

MY VOYAGE  
IN  
KOREA

M. EISSLER  
MINING ENGINEER

THE ORIENTAL PRESS  
SHANGHAI  
1918

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KOREA

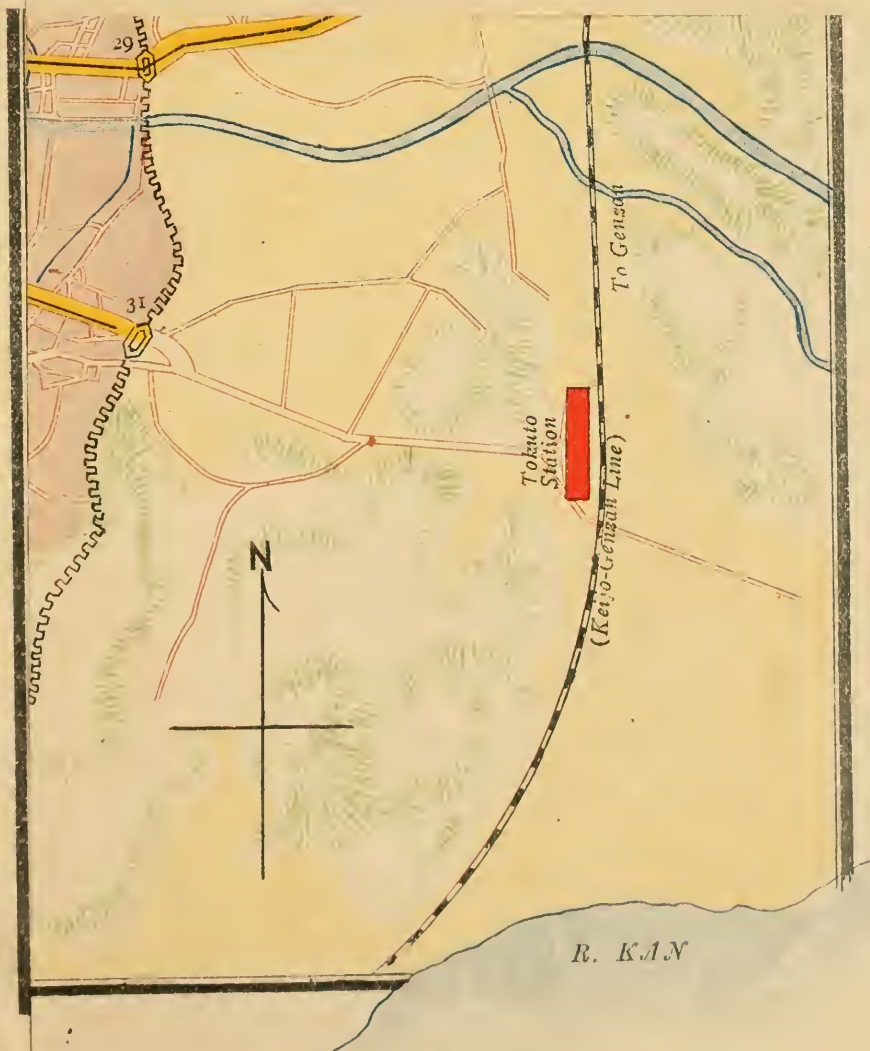
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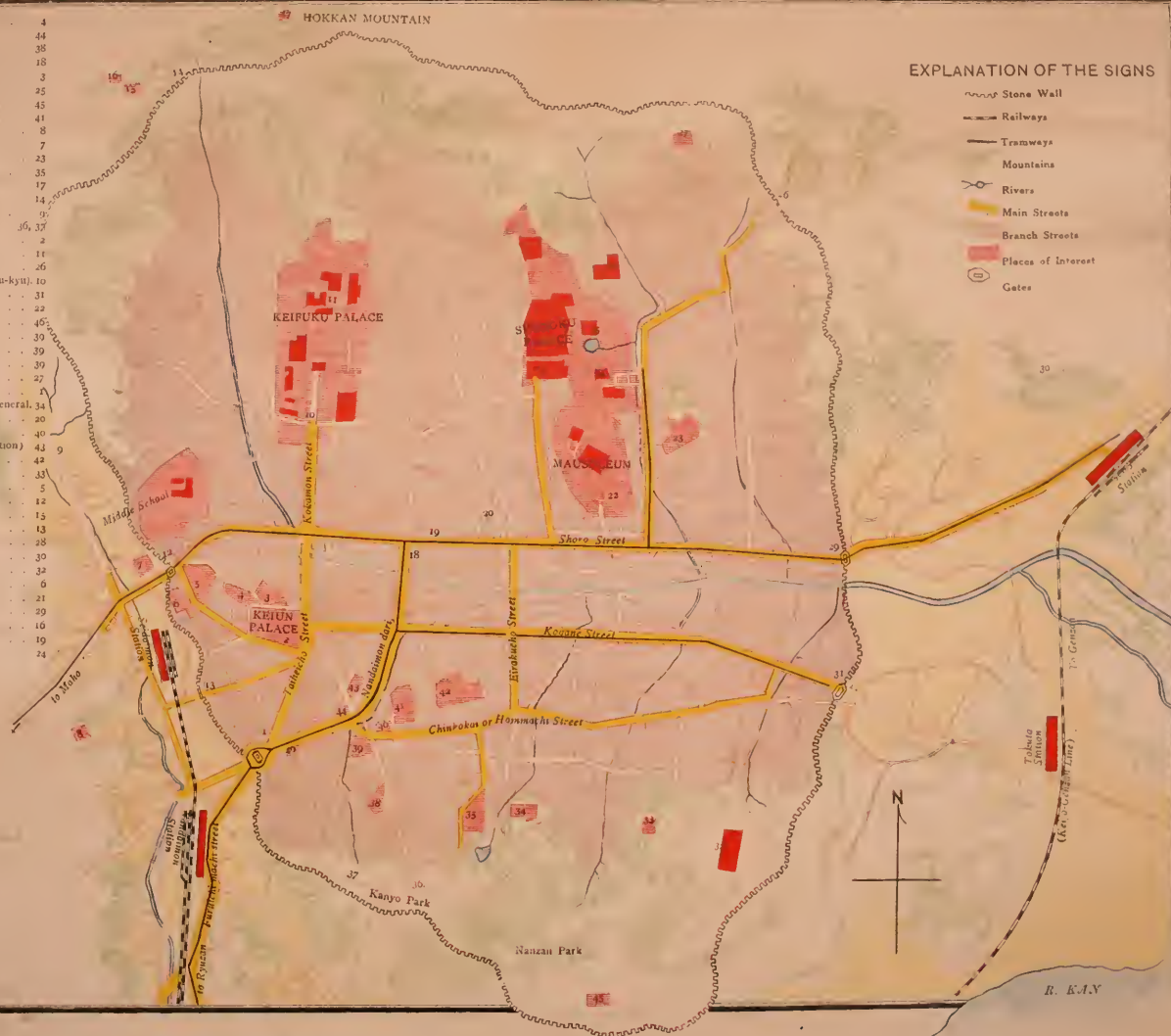


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- Mountains
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**with English and French Equivalents.**

JAPAN	GREAT BRITAIN	FRANCE
One Ri	2.4403382 Miles	3.92727 Kilometers
One Marine Ri	1.1506873 Miles	1.851818 Kilometers
One Square Ri	5.95525 Square Miles	15.423 Square Kilometers
One Cho	2.4507 Acres	99.1735 Ares
One Tsubo	3.9538 Square yards	3.3057 square meters
One Koku=10 To=100 Sho, Liquid.	39.703 Gallons	1.8039 Hectoliters
„ Koku dry	4.9629 Bushels	1/10 Ton
„ Koku (Capacity of vessel)	1/10 of one ton	
One Kwan=1000 Momme	8.2673 lbs. avoirdupois	3.75 Kilograms
„ „ „	10.047 „ Troy	
One Kin	1.3227 lbs. avoirdupois	6.00 Hectograms
One Momme	2.1164 Drams avoirdupois	3.75 Grammes
	2.4113 dwts. Troy	
One Yen=100 sen	2s. od. 582	2.583 Francs.





## Preface

*If the Trans Siberian Railway had not been constructed, Korea today would still be the sleeping Empire, its people living in its mediaeval way which is so well described by the French Missionary, Père Dalet in his book entitled "L'Histoire de l'Eglise en Corée" where all the horrors of the martyred Christians are described. As I wished to preserve in a condensed form the English translation of this ancient Korea, which with its barbarous customs still survived when this reverend gentleman published in France in 1874 his authentic records, I have confined my work to a translation of that portion in Part II of this volume which deals with the laws of the country, its rulers, social customs, religion, family life and habits and leaving out the gruesome tales of the executions of the first Christians who underwent tortures which a pen can hardly describe. All this is now disappearing under Japanese influence.*

*It is explained how Korea has been able to maintain her exclusiveness and to remain so long as a practically independent nation. Eventually she could not stay the onward march of an advancing civilization and the absorption by a stronger people. Japan owing to her large population of over 55 million of people on a limited area, of which only a small portion is cultivatable needed an extended sphere of influence and opens up new channels for her activities and her superfluous poor population.*

*They conquered Korea and in another generation its name will be forgotten and Chosen will be the geographical designation of the peninsula forming perhaps one of the Japanese Provinces on the Asiatic Continent, where the power of this Island Empire is daily expanding and time will tell if the results of the conquest will prove satisfactory and if Japan will be able to make life there for the indigenous population happier than it has been in the past and also promote the welfare of her own people by this conquest.*

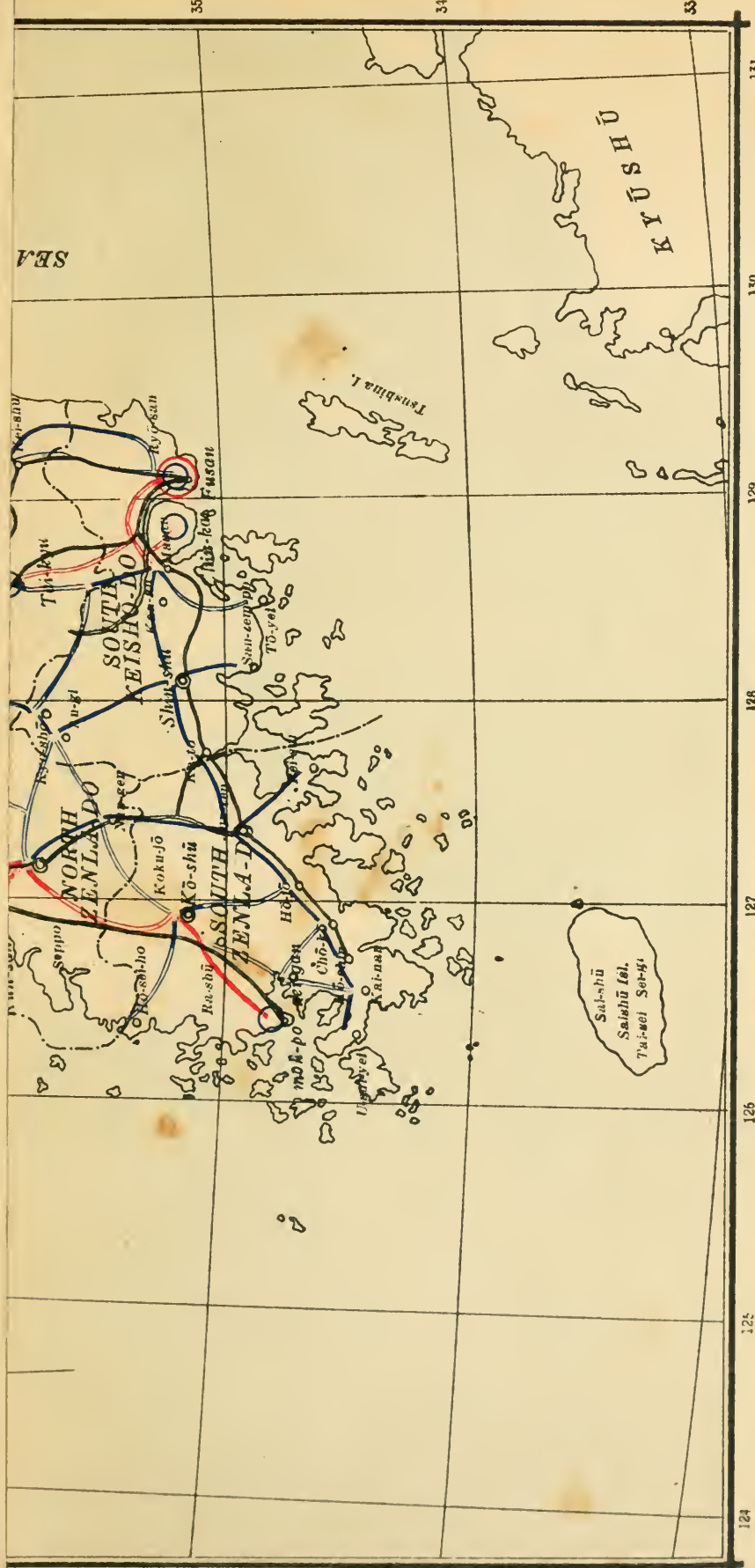
*I made three journeys to Korea where I saw that conditions were changing and that Japan is making great efforts to improve the country with the laudable object of eradicating old habits and customs.*

*Some of the impressions I gathered were not exactly of a pleasurable character, but I did not go to Korea for a holiday.*

*Hongkong 1918.*

*M. E.*










# R E M A R K S

- First Class Roads completed
- - - First Class Roads in Course of Construction
- First Class Roads planned
- Places provided or to be provided with Harbour
- Railway Lines
- Second Class Roads completed
- - - Second Class Roads in Course of Construction
- Second Class Roads planned
- Places provided or to be provided with Waterworks

### MAP OF KOREA SHOWING NETWORK OF ROADS AND OTHER PUBLIC WORKS



## REMARKS

-  First Class Roads completed  
 First Class Roads in Course of Construction  
 First Class Roads planned  
 Places provided or to be provided with Harbour  
 Railway Lines
-  Second Class Roads completed  
 Second Class Roads in Course of Construction  
 Second Class Roads planned  
 Places provided or to be provided with Waterworks

# **Chapter I**

The Geography of Korea







The Emperor of Korea Li O. or Yi Wang



# Chapter I

## The Geography of Korea or Chosen.

When looking at the map of Asia, it is noticed that Korea forms a peninsula of somewhat oblong form, to which belong quite a number of Islands, especially along the west coast, which are very fertile and some of them are quite large.

