed for help against this injustice.

Again according to custom all courts of justice in Korea are to be closed until about the end of August “because of the hot season.” In whatever manner or degree a Korean may be injured by another he will have no means of redress until the end of this hiatus of justice.

It is said that the service of collecting taxes from all provinces will be given to the Japanese assistants under the Adviser of the Finance Department.

The Imperial Treasury Department made an agreement with some Japanese gentlemen to build a mill outside the South Gate for grinding rice. The mill has been completed and is ready to convert great quantities of rice into flour. It has a capacity of one hundred bags of rice per day.

On the 23rd inst the Minister of Home Department, Mr. Yi Ch Yong, proposed the appointment of twenty-eight Magistrates in the Cabinet Meeting. His Majesty accepted all of the twenty-eight men.

The Finance Department issued a regulation for exchanging the nickel currency as follows: The Royal currency will be changed for one-half value. The counterfeit money of good quality will be changed for one fifth value. The money of bad quality can never be exchanged at any rate. The exchange places have been fixed at Seoul, Pyeng Yang, Chemulpo, Kunsan, and Chinnampo.

In Seoul the exchange will begin on July 1st. The hours of accepting the old currency are limited from nine to twelve A.M. and the paying out of the new currency will be from twelve to four P.M. The amount of money exchanged by one man must be more than one thousand dollars and less than ten thousand dollars. Amounts less than one thousand dollars will be accepted from the first of November. These amounts must be placed in hard wood boxes each containing 250 dollars or 500 dollars. Smaller amounts must be put in packages with amount marked upon outside of package. Any one desiring to exchange must send a proposal to the Finance Department with his address and amount of money for exchange.

On the 11th inst at Ker Chea Island, about 30 miles from Masanpo, the Korean and Japanese fishermen had a disagreement and the outcome was 14 men killed. Japanese agents from Fusan were dispatched to the scene to straighten up affairs.

The Japanese population in Seoul is as follows: Males 4,125; females 2,866; total 6,991. The number of houses is 1,666.

The American Minister, Mr. B. V. Morgan, had an audience with His Majesty yesterday.

The subject of Japanese vessels sailing up the rivers for trade with the interior, was discussed again in the Cabinet Meeting a few days ago, but nothing definite has been settled upon as yet

[page 237] The Magistrate of Kang-Kyea District, Mr. Sin Chung Kiu, reported to the Home Department that the Commander of the Japanese soldiers in that district compelled the people to furnish 850 oxen for war purposes and the people are unable to do their work. The officer also asked for 200 coolies and 500 horses. These demands are causing much distress among the poor people.

The Governor of South Kyeng Sang Province, Mr. Min Yung Sun, is to be commended for his fine services rendered and for his cleanness in his administration. The consequences are that his under officers perform their duties with care and the people are very glad to have such a good governor.

The Household Department Clerk, Mr. Yi Chang Pyel and some other influential men requested the Agricultural Department to grant them the right to cultivate the waste lands.

Mr. Kim Choong Whan, president of Po Sung School is receiving much praise from his pupils because of his interest in them and his thoroughness in their education. Of late he has cut his hair and now all his pupils beiig anxious to follow his example expect to have their locks shorn. Some thirty have already had their hair cut.

The Japanese Police inspectors of the five wards in Seoul have decided to establish telephones in their homes and they are planning to be connected with Japan in the near future.

All the Russian soldiers in Hamkyeng Province have retreated northwards, so now there are only two thousand cavalrymen in the vicinity of the Tuman River.

All the store-keepers in Seoul will constitute the Commercial Meeting Society according to the order of the Governor of Seoul.

The Governor of Seoul, Mr. Pak Ena Pyeng reported to the Home Department that he had complained to the Japanese Consul about the matter of putting posts around part of Namsan. The Consul replied that the land will be used as a park for the Japanese people. Now the Governor intends to put in posts for the city park instead of the Japanese.

A number of Korean scholars who have been studying in Yong Hai School in Tokio for about three months can already carry on conversation in Japanese. The president of the school is charmed with these talented individuals and he says there are no scholars in the world who can learn more quickly than Koreans.

Recently in the Cabinet meeting the list of all officers’ yearly salaries was reduced and is as follows : (1) The list for officers who have been appointed by decree, as ministers.

First degree is four thousand dollars.

Second three

Third two thousand and two hundred dollars.

[page 238] Fourth degree is two thousand dollars.

Fifth one “ and eight hundred dollars.

Sixth “ “ six

(2) The list for officers who have been appointed by proposal, as secretaries.

First degree is one thousand and four hundred dollars.

Second “ two “ “

Third “ dollars.

Fourth nine hundred dollars.

Fifth eight “

Sixth seven “

Seventh six “

Eighth five “

(3) The list for officers who have been appointed by introduction, as clerks.

First degree is six hundred dollars.

Second five “ forty dollars

Third four “ eighty “

Fourth “ “ twenty “

Fifth three “ sixty “

Sixth “ “ dollars.

Seventh two “ and forty dollars

Eighth one “ eighty “

Ninth “ “ forty-four dollars.

Tenth “ “ twenty “

# A Serious Disturbance,

There occurred in the southern part of Chung-chong Province, about the middle of June, an event which gives food for serious thought. The facts as brought out by impartial investigation are as follows.