Its situation is between the  $33^{\circ} 15'$  and the  $43^{\circ}$  north latitude and between the  $124^{\circ} 25'$  and the  $131^{\circ}$  longitude, east of Greenwich, its greatest length is difficult to determine owing to the irregular shape of the configuration of the coast lines, but can be taken at 500 miles, its greatest width is 360 miles, whereas at its narrowest points it is under 100 miles.

Korea is bordered to the north by a chain of mountains called Chanyan-alin, whose highest peak is Paiktow-san, or the mountain with the white head. Within these mountains two rivers take their source and flow in opposite directions.

On the north slope originates the Yalugang (Japanese Oryoku) which flows to the west and empties into the Yellow Sea and forms the frontier between Korea and the Chinese territory of Leaotung in Manchuria.

It is across this river that in former ages Chinese civilization and Buddhism filtered into Korea and in the past century Christianity was brought to Korea across this river, never to be recrossed again by the daring and self-sacrificing Missionaries. The Mikiang or Tumen-gang takes its origin on the south slope and flows to the east and empties into the sea of Japan, separating Korea from Manchuria and the Russian Amurski—Siberian possessions, which were ceded by China to Russia in 1860. The other boundaries are to the west and the south-west, the Yellow Sea; to the east the sea of Japan and to the south-east, the Korean channel, which separates the peninsula from the Japanese Islands.

The principal Island to the south is Saishu-to (Quelpart). Kang-wha Island is on the west coast near the mainland and commands the entrance to the Kan-kiang river, on which the Capital Seoul or Keijo is situated. Quelpart is 60 miles south of the mainland. Ul-laung (Utsuryo) is on the east coast.

I have mentioned that the northern frontier of Korea is formed by mountains which extend from the mouth of the Yalu at the 40° north latitude in a north easterly direction to 42° 19' north latitude on the east coast to the mouth of the Tumen river. The white headed Mountains or Petheu-shan form the water shed between these two rivers.

Along the east coast a chain of mountains extends from north to south leaving a very narrow shore line of level coast and in some localities the mountains rise abruptly out of the ocean and as they are bare and little timber grows on them, they offer an uninviting aspect and early navigators gathered the impression that Korea was a very poor country, not worth troubling about.

The coast range is known as Thaipak-san (Japanese Taihaku-san). Korea is intersected by many mountain ranges, which leave little room for the development of large plains anywhere. Some of the high peaks reach an altitude of from 6000 to 8000 feet. Like in Japan, nowhere large navigable rivers are seen, owing to the mountainous character of the country and as good roads don't exist, intercommunication is difficult, except where railways have been constructed since the Japanese occupation.

The word Korea originates from the Chinese word Kao-li, which the Chinese pronounce Ko-rie and the Japanese Ko-rai. This was the name given to this country by the former Dynasties, but the present Dynasty, which ascended the throne in 1392 A. D. changed the name to Tsio-sien (Tchao-sien), which was the official name of the Country. Tsio-sien means serenity of the morning, which shows that the name is Chinese, for whom Korea in effect is the land of the morning, and owing to its fine climate it is known to writers, as the land of the morning calm. Some of the Chinese books designate Korea by the word, Tong-koué or the Kingdom of the Orient. The Manchu Tartars designate it as Sol-ho.

This country was entirely unknown in Europe in the 16th century and on the first maps which were made in Holland the same is shown as an island. At the end of the 17th century the Chinese Emperor Kang-hi tried in vain to obtain from the Korean King the necessary geographical data to complete the

chart of the Chinese Empire, which was being prepared by the Catholic Missionaries in Peking.

His ambassadors were received with great pomp, but the information imparted to them was very scant and consequently the Jesuit Missionaries in Peking who made the map according to the data given and which is found in the Atlas of Duhalde and which was afterwards reproduced in more recent books conveys a wrong idea of the configuration of the peninsula. The one shown here is made from original Japanese surveys.

Originally Korea was divided into eight Provinces, namely.—

1	Chusei	—	which is the Japanese name for Chyung-to	Province	
2	Haian	„	„	„	Pyong-an „
3	Keiki	„	„	„	Kyong-geui „
4	Keisho	„	„	„	Kyong-sang „
5	Kogen	„	„	„	Kang-uon „
6	Kokai	„	„	„	Hoan-hai „
7	Kwankyo	„	„	„	Ham-gyong „
8	Zenla	„	„	„	Chyol-la „

At present there are 13 Provinces each with a provincial Governor who resides in the Capital of each Province.—

1	North Haian Province,	Gishu—Capital,—Wiju	in Japanese
2	South „ „	Heijo „ —Pying-yang	„ „
3	Kokai „ „	Kaishu „ —Hai-ju	„ „
4	Kwankyo South „	Kwanko „ —Ham-heung	„ „
5	Keiki „ „	Keijo „ —Seoul	„ „
6	South Chusei „ „	Koshu „ —Koang-jyu	„ „
7	South Chusei „ „	Koshu „ —Kong-jyu	„ „
8	North Kwankyo „ „	Kyojo „ —Kyong-syong	„ „
9	North Chusei „ „	Seishu „ —Chyong-jyu	„ „
10	South Keisho „ „	Shinshu „ —Chin-jyu	„ „
11	Kōgen „ „	Shunsen „ —Chyung-chyon	„ „
12	North Keisho „ „	Taiko „ —Taiku	„ „
13	North Zenki „ „	Zenshu „ —Chyong-jyu	„ „

#### PRINCIPAL SEA PORTS.

1	Chinnampo . . . . .	Chinnampo	in Japanese
2	Fusan . . . . .	Pusan	„ „
3	Gensan . . . . .	Wonsan	„ „

## PRINCIPAL SEA PORTS.—(Continued)

4	Jinsen . . . . .	Chemulpo	„	„
5	Joshin . . . . .	Syong-jin	„	„
6	Kunsan . . . . .	Kunsan	„	„
7	Masan . . . . .	Masampo	„	„
8	Mokpo . . . . .	Mokpo	„	„
9	Seishin . . . . .	Chyong-jin	„	„
10	Shin-gishu . . . . .	Shin wiju	„	„

## PRINCIPAL BAYS.

1	Chinkai ... ..	Chinhai	in Japanese
2	Koryo ... ..	Koang-nyang	„ „
3	Yeiko ... ..	Yong-heung	„ „

The country is well mineralized, gold is quite abundant in several localities and not alone in alluvial form but several companies are working quartz mines successfully.

In former years, the Kings of Korea did not allow the exploitation of mines, as they did not wish to attract the attention of the other powers regarding the hidden wealth of the country and arouse ambitious desires and consequently they made themselves as little as possible and appeared as poor as they could so as to discourage their powerful neighbours from invading their country.

## THE CLIMATE.

The Climate varies from one extreme to the other, and conditions are similar to those existing in other Oriental localities.

In the Orient the winters are colder and the summers are hotter than in the Occident in similar European latitudes, for instance in the north the Tumen river is frozen six months in the year and in the south of the peninsula, although in the same latitude as the southern portion of Italy, the country is covered with a thick layer of snow in winter and the thermometer will fall from 5° to minus 15° fahrenheit or (−15° to −25° Celsius).

The spring and fall are accompanied by a fine climate and there is such a fine balmy atmosphere, especially in the morning, that I am not surprised that the country is justly named “The land of the Morning Calm.”

During the summer the torrential rainfalls which last usually three months, interrupt communication from the middle of June to the middle of September,



but these rainfalls occur also in the spring and I know that I got trapped in April while on an expedition in the southern part of the Island.—The bridges are temporary flimsy structures and it happened to me that after a heavy rainfall of 20 hours duration the small streams were converted into raging torrents and every bridge was swept away during the night and caused me a delay of several days before being able to resume the journey. Before the rainy season, the Koreans dismantle their bridges and place the timber in a sheltered spot, to be set up again as soon as the rainy season is over and practically all travel is stopped during that period.

There are very few good roads in the country and these are mostly only foot paths wide enough for one man to walk and I often had to walk miles on the small dams along the rice paddies and lead my horse behind me.

Most of the bridges are built of sticks of timber 6 to 8 inches in diameter with a forked end upward. These are stuck at low water in pairs into the bed of the stream. In the crotches are placed the cross timbers and on these the longitudinal planks are fastened with straw ropes.

Some of the deeper rivers are crossed on ferry boats.

Navigation along the coast is also difficult, and another peril to navigation is the enormous rise and fall of the water at ebb and flood tides not only near the coast, but many miles inland, and they show variations from 20 to 30 feet, which makes it dangerous for small ships even to venture up the rivers for any distance.

The currents are also very rapid.

### CULTIVATION.

In the valleys most all the available ground is under cultivation. Rice being the staple food, rice paddies are found wherever water is obtainable and the climate not too rigorous, wherever there are streams they are dammed up and the reservoirs so formed furnish water for irrigation. Wheat and vegetables are grown in large quantities. Oxen are used for plowing, but horses are not used for that purpose and one often sees men dragging along the plow. Animal and human excrements are used as fertilizers almost exclusively, and they are carefully preserved, also the ashes of the wood used in each household is scattered over the fields. After the seeds begin to sprout, to prevent them from drying up during the hot season, the fields are covered up with the



branches of young trees, which are removed when the plants are strong enough to resist the hot weather.

The absence of roads and the means of transport in this mountainous country, only allows the small cultivator to work the holding on which he erects his house and therefore large villages are the exception and not the rule and the country people are disseminated in small hamlets, and what they raise is barely enough for their sustenance.

They also raise fibrous plants for making linen. Tobacco was introduced by the Japanese at the end of the 16th Century. Cotton came from China some 500 years ago. Potatoes are also cultivated. A large turnip, which seems to be a hybrid between a turnip and the black horseradish is a favorite dish and a delicacy when in a fermented state. In Japan it is called Daikon, and when fermented the same emits a nauseating smell and in my travels I went through regions where the atmosphere seemed to be impregnated with this horrible perfume. This Daikon dipped into Soy Sauce (made from the Manchurian bean) is considered the finest and best vegetable in the Far East and grows to enormous sizes, like some of our large pumpkins and thrives exceedingly well in the soil of the decomposed volcanic rocks. I saw some at the foot of the Volcano Sakurajima in the bay of Kagoshima, whose eruption recently created such havoc in the Satsuma Province (Japan) which exceeded in size a 10 gallon beer keg.

The Koreans formerly only cultivated the valley lands, but when the Catholic Missionaries made converts as far back as 1780 A. D. and they were persecuted and driven from their homes and had to seek a refuge in the more isolated mountain regions, they began the cultivation of the uplands, so as to save themselves from starvation and gradually they developed a system of mountain culture which the nonchristians took up after them and now many mountain ranges are in a high state of cultivation.

In the valleys the land is constantly kept under cultivation, but in the mountains every few years it is allowed to remain fallow. All kinds of fruits are grown in Korea, but they are tasteless, and their apples, peaches, melons, prunes, raisins are not good as the summer rains spoil them. The only fruit I found to my taste was the persimmon, which is dried and forms a fruit similar to the dried figs. Flowers grow wild and the fields look beautiful in the spring, but the flowers have no scent and emit a disagreeable perfume.

Ginseng is largely cultivated, which forms the finest tonic in the world and acts on decrepit humanity by restoring sexual activity and the Chinese are

great believers in its recuperative qualities. The root is only used, it is cut into pieces and put to soak in white wine during one or two months and is drunk in small doses. It has a strengthening effect on sick people.

Wild animals, like tigers, bears, boars are numerous, and the tiger skins have a thicker fur than those of India and for this reason they are actively hunted. Pheasants, deer and other smaller game are abundant. Domestic animals are of a smaller and inferior type. The horses are small but vigorous.

Only oxen thrive and are of normal size.—Oxen are large and are the beasts of burden in this country. They can carry as much as 1000 pounds on their backs, which exceeds the weight camels carry, as their loads seldom average over 700 lbs. Many pigs are raised and as dog meat is considered a delicacy, they are reared in great numbers, but they are of a poor race. Mutton, sheep and goats are also raised in limited numbers.

Domestic insects like fleas, lice, bedbugs and other of these little pests are most numerous, especially in summer and make life in that country during the summer a hardship and they can be considered by the foreigner a regular plague of Egypt. In some localities it is practically impossible to sleep in the interior during the summer. The water must not be drunk without boiling and filtering and is the cause of numerous diseases, especially intermittent fevers. It also produces scrofula, nervous prostration, swelling of the limbs and premature age.

Small pox is very prevalent among these people and formerly 90 per cent of the population was afflicted by this disease, especially the children are subject to it and many die.

Typhoid fever is very prevalent and if the patient can't get into a perspiration death will occur in three or four days. Sudden indigestion will suffocate the sick man and cases of instantaneous deaths are frequent and epidemics like cholera were in former times quite frequent. The women practice abortion and when women die leaving children only 2 or 3 years old, with nobody to take care of them, it will be easily understood why the population did not increase more rapidly.

Of late an increase in the population seems to be taking place, in several Provinces new villages are springing up, various rice farms which laid dormant for numerous years are again being cultivated. Padre Ch. Dallet a Catholic Missionary published in 1874 a book on the History of the Church in Korea and he estimated the then population at 10 Million Souls, whereas the

present Japanese Authorities place the number of inhabitants at 15,500,000, all nationalities included.

The supposition is that the Koreans are the descendants of Indians mixed with Tartar and Mongol blood, and their migration from their original homes may coincide with the one which brought the present population to the Philippines, and Formosa, where the Malay type prevails. No doubt some settled on the Lou-Chow Islands and the Gulf Stream of the Pacific carried their frail boats to Korea and to the southern portion of Japan, and they formed the nucleus of the present people and are the cause of the close resemblance between the Koreans and Japanese. Of course they all have black hair, but occasionally there are met people with chestnut colored or even light blond hair showing the infusion of some foreign element, but where and how these accidents happened is not known. The Koreans are taller than the Japanese, strongly built and I have seen them pack loads on their backs weighing 300 pounds.

The impression existed for a long time that the Korean language was a Patois of Chinese and the conclusion was drawn that they are descendants of the Chinese race. Today it is known that the two languages and the two peoples differ from one another and that the Koreans have more Tartar than Chinese blood in them.

---

## **Chapter II**

Recent History of Korea





The Prince Imperial Oseishi





## Chapter II

### Recent History of Korea.

It is generally believed that Korea at the end of the 18th. Century was still a vassal state of China, but this is erroneous, as gradually the Chinese yoke was shaken off and the annual tributes were not paid and Korea became a free and independant state.

At the close of the 18th. Century, several Koreans attached to the embassy at Peking became converted to the Roman Catholic faith and by them Christianity was first introduced into Korea and led afterwards to the terrible persecutions of the Christian converts, hundreds of them dying as martyrs for their faith and many noble French Missionaries were ruthlessly slain by the fanatical Koreans.

In 1864, a Regency was appointed during the minority of the Successor, who was a child of 4 years of age and his father being an ambitious man got hold of the entire power of the Kingdom and he inaugurated a reign of despotism and terror heretofore unknown. In 1866 persecutions against the Catholic Missionaries began with the decapitation of nine French priests. Many thousands of converts were put to death and their number is put down at 20,000. He was hated and feared by the people. The French government sent several men-of-war to Korea, but the expedition which was mismanaged proved a complete fiasco and the murder of the French fathers was never vindicated; on the contrary the Koreans considered themselves invincible and came to the conclusion that the foreign powers were afraid of them.

The Regent, the father of the future King was Prince Heung-Sung known in history as Taiwunk.—

An American ship, the General Sherman sailed up the Tadong river, got wrecked and the Koreans set fire to it and massacred the whole crew. In 1871 an American expedition of five ships were sent to Korea and they stormed a small fort and took it, which was considered sufficient in vindication of the

burning of the General Sherman and the fleet sailed away. While these events were happening in Korea, Japan was adopting western ideas and civilization and an envoyé was sent to Korea who succeeded in getting a favorable hearing from the Queen mother, as her son was coming of age and the regent was loath to relinquish his power; but he was forced to abdicate in 1873. In 1876 a treaty was made with Japan, by which the independance of Korea was recognized and in 1879 Hanabusa was sent as Minister to Seoul and a Korean Minister was sent to Japan.

A party sprung up which can be called the Liberals, backed up by the Japanese. The Conservatives looked for support to China and the ruling faction belonged to this party and the King sided with them. In 1882 military riots broke out in Seoul, as the soldiers were ill fed and badly treated and the Queen had to flee from the palace. The Japanese were driven out of the country.

This was the propitious moment for China to take a hand in the conflict and Yuan-shi-kai with several thousand soldiers entered Korea and they got a firm footing and acted as a guard to the Queen.—

In 1884 Korea made treaties with several of the foreign powers. In the same year the Liberals attempted a “Coup d’état” in the palace, supported by several hundred students just returned from Japan, but the attempted revolution was frustrated through the intervention of the Chinese troops after the students had massacred some of the Ministers, but they were driven out of the Palace grounds. The Japanese implicated in this affair withdrew to Chemulpo and returned to Japan. From that day Korea was in the hands of China until 1894, when the war broke out between Japan and China, which requires no explanation here.

The Queen mother still bore enmity towards the ex-regent Taiwunk and his sons, who occupied high stations at court. Meanwhile progressive measures were enacted, mining and other concessions were granted to foreigners, so as to develop the country. In September 1895 Viscount Miura came to Seoul as Minister for Japan and he got into contact with the ex-regent.

In the early morning of October 8, the Taiwunk, together with Koreans, Japanese soldiers and Japanese desperados, the famous Soshi, made their way from his country residence to Seoul, entered the palace grounds by the Kwang-wha gate and went to the royal apartments, situated about half a mile from the

front gate and killed some of the palace guards on the way. The Soshi and the Korean assassins heavily armed rushed the royal quarters and although the King and his son were not molested, the Queen was butchered, probably by the Japanese. The body was wrapped in blankets saturated with petroleum and burned in one of the near by groves.

Mr. Miura appeared then on the scene and the King was forced to appoint officials who were in sympathy with the Japanese, and although the Japanese authorities deny all responsibility for this dastardly deed, the evidence is too strong and proves that they must have known that the Taiwank intended to have the Queen killed. The King was afraid that he also would be assassinated and to save his life he escaped dressed as a woman to the Russian Legation where he was kept in security and he had a new Palace built adjoining the Russian Legation and on its grounds stands a fine modern granite structure intended for the crown prince. From that time bitter feelings arose between Russia and Japan and led up to the final struggle.

The King was very friendly towards the Americans and they obtained gold mining concessions, they built the first railway from Seoul to Chemulpo, the electric tramways in Seoul, the waterworks and introduced the electric lighting system in Seoul.

Under Marquis Ito's regime the Emperor was practically a prisoner in his own palace and no one was permitted to enter the grounds without a special permit and every effort was made to coerce him into submission and make him openly acknowledge a treaty whereby the independence of Korea is abolished, but he resisted this with great obstinacy. His ministers advised him to abandon the throne so as to save the country being swallowed up by the Japanese, and at last he consented to this.

The new Emperor was crowned in 1907 and from that time on the Japanese had absolute control of every thing in Korea and the Resident General is now the ruler. The Korean Army was disbanded and to their credit it has to be said that they made a stout resistance in Seoul and many Japanese were killed and wounded but the Korean soldiers were overpowered and some of their officers committed suicide instead of surrendering.—

The fight in the Provinces against Japanese rule was kept up for nearly two years and long before the same was finished, the national existence of Korea was at an end. The story of the war for independence which those who were brave enough to carry on, would fill a separate volume and would record

many deeds of valor of the hardy mountaineers who constituted the main fighting force. The Japanese in their reprisals wiped out many villages by fire and sword.

Not alone this, but in the wake of the Army came a lot of worthless camp followers from Japan, the desperate Soshi and a crowd of the worst class of low Japanese emigrants who under the slightest pretence evicted the poor Koreans from their houses and lands, taking possession of the same and naturally the Koreans have no love for the Japanese and they again look with contempt on the Koreans whom they consider as their inferiors.—

I am told that there are now 300,000 Japanese permanently settled in Korea, but the country, be it from a climatic point of view or for some other reason does not prove attractive to the Japanese settlers and it seems that the Japanese Government is disappointed, that after centuries of exertions to get possession of Korea it does not prove from a financial point of view the success they anticipated, but perhaps it is too early yet to pass a final opinion on the subject.

Any stranger visiting Seoul must be impressed when he passes the Gates of the Imperial Palaces with the sight of the Japanese soldiers standing guard there with fixed bayonets. No stranger is allowed to enter, as the Emperor is practically a prisoner and what food for reflexion when one thinks that the American Government made a treaty with Korea in which it was guaranteed to help Korea in case she is oppressed. Korea today must be considered a Province of Japan and the Emperor is only so by name and the ruler of the country is the Japanese Governor General.

On the other hand it has to be considered that when the Japanese took Korea, there was a royal figure head surrounded by a hierarchy of office holders who were drawing the life blood out of the working population. The exchequer was empty, the people impoverished and human vultures hanging around on the outskirts of the Palaces to pick up any of the carion which might accidently fall to their lot. It remains to be seen if Japan will succeed in introducing better conditions and to improve the existence of the poor people. In some of the following chapters will be shown how Korea was ruled under its Kings and Emperors and what their laws, customs and habits were and which have survived to this day.

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## **Chapter III**

**Buildings—Monuments—Architecture and Relics.**





## Chapter III

### Buildings. Monuments, Architecture and Relics.

The peculiar Architecture which is noticed in China prevails in Korea where a few of the ancient buddhist monuments and temples are left. The majority of the dwelling houses in Korea are a ramshackle sort of huts, made of lumber, wicker work plastered over, whereas the corner posts and beams which support the heavy tile roofs are out of proportion to the weight they have to carry, as they are too light and the result is that all these houses look as if they were ready to fall to pieces and it is only surprising that they don't, as most of them are out of plumb. They don't seem to understand the principle of the tie beam to relieve the lateral thrust caused by a roof resting upon rafters.

The most important portion of the Korean house is the floor, underneath the floor are built, with rock or brick, a series of channels or flues which debouch into a lateral flue at the end of the room and when these are properly arranged they are covered with thin stone slabs fitting closely together, and the joints are carefully sealed up with good mortar so that no smoke can escape into the room. Over the stone slabs comes a thick layer of mortar or cement and when dry the floor is covered with a heavy oil paper and there is no better paper made anywhere for such purposes than in Korea.

The fire place is outside the building, the flame of which passes under the floor through these channels under one or even two rooms and the smoke discharges into a chimney or in its absence escapes on the floor level and one walks in the narrow lanes and alleyways of Seoul in an atmosphere of smoke and soot especially during the winter. This house heating arrangement is called a Kan and is a speciality of Korea and Northern China, and during the winter no doubt they prove a blessing, but as the fire place is also used for cooking purposes and the heat passes under the house in summer as well they become then veritable infernos.

In Northern China they have a similar arrangement called Kang, which differs from the Kan. It is an elevated brick structure containing the flues and occupies only a part of the room and on top of this platform are the beds. Some of the rich mens houses have dozens of Kans. These houses are cut up with numerous walls into a series of courtyards around which are the dwellings of the retainers forming a regular labyrinth. The buildings are only one story high, and are located in the most secluded and also dirtiest part of Seoul and they are usually reached by passing through numerous twisting and turning alleyways inhabited by the lowest type of Korean humanity, after wading through muddy cesspools where the nostrils are assailed with nauseous odors, the entrance Gate of the Yambans house is reached. Every Korean house is surrounded by a wall so that nobody should be able to look into the house or the yard. It is necessary that the women remain invisible.—When the Emperor moved into the new palace which is surrounded by high walls, some enterprising foreigners built not far from it a three story building from the upper portion of which they could look into the garden grounds of the Palace and the Emperor had to pay a big price to get this obnoxious building into his possession from which he removed the upper story.—

Glass windows are rarely seen in Korean houses, they use oil paper for that purpose.—

On the roofs or eaves of gates and palaces they place stone figures of animals representing demons, to keep away the evil spirits.