Sometime last year a number of Koreans had gathered at a Buddhist monastery in the town of Eun-jin. Among them was a boy about twelve years old. By accident he overturned a small image of some kind and caused a very little damage. Koreans agreed afterward that it could be perfectly made good for a few cents. But the monks caught the boy, intending to hold him as hostage until his parents or relatives should pay an indemnity for the indignity put upon their monastery. But they soon discovered that the boy was an orphan and therefore worthless from the financial standpoint. The monks therefore seized one of the bystanders, charging him with having witnessed the sacrilige without raising a hand to stop it. This man was wholly innocent of any wrong. The accident occurred suddenly and he probably could not have prevented it. He was imprisoned there for three days pending [page 239] his payment of forty Korean dollars as indemnity. He was unable to get it and was finally released but a few days later he was seized again and the demand had now risen to two hundred and fifty dollars. After beating about the bush a long time he was again released. After this a Japanese monk came to live in the place and obtained some influence over the monks of this monastery. Again the Korean was arrested and the monks together with the Japanese now claimed that the man owed 1,200 dollars! As the man declared his inability to pay the money and denied that he owed it, the monks formed a company and went to the man’s house which was in the neighboring village of Nolmi and searched his house, stealing therefrom deeds to rice land and other valuables. That occurred this spring.

Meanwhile Dr. W. B. McGill of Kong-ju a member of the Methodist Episcopal Mission had begun work in Nolmi and had established a small church there containing eleven baptized probationers and about two hundred and fifty inquirers who attended the services with some regularity and were known as adherents. Among their number was this man who had been so badly treated. The adherents had also bought and paid for two pieces of land on rising ground near the village, one for a church and one for a school. On the former plot a building was erected but as yet the other plot had only been staked out. There was no possible question as to the ownership of this land. It had been legally bought and paid for and the deeds were deposited with the mission authorities.

One day a crowd of Il-chin men came, pulled up the stakes driven by the Christians about the plot of land that they had bought for a school and set their own stakes. They said the land was theirs and they were going to build a school there. They were at last persuaded to withdraw but then the Japanese came and seized the land saying that they were going to build a school there.

When this Korean was caught and ordered to pay over 1,200 dollars to the monastery the Christians or mission adherents attempted to aid him in a purely pacific way by consulting with his captors. This aroused the anger of the Japanese, of whom there were several then in the town either as merchants or farmers, and they sent out word to all the Japanese in the vicinity to congregate in the town. The Christians hearing of this sent in haste to Rev. Robert Sharp of Kongju asking him to come down and aid them. He went down on June 14th and stayed overnight but in the morning hearing that there was to be a determined attack made, he hurried to the nearest point where he could find a telegraph station. This was at Kang-gyung-yi six miles away. There is incontestable proof that the Japanese had declared their intention of killing both Mr. Sharp and the Christians. He arrived at night and immediately telegraphed to Seoul for help saying that his life was threatened. He could get no help from the Japanese police that night though there was a police station there and it was not till after eight o’clock the next morning that a start was made. He was accompanied by Japanese police back to Nolmi were it was found that during the night [page 240] a gang of Japanese and ll-chin-whoi men had come to the church and had demolished all the doors and windows and wrecked the place badly. They were armed with guns, knives and clubs, for it was found that guns had been fired and that several of the Christians who were staying at the church had been cut with swords or beaten with clubs, some of them so severely that they could not walk. One man had a broken rib.

After wrecking the church a gang of five Japanese, armed with clubs, went to the place where Mr. Sharp had lodged and demanded admittance. Two of them stood guard at the door with raised clubs and the other three entered. They demanded where Mr. Sharp was, but as he had gone to Kang-gyung-yi for help, could not be found. There is even reason to believe from the language of these men that had they founa Mr. Sharp his life would have been taken. Soon after this Rev. W. B. Scranton, M. D., the Superintendent of the Methodist Mission together with Mr. E. H. Holmes a secretary of the British Legation in Seoul arrived at Nolmi with a number of Japanese gendarmes and they found that other gendarmes had already arrived from Kong-ju and all was quiet. The Japanese in Nolmi assumed a very humble attitude and the Il-chin-whae people confessed themselves to have been wholly in the wrong. A careful investigation was made by the Americans and by the Japanese gendarmes independently. The Japanese gave up all claim to the land and removed their stakes but none of the ringleaders were arrested although it was well known who they were.

We have ascertained that the results of the two independent investigations were practically identical. The Japanese authorities promised to make a thorough investigation and settle the matter properly. They referred the matter to the Japanese consul in Kunsan. Since that time nothing has been done so far as the missionaries know or so far as the Koreans in Nolmi know. The Korean Christians there have written repeatedly saying that if this matter is allowed to pass without the Japanese miscreants being brought to justice it will be impossible for Koreans to live in any place where a score of Japanese have settled. At the time when the investigation was made these Japanese withdrew their stakes from the grounds belonging to the church and acknowledged that they had no right to it but we learn that since the beginning of negotiations in Seoul they have again seized the land and set their stakes.

The public will wait patiently but eagerly to see what will be done about this case. It is in a sense a test case and it will show fairly well what we have to expect in such cases. From the very start there has been no question as to the culpability of the Japanese in Nolmi. Will they be punished or not? Will restitution be made for the damage done and will the Koreans there be assured that hereafter they will be allowed to live at peace from these outrageous attacks?

We shall watch the case and report what is done. There may be those who doubt whether anything will be done but we cannot believe that in a pain case, brought to the notice of the Japanese officially by a foreign power, they will fail to do at least partial justice.