There is so much written about the beauties of Seoul, that I can't help mentioning that Seoul is a horrible place. The City is built in a basin, surrounded on all sides by high mountains, amphitheater like and would be as far as mountain scenery goes a very interesting sight, but there is no regularity in the streets, most of the houses are hovels built of mud and the impression one gets of these low, one storied, dirty and filthy agglomeration of huts is a very poor one and a ramble through the unpaved narrow streets creates a feeling of disgust. Since the coming of the foreigners a semblance of order has been introduced into the main Avenues which cut through the town to the four points of the compass, and substantial stone and brick structures have been erected and the Japanese have made many improvements in widening and cutting new streets through the populous quarters; but as soon as one wanders into the purlieus of them and leaves off the beaten path one sees sights which are even rare in China.

It is a great pity that the palaces where the Empress was murdered are allowed to go to wreck and ruin, as they are monuments of oriental art. No attempt is made on the part of the Japanese to preserve them from decay and deterioration, as perhaps they feel that as soon as the mementos of the tragic events are obliterated which are connected with the conquest of Korea, the quicker the world will forget all about them. Seoul was made the Capital of Korea in the 16th century, after the destruction of the old Capital Sinto during the Japanese invasion—which town was 20 miles north of the Kang-kiang river.—Sinto was made the Capital in 930 A. D. and before Pien-yang was the royal residence.—

Quite a pleasing contrast form the Palaces of the Emperors and there are some beautiful structures in Chinese Architecture erected on the new Palace grounds.

Among the interesting remnants of old Korean Architecture must be mentioned the wall which surrounds Seoul, which is fourteen miles in circumference and twenty feet high, surmounted with battlements and embrasures and pierced by eight massive gates. This wall clings to the edges of the mountains, going up and down the steepest declivities with symmetrical grandeur. Like all Chinese walls it has a core of mud faced with masonry and in some places it is built of solid stone.

The interesting sights in Seoul are these old walls and the surrounding mountain scenery, the gates, palaces and the imperial graves and the study of Korean manners of living and their primitive habitations.

The gates are very substantially built and are two to three stories high.

There are still the remnants of a once existing sewerage system visible, as through the centre of the town passes an open conduit, walled on the sides and must be 12 or more feet in depth but is silted up now and into this, the main sewer, smaller channels empty, and during the rainy season the drainage of the whole city is carried off and owing to the natural grade into the valley a good sewerage system could be provided for, which would drain into the Han River. On the south side of the city is the Nam Shan or South mountain, which is very precipitous and to the North is Pook Shan or North Mountain.

Seoul has 300,000 inhabitants and is 28 miles from its sea port Chemulpo, which it is connected by a railway.

The walls are over 500 years old and the gates are from 14 to 16 feet in width and are set in arches about 16 feet deep and made of large blocks of stone finely hewn and joined, furnishing perfect specimens of arch building. The towers are meant for the soldiers to defend the approaches and they form the principal attraction to the tourist.

There are three wide streets, one from East to West ending at the East gate and the others run off at right angles from this, one to the main gate of the palace and the other to the great South gate. Some very interesting remnants of old architecture are seen in the ancient Capitals of Korea, like Taidong gate in Phyong-Yang.

Towering above the surrounding buildings on a hill in the centre of Seoul is the fine Catholic Church, a fitting monument of the brave French fathers who have brought the Cross to Korea. Since the advent of the Missions of other denominations, schools and hospitals have been built by them and Severance Hospital in Seoul deserves a fitting place whenever the history of the Protestant church will be written, nor has the introduction of Protestantism been of the tragic character as are recorded here in relating the introduction of the Catholic faith.

The Protestant Evangelization of Korea is due to the efforts of Rev. John Moss who came from Mukden in 1873 and he was the first founder of Protestant Christianity in Korea and it is the duty of every foreigner who visits Seoul to make himself acquainted with the noble work our Missionaries are doing and they are certainly sowing there the seeds on fertile ground.

The old legation quarters with their compounds now converted into Consulates cover a large area and some of them have some imposing structures on them, a fairly good Hotel is in the Legation quarter, but the Railway Company is constructing a new hotel, which will be run on the same lines as the Manchurian Railway Company's hotel at Dalny, Mukden, Chingwantao and etc., where the traveller is compelled to stop over a day or two, as the time tables are so ingeniously arranged that trains never make connections and the traveller has to patiently abide his time in these hotels and contribute to the exchequer of the Manchuria Railway Company.—

The foreign population in Korea is not large and is made up of those connected with the Consulates, merchants and the employés of the Mining Companies.—

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In the interior of the country are to be seen the remnants of brick and stone enclosures around which high walls were built and in these enclosures thousands of people could seek a refuge in time of war.

There are numerous old monuments in existence in Korea, and the oldest is said to be the Altar of Tangun erected on a high peak on one of the Islands, whose authenticated age dates back 2000 years before the Christian Era and not very far distant from it are some Buddhist Monasteries.—

Near Pyeng-yang is a stone tablet which marks the site of Kijas grave. Many huge mounds near the town of Kyong-ju are supposed to be the sites of the graves of the Kings who ruled Silla.

The most remarkable relic is the Bell of Silla, as the same clearly proves that the Koreans 1700 years ago must have already attained a high degree of civilization, to mine and smelt copper ores, cast a bell and hang the same up so as to give a clear sound when struck.

Of the Golden Pagoda constructed by the buddhist priests, nothing remains but the two lower stories and these ruins are about 1600 years old.

There are many other Buddhistic remains in Korea and many decaying temples and monasteries are still in existence which are inhabited by some poor bonzes eaking out an existence by charity. These temples are located in the most beautiful spots in the country in the midst of pine and fir forests. The most renowned ones are in the Diamond mountains in the central eastern part of Korea.

Near Songdo are two figures one male and the other a female in stone. These are called Miryoks. One of those statues is 70 feet high and an oblong stone slab resting on its head measures 12 feet in length.

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## **Chapter IV**

Agriculture—Science—Industries—Commerce—Mining.





Wooden stamps driven by water power



Two Forty Stamp Mills



Bird's eye view of Seoul. Showing Catholic Cathedral to the left



Bullocks bringing firewood and brush to Seoul

## Chapter IV

### Science—Industry—Commerce—International relations.

Science is not so disseminated in Korea as one would think considering that schools were established there to propagate knowledge from time immemorial. In Astronomy they have just sufficient knowledge to make use of the Chinese Calendar which is sent to them yearly from Peking.

The calculators in the finance department barely know the rudiments of arithmetic and book-keeping. In Medicine they are in many cases proficient as beside the knowledge acquired from China, the Koreans have introduced some very important discoveries and a book has been published in Peking on medicine as practiced by Koreans.—

The ambition of the Medical Students is to become Court physicians, and they have medicines there which are unknown in Europe, and one of the Catholic Missionary Bishops testifies that he was suffering from gravel in the bladder and was on the point of death but he was cured by one of the Korean doctors. The secret of their remedies are strictly guarded.

Well known as a fortifier and stimulant is the use of ginseng and the fresh horns of deer. I know myself that the Siberian hunters sell the horns of deer, when they are killed at the proper time, for several hundred rubles a pair in Kiachta, on the Mongolian frontier from where they are sent overland to Peking.

The Korean hunters say that when they drink the warm blood of a deer it puts new life into them and that they can stand then any amount of fatigue.—

The Korean medicos practice the acupuncture method. By this is meant that they insert a fine needle into certain parts of the body to a depth of 1 to 2 inches and only draw a few drops of blood, and thereby produce some remarkable effects.

I remember as a young man when I was in San Francisco, a Chinese Doctor named Li Po Tai had a great reputation there and effected some remarkable cures by means unknown to the medical profession.



The Koreans know very little about industrial arts.—Every family produces in their homes what they require. They weave their own linen and even silk, they grow the plants out of which they extract the coloring matter to colour it, they are their own carpenters, tailors, masons etc. They make their own rice wine, distil their own spirits, press their own oil. They gather the plants which serve as remedies in case of sickness, they make their sandals, clogs, baskets, brooms, ropes, strings, straw mats. Their instruments are very primitive and as they only work when necessity compels them to produce these things by the simplest possible methods, they never acquire a high degree of proficiency and perfection.

Special workmen only exist where special tools are required, and a long practice to learn how to use them; but such individuals who are permanently established in one locality are very rare.

The implements used by the agriculturalist are very crude. The country does not lend itself to exploitations of agriculture on a large scale as it is a mountainous country and the valleys are not so large and extensive as in other regions. Their system of irrigation for the rice fields, like everywhere in the East, is perfect.—

They make excellent paper from the bark of the mulberry paper tree.

The bulb known as Ginseng grows here and is highly prized and like opium has a harmful effect on mankind.

Fishing is a great industry as most people live on rice and fish, as only the richer class can afford the luxury of meat.

A large number of people are engaged in salt making from sea water by evaporation.

Rough cotton, hemp and grass cloth are woven in hand looms. Korea at one time had a highly developed ceramic art of its own, and in some of the ancient graves which have been desecrated or opened by accident, beautiful specimens of Celadon ware are exhumed and the Satsuma ware of Japan is made to-day by the descendants of those Koreans who three centuries ago were taken as captives by the Shogun of Satsuma to Kagoshima and they were the founders of this industry there, which to-day has a world wide reputation. Not many years ago there was no post or telegraph in Korea and the people there, like the Indians in America, signaled to one another by means of beacon fires by which means they could communicate easily, news from one high mountain peak to another. They had regular stations over the whole country and any news could be flashed during one night over the whole of Korea.



The work of cutting fire wood, brush and kindling wood occupies a large population and is one of the sights in Korea, as the patient ox is used for its conveyance and whole caravans wend their way daily into Seoul and no doubt is cause of the great denudation of the forests in Korea, although the Northern portion along the Yalu has splendid forests and timber is also found in other inaccessible localities in the Peninsula.

They turn out a certain kind of bronze work of peculiar design and also inlaid work which is bought by travellers but it is not artistic like Japanese work.

Artisans with shops in a fixed locality are also rarely to be found, and they generally travel about doing odd jobs, carrying their tools with them and even potters who build furnaces to burn their wares start business in a locality where there is plenty of suitable clay and fuel and when these become exhausted they move elsewhere. Blacksmiths do the same and the result is that no proper industry exists anywhere.— Even the copper they use for ornamentation and utensils is bought in Japan although there are fine deposits of copper ore in Korea. The only thing they understand how to manufacture is paper, which is of the best quality.

In every important village markets are held once or twice a week and here the bartering takes place. Before the Japanese occupation the only money in circulation were copper coins with a hole in the center and one hundred were on a string. One thousand of these coins are equal to 50 cents American money and one string is called a *nhiang* and four hundred strings made a load for one man or two hundred dollars worth; consequently when a considerable sum of money has to be paid a whole convoy of men had to be engaged to carry the money.

High interest is paid on loans, from 30 to 60 per cent per annum. In good times the farmer realizes 30% profit on the value of his land.

The old coins were nearly pure copper with some zinc, but of late the alloy was so increased that their intrinsic value was much diminished.

Gold mining, especially the exploitation of placer mines has been carried on extensively by the natives with their crude methods and so far no attempt has been made to work the rivers and flats by dredging, in spite of the large amount of drilling done to ascertain their value and consequently the inference can be drawn that the ground would not be payable by these methods.

There are as far as my knowledge goes four important companies who work quartz mines successfully in Korea under concessions granted to them by

the deposed Emperor. Distributed over the Peninsula in different localities are other quartz reefs which were in the hands of foreign corporations but seem to have failed—I have not been able to ascertain the causes which led to these failures.

I have reason to believe that in certain Districts valuable quartz reefs exist which were formerly the private properties of the deposed Emperor and they are known as the Imperial Household mines but they were confiscated by the Japanese Government. While in Seoul, I made an offer to the competent authorities to grant me the right to exploit a group of mines in a certain district against a royalty to be paid to the Government on the gold produced, but was informed that the Japanese Government is going to work these mines and that they don't intend to give any concessions to foreigners on any of the old Imperial household properties and as these cover extensive areas in the best mineralized sections, I think it will be difficult to find outside of these areas any mines which will prove payable.

Considering the treatment meted out to me by a certain section of the mining population, I left there very much disgusted and will give the engineers who have occasion to visit that country in quest of mines the following advice.—

“Beware of the professional Korean mine salter,”

I am informed that an American firm is developing a valuable copper deposit in the North Eastern portion of Korea. Some coal mines are also worked in the Northern portion of the Peninsula and large beds of iron areas are found there, as well as zinc, lead and silver.

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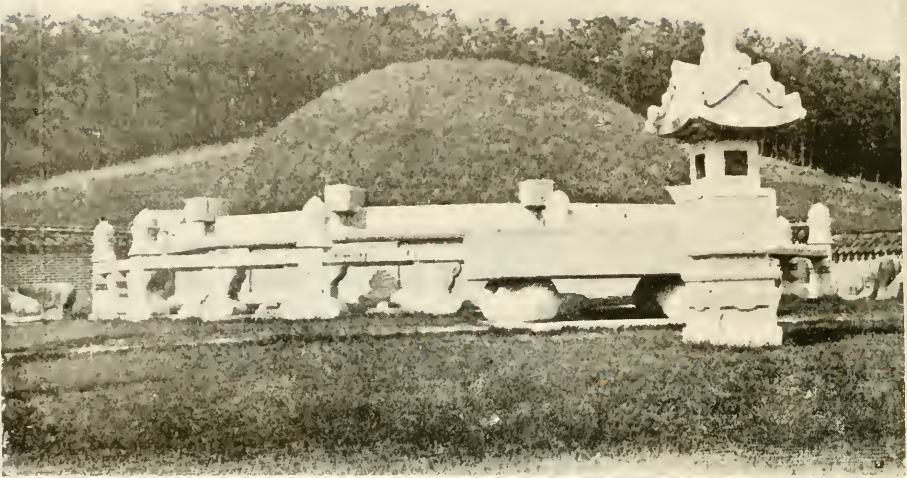


A Korean scholar and his family



The South Gate of Seoul





The murdered Queen's mausoleum outside the East Gate of Seoul. It is situated in a pretty grove of trees. Under the mound is a vault in which the remnant of the body is deposited. Note the large stone sacrificial table, the stone lanterns, figures of warriors guarding the tomb and the animals most useful to man.



The Taidong gate in Pyng-yang in Northern Korea

## **Chapter V**

Children—Women—Marriage





## Chapter V

### Children—Women—Marriage.

The condition of the women, like in most Oriental countries, is from our standpoint a pitiable one, as she is the slave of her husband and not his companion, but her position is brought about by the customs and usages prevailing there. She has no moral existence and the woman who has no husband or family to protect her is at the mercy of everybody. No name is given to women, she is simply the daughter of so and so or the sister of M and after her marriage she has no name at all. When a son is born to her and he grows up, she is called the mother of W.—

Among the upper classes when children have reached a certain age, say about ten, custom demands that they should live separately and the boys are assigned to the outer apartments where they live with the men. The young girls are sequestered to the inner apartments where they are educated and are taught to read and write. The degree of seclusion of a Korean woman depends upon the position she holds in society. There is the aristocracy, the respectable and the disreputable classes. The higher her position the more secluded she will live; there are the upper four hundred in Korea, the same as in America.

When a girl arrives at the age of 12 years, she must never be seen without the changot or sleeved apron which covers her face. They are instructed not to show their faces, so that they become very bashful and hide themselves.

One can understand that family life is entirely destroyed by these customs and a husband very seldom speaks to his wife and associates very little with her. Even among the poor people, the men seek recreation out of doors among their male acquaintances and I have never seen so many “flaneurs” on the streets as in Seoul, where the men promenade about in groups, smoking their long pipes and gossiping.

Amongst the nobility when a girl has arrived at the age of puberty, even her nearest relatives are not allowed to see her or to speak to her and when they are married they are simply unapproachable. They are in their inner apartments and can't go out and look into the street without the permission of their husbands; and this sequestration has been carried to such extremes that fathers have killed daughters, husbands their wives, because some strangers have touched them.

Nevertheless a certain respect is shown to them and they are addressed with many ceremonies, her apartment is inviolable and the police are not permitted to enter a woman's apartments and the nobleman who withdraws into his women's apartments can't be taken by force. The wives of the Mandarins have the right to be driven in a closed carriage drawn by two horses and they are not obliged to make the genuflexion in coming before a high personage. They are not compelled to dismount when passing the palace gates. As women are considered irresponsible they can enter everywhere even the King's palaces and they can walk in the streets even at night, whereas after nine in the evening till two in the morning men are forbidden to walk the streets, without there is absolute cause for it. At least that was the custom in former years.

When the girls have reached the age of puberty, it is the parents who engage them to men, without consulting them and even against their wishes and inclinations. The arrangements are all made by the parents, who discuss the marriage contract and according to the advice of astrologers the favorable day is chosen for the marriage ceremony. The eve of the day fixed, the bride asks one of her friends to comb up her hair and the young man asks the same service to be rendered to him by one of his comrades, and they are chosen with great care and are called Poksiou, that means "the lucky hand."—The children of both sexes wear their hair in a braid hanging down their backs and as long as one is not married one is considered a child and not supposed to be capable of thinking and to be serious, and even young men 25 to 30 years of age when not married are excluded from any assembly of men where important matters are discussed. But marriage brings with it the emancipation of the sexes even when contracted at the age of 12 or 13 years. From that moment the boy becomes a man (Euroun) and the bride becomes a matron and he can wear the bamboo hat and let his voice be heard in the council of the elders. The tail of the boy is twisted then into a top knot on top of his head. It is customary not to cut a single hair on one's head. The married women besides their natural



Women in their native street costumes, wearing the Changot



tresses, wear an abundance of false hair ornamented with numerous pins and combs. Those young men who have not been able to get a wife for some reason or another, so as not to appear ridiculous tie their cue into a top knot.

On the wedding day a platform is built up, ornamented with all possible fineries, the parents and friends are invited and a big crowd assembles. The future spouses who had probably never seen one another, are brought forward with great solemnity and they salute each other and withdraw, without speaking one word. The bride goes back into the women's apartments, and the groom joins the men whom he entertains with the best the market can furnish.—

It is this salutation before witnesses, which implies the consent, that constitutes the legitimate marriage; and she belongs to him and he can have no other legitimate wife while she lives but he can keep as many concubines as his purse can afford. In regard to concubines, it is sufficient when a man can prove that he has had intimate relations with a girl or a widow, that she becomes his legal property. Nobody can reclaim her even her parents and if she runs away she can be brought back by force.

On the day of her marriage, the bride is not supposed to speak one word to the bridegroom and she must remain silent and demure under any conditions; and she must maintain this silence for several days and even weeks and only speaks when absolutely necessary.

With the father-in-law she is supposed to be still more reserved and must not even look at him, but with the mother-in-law she is allowed to speak, from all this it will be understood that there are very few happy marriages in Korea. Conjugal fidelity has only to be observed on the woman's side and she must never show any jealousy and the husband never shows that he has any affection for his wife, and for him she is only a slave of a higher rank, who bears children for him, and to satisfy his passions. It is customary among the nobility to go away after the marriage and to leave the newly married woman for quite a long time, so as to give proof that she is quite indifferent to him.

Some women with sense accept their condition with resignation, but many show their characteristic defects, become violent, cause dissensions and quarrel with the mother-in-law and make scandalous scenes. Among the upper classes the husband can get a divorce or he resigns himself if he is sensible. If she runs away he can have her brought before a Magistrate and have her punished with a bastinado, or he can give her away as a concubine to one of his servants. Since the Japanese occupation the status of the women is raised to a higher level and it is not so easy to get rid of an obstreperous wife.



In all grades of Society, the principal occupation of the woman is to educate and to nourish her children. The mothers never fail in their duty to nourish children at their breasts; as the artificial feeding of the children by the bottle is unknown here and children who lose their mothers while infants are left to die. Koreans do not understand the milking of cows or goats and their milk is never used. When a mother has only one child she will feed it till he is six or seven years old, and often till he is ten or 12. This disgusting custom is natural and is done openly. I observed the same thing in Japan, where once while visiting a mine in the interior and while stopping at the house of an engineer, he and his wife were sitting in the room with me, when in bounced a little boy who looked to me about five years old, ran up to his mama, opened *sans ceremonie* her kimono, put his lips to her breast and took a good long drink, while I sat there quite dumbfounded and most likely blushing, while both father and mother were most oblivious that they were transgressing on western customs. The education of the children does not require great care, they do as they like and are naturally spoiled by this neglect and become very capricious. The women of the nobility lead a very idle life, while the women of the lower classes have a hard time as they look after the house, assist in the field work, while during the winter the men do nothing, pass their time in playing, smoking or visiting.—

Even after death the inequality of the sexes continues and should the wife die, the husband goes into half mourning and after a few months generally marries again. If the husband dies, the widow is supposed to mourn him the balance of her life, and it would be infamous for her to marry again, no matter how young she may be; but if such is the case her future children are not considered legitimate. Many scandals result from this, as the widows become publicly or secretly the concubines of those who will support them.—Occasionally a widow commits suicide, to prove her fidelity and to protect herself from any degradation to which widows are exposed, and the King generally has a monument erected to the memory of these heroic widows.

Among the lower classes the widows are allowed to remarry again, as they would otherwise starve to death.—

After a young bride arrives at the home of her husband, she has the run of the house but only her husband has access to her private rooms.—

In former years a lady in good position would not walk on the street unless her face was carefully hidden by the changot.



The women when young are quite good looking and their faces are different from the Japanese and Chinese women.— The dancing girls, slaves and prostitutes are forbidden to wear the veil or changot.—

The Geesang corresponds to the Geisha in Japan. They are controlled by the Government in common with the Court Musicians. They are supported from the public funds and are in evidence at official dinners and all palace entertainments. They have received a certain education, they can recite poems, besides dancing and singing, they also play on various instruments. They possess all the characteristics of the clever courtesan and being endowed artistically and intellectually they form very often an attractive addition to the households of the noblemen or as concubines to the Emperor.

Having received from her childhood a certain education, so as to fit her for her position in life and not being secluded, has given her the opportunity to get a social culture which makes her more attractive and companionable to men and although there is a distinction between the dancing girl and the ordinary courtesan, the former belongs to the class of women which Frenchmen so appropriately call “*le demi monde*.”

Civilization has so far advanced in Korea that even “the divorce” exists there. There is no such a thing as a “legal divorce” but is a matter which the relatives arrange, and the children remain in the care of the husband.

If a woman is barren and bears no children, the husband can divorce her. The upper classes avoid as much as possible public scandals in their families, but among the lower classes this does not matter. A poor man can have as many wives as he likes as long as he can support them.—

Concubinage has existed in Korea for ages both among the aristocracy and the middle classes. A noble woman will try her best never to become a concubine. The sons of a concubine are not considered legitimate and if the legal wife has no son the husband will adopt a son from another branch of his family, who will inherit his property and render homage to the ancestor. From the foregoing account it will be seen that in Korea woman practically does not exist and that she is simply there for the purpose of reproduction.

Marriage is a very important rite in Korea, as it makes a man out of a boy and an unmarried man is considered a boy, no matter what his age.

There is a certain class of men in Korea whose business consists in being matrimonial go-betweens, sort of marriage-brokers and similar institutions exist in Europe, and his business is to deceive both parties.—As the contracting

parties do not see one another till the day of the marriage when it is too late to back out, the bridegroom may find a very ugly girl instead of the beauty he expected and vice versa.—

Most houses of the better class, in the country consist of three rooms.—The central one has no door or window, it is simply an open front and here the family assembles, eats, receives visitors and gossips.—To the right is a light frame 4 feet high and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide covered with paper which serves as a door and leads to the room on the right and a similar one on the left.—There is absolutely no furniture—no beds, no chairs, absolutely nothing in the rooms, fortunately I carry my folding bed with me when travelling, but my companions slept on the bare floor. I had a Chinese cook with me and he had two empty five gallon kerosene oil tins put at his disposal, in which a charcoal fire is made and on these he did the cooking.—

The meals are served on small tables about a foot high and one has to squat on the ground tailor fashion to take the meals. For a European or an American this is a curious and novel experience. Here and there in the corners of the rooms are small blocks of wood which serve as cushions.—The rich people have chests or trunks in which they keep their belongings; and some use wardrobes.—

The poor people wear straw sandals on their feet and in winter they use clogs.—The better class of people make stockings out of cotton cloth. Their clothing consists of white cotton of which trousers and jackets are made and over it a large, ample, wide sleeved overcoat of the same material is worn.

Koreans never shave nor do they cut their hair.—Wigs and false hair are fashionable among women and are considered a great ornament.

Their hats and head gear are curiosities and are simply ridiculous from a practical point of view and the pictures illustrate them best. They are fastened to the head by a combination of belts and ribbons too complicated to describe and offer no protection against heat or cold. I tried to fix one on my head and found that the arrangement compressed my temples and was altogether very uncomfortable.

I asked one of the Sages how it came about that the Koreans dressed in white as it was not a practical color and kept the poor women all the time busy at the wash tub and he gave me the following explanation. In China as well as in Korea the mourning costume is white and when an Emperor dies the whole population had to wear white clothing for three years. Several hundred years ago, quite a series of Kings died in quick succession, so that for a

number of years the nation wore white, till it came into such general use that it became a fixture and has remained so till this day.

The Japanese are making great efforts to introduce other colors and apparently are succeeding in that direction.

The relatives of the deceased wear costumes made of hemp fibres during the mourning period. Woolen garments are not much used as the material has to be imported and consequently is dear. Not enough sheep are raised, so as to supply the wool for local manufactures.

When in mourning the men wear straw hats of enormous size and cover their faces with a fan, as they are not supposed to show their sorrowful countenances in public.

The dress of the men consists of a short jacket, extending a little below the hips and of wide trousers worn loose around the legs or tied together above the ankles over the stockings.

The better class wear long flowing robes similar to those worn in China, tied around the waist with a silk or cotton band. The collar of the dress is mostly white. Children wear colored stuff and the long veils of women are usually green.

The material of the clothing consists of finely spun bleached cotton of native manufacture or imported. The poor people wear straw sandals or wooden clogs similar to those worn in Japan and the richer class wear shoes like the Chinese or cloth boots; they also wear silk clothing and they manufacture a strong kind of pongee silk, but usually Chinese silk is imported. In winter their jackets and gowns are quilted, also the white gowns and during cold weather, like the Chinese, they wear three or four suits one on top of the other and occasionally these are fur lined.

The hats are made of a sort of black gauze on a bamboo frame and a variety of indoor and ceremonial caps are worn by the upper and middle classes.

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Children ironing or rather plating



Another beautiful corner in the old palace grounds where the Empress was murdered





Temple outside of the North Gate of Seoul with a statue of Buddha



An entertainment hall in the old palace grounds



## **Chapter VI**

**Games—Theatres—New Year's festivities**



## Chapter VI

### Games—Theatres—New Year's festivities.

The Koreans are inveterate chess players and they also have a game similar to dominos. Card playing is forbidden by law, only soldiers were allowed to play during the night watch so as to keep them awake. In spite of the prohibition there are numbers of professional gamblers who play secretly in houses of friends where those in the "know" assemble.

Kite flying is a great pastime during certain seasons.—Shooting with the bow and arrow is very much in vogue.—Prize fighting is also indulged in and although supposed to be a peaceable entertainment it usually degenerates into a general fight and from a fist fight it develops into one where stones and sticks are used and it is not uncommon to have the same wind up with several dead men on the street, but the police in this case do not interfere.

From town to town wander groups of jugglers and comedians who give representations in the houses of well to do people, ordinarily at marriages, or any other festive occasion. A theatre in the proper sense does not exist in Korea. They recite pieces of historic interest and they mimic to perfection anybody they represent. There are no female actresses in Korea, which is also the case in China and Japan and the men always assume the role of the females and it is wonderful how they imitate the voices, gait and mannerism of the girls and women.

On New Year the whole country assumes a festive garb, every body tries to be in his home and the hotels give food and lodging gratis to the wayfarer. The courts are not in session, no arrests are made, and even prisoners are allowed leave on parole to go home and they generally return to prison after the festivities are finished.

The custom is to wish one a happy day on the eve of New Year, which equals the salute of the finishing year and on the morning of the New Year is the salute of the New Year and this is of regard, and is offered to parents, superiors and acquaintances and the principal ceremony on this day is the

bringing of sacrifices before the tablets of the ancestors. After this the distribution of the presents takes place and during the days following visits are exchanged and entertainments are held, all work, commercial transactions stop for eight consecutive legal holidays. But New Year's festivities are generally celebrated 15 days.

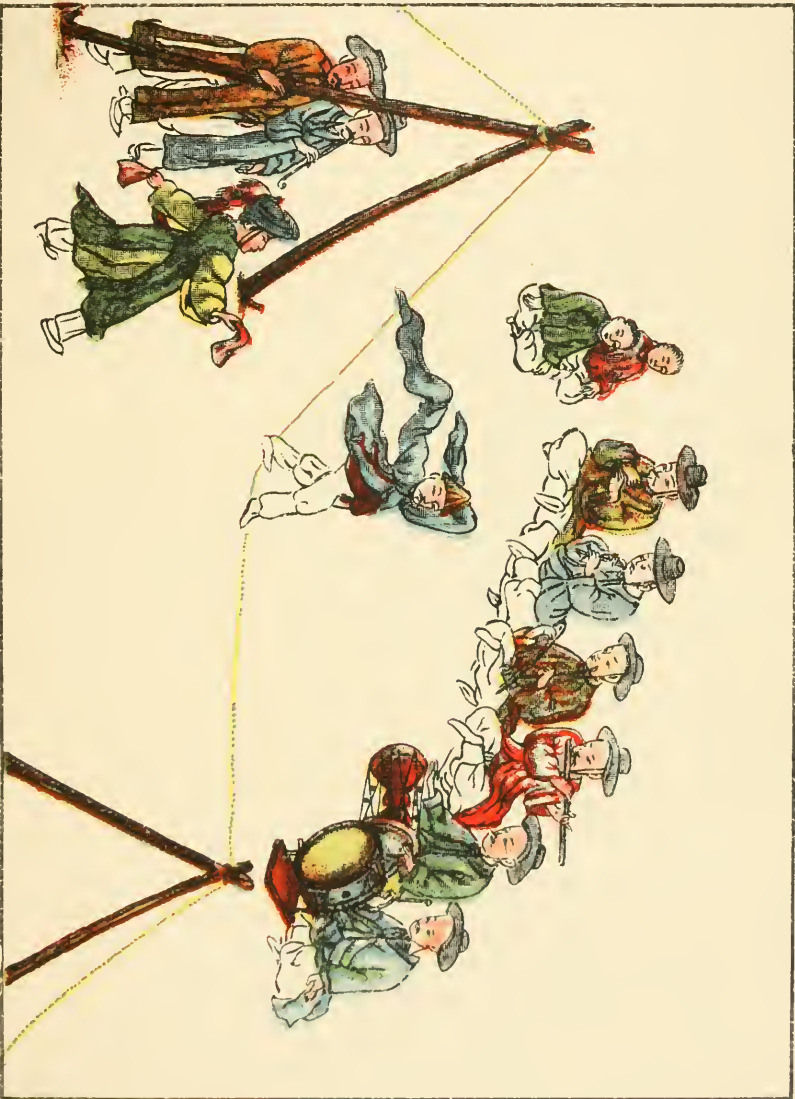
Birthdays are also celebrated, the most important feast in the family is the celebration of the 61st birthday of the father in each family. This anniversary is called Hoan-Kop, and is considered the most solemn event in the life of each man and he has arrived at a ripe age and everybody does his best to do honor to him, as it is considered that his life's work finishes on this day and that his career is at an end and from now on he reposes.—

Great preparations are made for these festivities and among the rich no expense is spared and among the poor the last cent is spent to make this occasion as brilliant as possible. The literati compose verses in which they sing the praises of the happy man who has finished his active life. The whole neighborhood is invited to these feasts. In the houses of the rich, dancing girls, musicians and actors come to entertain the invited guests.—

When any of the royal personages arrive at this age, especially the King, the whole kingdom participates in the feast. A general amnesty is proclaimed. An extraordinary examination session is held so as to confer literary grades.—All the dignitaries appear at court to offer homage to the King.—In the principal provincial towns the Mandarin exposes the tablet representing the King and the people prostrate themselves and offer congratulations.—

In the capital great festivities are held and the provincial Mandarins are expected to send the money to cover the outlay.

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Dancing on a tight rope





## **Chapter VII**

**Guilds and Associations.**



## Chapter VII

### Guilds and Associations.

The following conditions existed prior to the occupation of the country by the Japanese. The Middle Classes live mostly in the Capital and the large cities, some of them occupy inferior government positions and in the interior a sort of country gentry grew out of them, who enjoyed certain privileges and occupied a prominent position in the Provinces.

They were treated with great respect and were great sticklers at ceremonies and polite behaviour and are so to-day. In their wake followed a whole bevy of interpreters, astronomers, doctors, sages and the like.

To protect themselves against the exactions of the nobility, the members of the different professions, arts etc., formed associations or guilds, such as we find all over China where they wield an immense influence and they have become powerful, especially in the Capital and in the larger cities. The artisan class, such as mechanics, carpenters, joiners, coffin makers, masons, porters and many others, own a monopoly of the trade.

Other coteries who had no monopoly banded together with the sole object of protecting themselves mutually and they admitted outsiders as members as long as they paid the usual fees and submitted to the rules and regulations of the association.

This corporate spirit is spread over the whole of Korea and is the outcome of the conditions which prevailed for centuries in that unhappy country, as there was no law protecting the poor against the rich and consequently the community of interests banded together the rich as well as the poor and each village forms a small republic in itself and has a common fund to which all the families without exception contribute. This money is invested in land and the revenues pay any supplementary taxes, for instance marriage ceremonies, burials and other unforeseen expenses. The people serving in the Temples of Confucius, guardians, porters, commissioners, the servants in the royal palaces, the employes in the ministries and all those who have position and some

common interest form associations or societies, analogous to the workmen's guilds and everybody belongs to some society which will protect him in case of necessity.

One of the strongest and most powerful organizations is that of the porters or carriers. The interior transport is made on the backs of men or animals and the same is entirely in their hands. The majority of them are widowers or were too poor to get married; those who are married are always accompanied by their wives and children. Scattered over the country are 10,000 of them, and they are subdivided in provinces and districts under the orders of a chief, censors and inspectors. They have a jargon of their own in which they converse and they salute one another with great respect, and are most ceremonious. They have severe rules, and their chiefs punish them, sometimes even the death penalty is meted out to them for crimes committed. They pretend that the Government has no right to mix into their affairs, and never has one of them asked for justice before a Mandarin.

They are considered honest and correct, and the packages and wares confided to them and which they carry long distances into the provinces are always promptly delivered. It is said that their morals are bad and that they are addicted to vices against nature but their wives are respected and the one who would touch the woman of a confrère would be put to death.

They are insolent to people and even the Mandarins are afraid of them. If they consider that an injustice has been done to them, they withdraw in a body from the district or the town and this stops all commerce and the circulation of merchandise and it is only after lengthy discussions and after consenting to their demands that they will resume work, prouder than ever.

Before the construction of the railways in Korea by the Japanese the whole of the carrying trade was in their hands and even today they can dictate terms as to the transport of goods from the stations into the outlying districts and owing to the absence of roads they still enjoy a monopoly and the traveller is entirely at their mercy.

The slaughterers of animals are despised, as the ox is such a useful animal to the agriculturist and as a carrier of burdens, and an old law forbids killing them and public opinion considers that the act of killing one is most degrading. The beef killers form a separate class, more degraded than the slaves. They don't live inside the city walls, they are ostracized by the population and intermarry between themselves.

It is amongst them that the high executioners are chosen. They alone have the right to kill a beef, and any other Korean guilty of such an act would be driven from the village.

Public contempt only attends those who kill the animals but not those who sell the meat or the butchers, as these are very respected, nominated by the Mandarins to whom they pay a tax for the monopoly of selling meat.

The Character of the Koreans. Their moral qualities, their defects, their customs and habits.

There people have certainly some good qualities, as the feeling of human fraternity and brotherly love are strongly developed in the country. I have mentioned how closely are woven the family ties, how the different corporations stick together to defend their mutual interests and to assist one another, but they go even further than that, as they are always ready to assist one another and their generous hospitality is a distinctive characteristic of these people. Give the devil his dues, and in this respect they are far above the peoples whose countries suffer from the ravages of the egotism of our modern civilization.

I had an experience of what Koreans will do when the object is to form a combination by which one of their own is to benefit by some rascality or swindle, which evidently appeals to these arch conspirators.—Representations were made to me that Koreans were working some gold reefs which they wanted to sell.—I was very much impressed with the looks of the reefs, in fact several hundred men were at work, getting out ore, carrying it on their backs in baskets from 2 to 3 miles to their primitive crushing mills. They were taking out gold every day and judging from appearances here was a prosperous native undertaking which in the hands of a foreign company would develop into a big mine, as they were producing daily large quantities of gold which was shown to me and which was loaned to them from outside parties. I discovered that by ingenious methods they salted my assay samples and once my suspicion aroused I soon discovered that ores which they claimed were yielding \$12 gold a ton was worth only about \$3.50 and all this great bustle and activity and seeming prosperity was simply a stage setting to deceive the foreigner.

Such a spirit of solidarity and unity is only to be met with in China or Korea and there is something very pathetic in this consanguinity which will strike the Westerner, to see hundreds of men banded together with only one wish and desire in their heart and mind, and that was to cheat the foreigner

Mining Engineer or Devil, so as to benefit one of their race. I give them credit for being the most expert Mine Salters in the world. This is the example I had before me that the Koreans will do anything to help one another.

If a house burns down, or an inundation destroys it, the neighbors will all help to rebuild it, and if they can't give any of the material they will give a few days work gratis.

On his travels the Korean can enter any house, feed there, and remain over night all free. In case of sickness everybody helps, and hospitality is one of their sacred duties. Of course there are many bad subjects who make use of this common trait in the people and abuse it.

In Seoul there is a corporation of beggars who divide the city into sections and exploit the same accordingly in groups to whom such and such a quarter is assigned. They are most insolent and the people are afraid of them.

The Koreans are very talkative and are inveterate gossipers and one can see more idle men in Seoul strutting about the streets in their white coats and with long pipes than one meets in any of the other Oriental cities.—Like the Chinese they are also very inquisitive. They also are a very loud talking and noisy lot.

They are a very immoral people.—The children up to a certain age go about naked during the summer months.—Each man married or not married can have around him as many concubines as he can support.—Prostitution is carried on openly, and sodomy and other crimes against nature are frequent.

The Koreans have a very vindictive character, no doubt the result of the semi barbarous condition in which they have lived for so many centuries. The lower classes have no education and it will take a long time to raise them out of the state of degradation into which they have fallen and no doubt their fits of passion and their immoral habits are the result of the low state of civilization in which they were plunged. If they are insulted or wronged and can't revenge themselves they will commit suicide—a custom very much in vogue in China.

They will support punishments and tortures of the severest kind without uttering one word of complaint or showing the least emotion. During sickness they are very patient. They indulge in bodily exercise, gymnastics, and they like the chase.



The Koreans' house is "Liberty Hall," a Korean will impoverish himself for the sake of his acquaintances, relatives and even strangers, and will face poverty, but he does not want to be called mean or stingy, as this would be the vilest epithet by which a Korean can be apostrophized. When a stranger enters his house at meal time, he simply sits down and is welcome to whatever is on the table. A man of position becomes by law and custom the victim of all his impoverished relations. As there are not many native inns in the cities, a traveller coming from the interior takes up his quarters with acquaintances and if he knows many people he can move from one to the other and remain gratis for any length of time. The successful man becomes the natural prey of a lot of hangers on and he is the chief of his clan in which position he feels himself flattered.

The Koreans are what the French so correctly describe by the word "flaneur," and a walk on the main streets in Seoul is not entirely destitute of its charms, especially on a calm morning. One sees those fine, well proportioned men dressed in their white flowing robes with their little bamboo hats strutting about in measured steps with dignity and repose, acting very politely one towards the other, each one smoking a pipe with a long stem, regular "Boulevardiers"—the descendant of the half savage Mongolian or Tartar, doing his *dolce* for niente on the Corso of Seoul.

The Korean is seen at his worst when he gets excited and is quarrelling, and I am told that it is impossible to translate into words of a foreign language the vile epithets which they hurl at one another and when they have exhausted their vocabulary and it comes to an encounter they try to seize one another's topknots which is a very convenient handle to pull the enemy to the ground and the weaker then stands a good chance to have the life kicked out of him unless the bystanders intervene which is usually the case. The Koreans like the Chinese are great peace makers, and in China there is a special class of men who make a living by making peace between families. The men are bad enough when excited, but there is nothing to compare with an infuriated Korean woman. I only had occasion once to see a street scene in Seoul between two angry women and it is certainly a spectacle I will remember forever.

There is one thing which will strike the careful observer when making a character study of the Korean, namely, that he does not remain indifferent to extraneous impressions. He does not wear that indifferent, impenetrable mask of features which characterizes the Chinese and more so the Japanese, as his

expression will change and he will show his pleasurable emotions, anger or disappointment, or fear and there is no great difference in the temperament of the Korean as compared with the Westerner, whereas the Chinese and Japanese are impenetrable.

If Korea had not been absorbed by China, who imposed on her people her religion, customs and laws, there is no telling what these people would have developed into if left to develop independently, as the Korean is possessed of high intellectual qualities and has what we call brain power, but he has been kept down and was not allowed to pursue a free and independent career.

They are very improvident, spend their money freely and will resort to any kind of trickery to get hold of money.

They are very voracious; endowed with enormous appetites, and look more for quantity than quality. They use, like the Japanese, small tables about a foot high on which their meals are served and squat on the ground while eating.

Drunkenness is very common among them, and the man who can afford to get drunk stands in high esteem, as the majority of the people can't afford to get drunk. They eat raw meat and fish when well seasoned. It is said that the character of the people differs according to the Provinces they inhabit, but I was told the same thing in Japan, but on the whole their characteristics are so well marked that a slight shading off for the better or for the worse would hardly make any difference.


This national character has formed itself according to environment. It was always a fight between the high and the low and the result is that the spirit of conspiracy is so highly developed in them, that the same forms a part and portion of their mentality. It is with great suspicion that these men should be dealt with, especially the deposed Yambans who know all the tricks of the trade, and from the time one enters the arena of any business transactions an atmosphere of intrigue and mystery surrounds one.

The psychologist will naturally ask himself how these race characteristics have developed themselves in these people, which are not dissimilar from those prevailing in China. They are no doubt the outgrowth of the patriarchal system, and have survived from the earliest ages. They wandered about in bands while still nomads or when settled, for the sake of defence, the head of the family was the chief, in time the chief would rule a large body of descendents of the same clan. The obedience of the younger towards the

elder became more strict and filial duty was then looked upon as a virtue. The advent of the Confucian religion contributed greatly to strengthen this patriarchal system, as around the father gathers almost a religious veneration.

The Eastern people believe in a future life and also in a personal immortality, and that his personality lasts forever, and therefore the reverence paid to one's ancestor during life must continue after death. The worship of ancestors, is an outcome of the patriarchal system, and its observance is in keeping with the idea. Worship is paid to their spirits, as is befitting those who were held so high in estimation during their life on earth.

Whatever their good qualities may be, I found them as cunning and untruthful as any people in the Orient, and I was glad that I came to Korea with my mind full of suspicion and with a feeling of relief I crossed the bridge of the Yalu and got away from this atmosphere of corruption and intrigue unharmed and unscathed, but richer in experience. But the Korea of old with its mediæval customs is still there and perhaps in a generation or two the Missionaries and the Japanese Government will alter the prevailing conditions.







This marble Pagoda was brought from China to Korea 400 years ago. Shortly after a war with Japan broke out and they invaded Seoul and had taken off the top portion—standing on the ground—and they tried to destroy this beautiful monument by fire which the advancing Chinese soldiers succeeded in extinguishing; but some portions got charred. This event took place in 1592. The monument ornaments a park in Seoul and the Japanese call it the Tower of Roseki.





A Korean gentleman and his two sons



A Korean nobleman in court dress.



## **Chapter VIII**

**Families — Adoption — Parentage — Mourning.**



## Chapter VIII

### Families—Adoption—Parentage—Legal Mournings

The Koreans are fond of their children, especially their boys, who are worth to them ten times more than the girls, and even these are dear to them. One very seldom hears of abandoned children and even in times of famines they will try to sell them or give them away and in better times they try to buy them back. Married women don't practice those outrages against nature by which child birth is prevented, as a Korean no matter how poor will always be happy to become a father and he will always try to find food for his children.

The first thing a child is taught is respect for his father. Any insubordination against him is severely punished, but with the mother it is different. According to their customs the mother counts for nothing and the child learns this unfortunate state of things only too soon and he disobeys her with impunity. He uses towards his father the most respectful terms when addressing him, whereas when speaking to his mother he may use an endearing term.

He always assumes a respectful attitude before the father, he never smokes before him and he considers himself the servant of his father and when he is sick he attends to his wants and when he is imprisoned the son must try and live near by and when he is exiled the son accompanies him into exile.

The Mandarins often get leave of absence to visit their parents and should any of them die, the Mandarins have to lay down their office and remain inactive during the period of mourning. The same custom prevails in China and the following incident happened while I was in that country. In 1908 I was in one of the Provinces which had a Manchu Governor. There were more or less Anti Dynastic troubles then already in the Yangtse Valley and the news came that a young revolutionary student had assassinated the Manchu Governor of the Province of Anhui and a few days afterwards I heard that our Governor had laid down the robes of his office on leave as he got news that his father and mother were dying in the Province of Honan where their home was and

that was the last we saw of this Governor, therefore filial piety comes in good stead occasionally to protect one against the assassins bullets. No virtue in Korea is prized and honored more highly than filial piety, none is taught with such scrupulous care, and none is more magnificently recompensed, even monuments are erected to the good son, temples are built for him and dignities are showered on him, and there are many examples existing to stimulate this virtue—but nothing for the mother.

I must recite here another incident in China which throws some light on customs in the Orient. I was invited to a New Years dinner by one of the Mandarins in one of the provincial Capitals. A bevy of young boys streamed into the room, who were all introduced to me and I asked the father how many children he had and he said eleven. When time came for dinner a bevy of little girls sat down at the table—I counted seven and I asked him to whom these girls belonged and he said they were his daughters and I put the question to him, why he didn't tell me that he had 18 children and he replied "girls don't count in China only boys." I afterwards saw his legitimate wife and his three concubines and I learned something of the intimate life of the Chinese Aristocracy. The legitimate wife was a woman of remarkable intelligence and the children of the concubines were treated by her with the same affection as her own and all the children seemed to adore her and if the impression prevails that women count for nothing in China, I must give it a most emphatic denial, as this particular Mandarin was in holy terror of his wife and whatever she said and dictated was law and she is not the only example in China as I had this corroborated in many instances.

There one wife told me that they have to tolerate the concubines, as all men were brutes and get tired of the first wife after she has a few children and loses her good looks and of course the husband wants a change and they are only too glad to let the brute have his fling, but we let him feel our authority and get our revenge in that way.

I had no occasion to get a peep behind the scenes of aristocratic Korean life, but when one reads some of the historic records of late years, the impression gathered is, that here also the intelligent woman knew how to assert her authority and played her part in many of the intrigues which disturbed that unhappy country.

The adoption of children is very common in Korea.—A childless father adopts one of his relatives and the reason of this custom lies in the religious

belief; as the descendents must render the posthumous honors to their ancestors and as the family has to be preserved, girls are never adopted as they can't fulfil the religious rites prescribed.

The adoption is usually registered in the court of rites and the child is generally chosen amongst the parentage on the fathers side, generally it is a son of one of his brothers or the son of a cousin or issue on his side.—If one has a son who was married and died without an issue, the one who is adopted must be adopted in the name of the deceased son and the choice must fall on a grand child of one of the brothers or cousins, that is to say one who can be the son of his sons.—This system of adoption often causes dissensions in families as neither the father nor the adopted son can have that natural love which consanguinity brings forth. The legal adoption can't be broken except by a special permission of the tribunal of rites, which is difficult to get. When one is annulled then another son can be adopted.

Among the poor people children are adopted so that the parents in their old age should have somebody to support them, but this system is not recognized by the law.

The family ties in Korea and in the Orient are much closer woven than amongst the Europeans. All the relations up into the 15th. and 20th. degree, whatever their social position, let them be rich or poor form a clan or a tribe, one family, of which all members have a communal interest and have to support one another reciprocally.—When the father dies, the son takes his place, he conserves the property. The younger ones receive from their parents donations at the time they marry according to custom, rank and the fortune of the family; but all the property belongs to the eldest, who must take care of his brothers as if they were his own children.

The brothers consider him as their father and in general the family connections are very close and cordial. The house of one belongs to all and his resources are at the disposal of the whole family and the law makes use of this and the head man of the family or the one who has the money is made to pay the taxes for all. This system of communal interests has also its disadvantages; as in every family there are usually to be found some worthless fellows who live at the expense of their relatives.—The relationship resulting from marriage does not count in Korea.

There are only a few family names in Korea, about one hundred and fifty, and to distinguish the different families who have the same name, the pou

is added, or the indication of the place where they originate from and all from the same pou are parents and can't intermarry. The family name is never used alone, and is followed by the proper name or So-pang for the young men or by the title Saing-ouen for the elder noble or chiefs of families—and these words equal the title Sir—honorable.

Besides the family names, each individual has a name, ordinarily three, first the name given him in his childhood, the ordinary name, and the legal name and also his nickname and for the converted the Christian name. When a child is born, a name is given to it, after marriage this name is only used by the father and near relatives. The women never change names even after marriage and they are called by the name of their husbands, Taik or Madame, or Koa-Taik=Madame widow.

Among the Nobility, all those which descend from one branch have a character added to their name which changes at each generation so that one can see at once the number of generations which have descended from the original stock.

If a man has concubines he must keep separate establishments for them. He can't introduce her into the home where his wife lives. This custom is not followed by the lower classes. The common people have often no name at all or simply a nickname. The Kings official name is given to him by the Emperor of China and the people never know this name till he dies and his successor makes the same known when he ascends the throne.

Amongst the Nobility certain rites have to be observed in case of a death in the family. The body of the defunct is placed in a strong wooden coffin and kept for several months in a special apartment. In this apartment the relatives must come four times daily and lament and cry and they must wear their mourning costume, composed of a gray coarse linen wrapper, torn, dirty and all patched up. Around the waist is tied a thick rope of hemp and straw and around the head is woven another thinner rope and as head gear is worn a grey linen bonnet.—On a table in the mortuary chamber are placed different eatables and then the person presiding at these ceremonies commences to intonate his plaints in a lugubrious voice which lasts for about thirty minutes in which all present join and the louder and more plaintive these sing-songs, the more they express the sorrows of the Company. I never heard more sorrowful tunes in my life before. When the wailings are over, the meats are taken away, the mourning dresses are taken off and they sit down to their



meal. These practices continue even after the burial of the corpse and the first descendent must go to the grave very often and lament his sorrows over it. He is a good son who will spend a whole day and night there and even cases have happened where they built small houses near the grave and lived in them for years, and for this devotion they acquire the reputation of saints and have the veneration of the public.

If the eldest brother after the death of his father does not act justly to his younger brothers or is a spendthrift they can apply to the courts and prevent him from squandering the patrimony. If he refuses to support them, they can force him to divide the property. If the married sisters are in want he must help them. If the father leaves a will, the eldest son is his executor.

These stringent rules apply mostly to the higher class people as among the common people the women seem to have a better status, as she is more on a level with her husband, and the lower the people are in the social scale, the inequalities between the sexes disappear.

The custom in Korea is that the burial of a poor man shall take place three days after his death, that of a middle class man nine days, of a high official after three months and of any member of the royal family nine months after death.

The body after being placed in the coffin, is hermetically sealed with several coats of lacquer.

The graves of the rich men have a stone altar placed before them.—The coffin is placed in a decorated hearse, and the procession proceeds to the grave. The mourners wear immense hats which conceal their faces.

After the coffin is buried, a circular mound is constructed over the grave and the usual sacrificial offerings are made. Rich men usually have a small temple in which the tablets are kept.—Common people worship for their ancestors during three generations.

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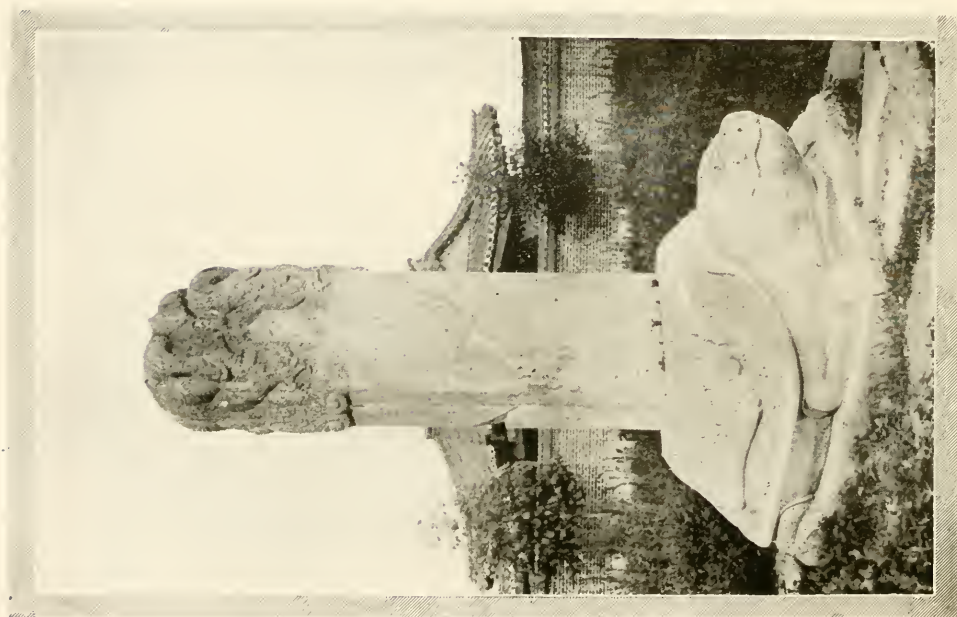




The tomb of a famous monk in the Diamond mountains



Astronomical observatory of ancient Silla



#### THE TURTLE MONUMENT

The characters on this monument which is of marble very few Koreans can read. The turtle is of granite and was doubtless brought here from China as a gift to one of the Kings.



Relics of ancient Korea. The ruins of the Golden Pagoda at ancient Silla, which was nine stories high.—Keyong Chiu

## **Chapter IX**

**Korea since its Annexation by Japan.**





## Chapter IX

### Korea since its Annexation by Japan.

Japan annexed Korea in August 1910 and its name was changed to Chosen, and the laws and administration were placed in the hands of a Governor General (Chosen-Sozokufu); and since then they have made efforts to improve the conditions of the Peninsula.

The Treaty of Annexation was signed on the 22d. of August and contains the following Provisions.

1°) The Emperor of Korea to make complete and permanent cession to the Emperor of Japan of all rights of sovereignty over the whole of Korea.

2) The Emperor of Japan to accept the above mentioned cession and to consent to the complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan.

3) The Emperor of Japan to accord to the Emperor of Korea, ex-Emperor and Crown Prince of Korea and their Consorts such titles, dignities and honours as are appropriate to their respective ranks, and sufficient annual grants to be made for the maintenance of such titles, dignities and honours.

4) The relatives of the Emperor of Korea also to receive due dignities, titles, honours and station.

5) The Emperor of Japan to confer peerages and monetary grants upon Koreans, who, on account of meritorious services, are regarded as deserving such special recognition.

6) In consequence of the aforesaid Annexation, the Government of Japan will assume the entire Government and administration of Chosen and undertake to afford full protection to the life and property of Koreans obeying the laws in force, and to promote the welfare of all such.

7) The Government of Japan, so far as circumstances permit, will employ in the public service of Japan—Koreans who accept the new regime loyally and in good faith and who are duly qualified for such service.

The Emperor of Korea promulgated a Rescript in which His Majesty declared that from his accession to the Throne down to the present time, he had used his utmost efforts to improve the Administration, but had failed and that he was now convinced that it was beyond his power to effect reforms owing to the long standing weaknesses and deep rooted evils, and that therefore he ceded all the rights of sovereignty over Korea to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, the neighbouring Empire, in whom he henceforth placed implicit confidence, in the hope of consolidating the peace of the Extreme East and ensuring the welfare of his people; that all the Koreans would now be expected to cease from all disturbance, to appreciate the present national situation as in accord with the spirit of the times, and to enjoy happiness and blessing by pursuing their own occupations in peace and obeying the enlightened administration of the Empire of Japan; that he had decided to take this step, by no means disregarding the peoples interests, but with a profound desire to relieve his people from this deplorable situation; and that, finally, he commanded his people to take due cognizance of his wishes.

In this way a territory of 84,102 square miles with a population of about 13 million souls were added to the Empire of Japan.

To promote the prosperity of the Ex-Imperial family and to accord due and appropriate honours to the Sovereign of that country and his relatives, other Imperial rescripts were promulgated by which the Korean Emperor being thereafter invested as O (Wang in Korean) "Prince," is to be known by the name of the Li-O (or Yi Wang in Korean) of the Shotoku Palace.

The Crown Prince is to be called Oseishi ar "Prince Heir" so that the hereditary title should endure forever while the Emperor father is to be given the title of Tai-O or "Father Prince," being hereafter known by the name of the Li Tai O (Yi Tai-Wang) of the Tokoju Palace.

Their consorts are to be given the titles respectively, of Princess, Princess Heir, and Grand Princess, with the additional titles of "Imperial Highness;" and the treatment of Imperial Princess or Princesses of the Blood. Their annual grants are to be sufficient and the same as hitherto, the total amount being 1,500,000 Yen, defrayed from the annual budget of the Government General of Korea.

Members of the Imperial family of Korea other than those mentioned above, such as a step brother of Prince Li or his uncle, are also to be treated as Imperial Princes and Princesses of the Blood, receiving the title of "Imperial

Highness," and for these two relatives of Prince Li, a grant of 840,000 Yen is to be given out of the Imperial Donation fund respectively for the maintenance of their household.

With regard to the management of the household of Prince Li's family by a decree the same was brought under the supervision of the Minister of the Imperial Household Department.

The business of Prince Li's Household Office and its employees was brought under the jurisdiction of the Governor General of Chosen.

The blood relatives of the Prince, personages of high birth, and those who had rendered meritorious service to the State, were given hereditary peerages and monetary grants by His Majesty of Japan. Those who received this privilege are 76 in all, including 6 Marquises, 3 Counts, 22 Viscounts and 45 Barons.

A money grant was given to these Peers and to persons who had rendered services to the State and to all officials of Korea who had served the Ex-Korean Government. These numbered 3645 persons and the amount allotted to them reached 6,790,000 Yen.

Other deserving people of the Yangban class to the number of 3209 persons received 10 Yen each, while helpless widows, widowers and infants on whom were bestowed Imperial gratuities, reached 70,902 persons each receiving three Yen.

To encourage Industry and Education the Government issued a loan bearing 5 per cent for 30 Million Yen and distributed over 25 Million Yen in registered bonds which were distributed in 12 Provinces.

Exemption was granted from taxes due till 1898 and remissions were made on those to be collected in 1910.

A general amnesty was granted to all prisoners awaiting trial or criminals convicted under extenuating circumstances, the total number so affected was 1711.

Koreans employed in the public service, civil or military shall remain in their positions according to their fitness or ability. Six Provincial Governors out of 13 appointed are Koreans.

District Magistrates, village head men, and advisory councillors in the Provincial Government and Prefect Magistracies also are exclusively Koreans.

Japanese Officials, receive on the average 40 per cent better salaries, in addition to allowances representing 40 to 60 per cent of the regular salary.

The foreigners in Japan are brought under Japanese jurisdiction and their legally acquired rights, such as land ownership or mining concessions will be fully respected.

The custom tariff existing in Korea is maintained for ten years. The privilege of coasting trade is extended to vessels under the flags of Powers having treaties with Japan for a period of ten years. In Korea there are some 500 foreign missionaries engaged in Christian propagation. Religious freedom being recognized, all religions, Buddhism, Christianity or Confucianism are equally treated, due protection and facilities are accorded to them so long as their propagation does not disturb public peace and order or intermeddle in political affairs.

#### The Organization of the Central Administration.

The Government General of Chosen consists of a Secretariat and five Departments.

(1) General Affairs, (2) Home Affairs, (3) Financial Affairs, (4) Judicial Affairs, (5) Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Affairs.

In addition, there are a Central Council and an Old Usage Investigation Bureau, a Police Department, Law Courts, Railway Bureau, and Land Investigation Bureau.

There was also established the Chūsuin or Central Council, the Councillors being exclusively chosen from among native Koreans of ability and reputation.

#### Consuls and foreigners.

The Consular jurisdiction hitherto maintained by the Powers concerned being abrogated foreign residents in Korea coming under the jurisdiction of the Empire enjoy as far as conditions permit the same privileges and immunities as in Japan proper. To foreign residents who are citizens or subjects of Powers whose Governments hitherto had no Treaty relations with Korea, the same treatment will be extended.

In Korea, Consulates or Consulates General are maintained by Great Britain, Germany, France, Russia, the United States, China and Belgium. Although these Consular Authorities, since annexation, cannot exercise judicial privileges, yet other privileges and immunities appertaining to them by virtue of Treaty stipulation, international usages etc. are fully accorded.



Foreign Settlements were established at the Treaty Ports of Chemulpo, Masan, Mokpo, Chinnampo and Joshin, according to agreements with the Treaty Powers. The Municipal Administration of these Settlements is allowed to be maintained, except the police administration. The rights acquired legitimately by foreigners in Korea prior to Annexation are to remain effective and will be respected by Japan.

A Land Survey of Korea has been carried out so as to secure justice and equity in the levying of the land tax and for accurately determining the cadastre of each region as well as protecting rights of ownership and thereby facilitating transactions of sale, purchase and other transfers. The land tax in Korea is still levied on the old Kyel System founded several hundred years ago.

A Bureau was also established for the investigation of old usages.

### The Local Administration.

The country was divided into 13 Provinces with a seat for the Provincial Government and in each reside the Provincial Governors.

The second administrative division of local administration consists of 12 prefectures and 317 districts.

The Prefects are elected from among Japanese who were once high officials in Japan. District Magistrates are appointed from among native Koreans who served under the Ex-Korean Government.

The Budget for 1912 shows that the expenditures were 51,781,226 Yen and the Revenues were 62,126,894 Yen of which of 27,250,000 Yen was covered from Public Loans and a grant from the Japanese Government.

Owing to the expenses urgently required for developing productive enterprises and for extension of communication facilities, accounts for the large expenditures.

*Mining tax.* The mining laws provide for three kinds of mining taxes, namely, a tax on products, a tax on the area of the district in which a mining concession is given and a tax on the placer. The tax on the mining district is levied at the rate of 50 sen for each 1000 tsubo per annum; the tax on products is one per cent of the value of the mineral taken out, and the placer tax is one Yen on each cho length of the river beds for which a permit is given.—

*Customs Tariff.* The customs receipts in 1913 amounted to 4,807,748 Yen, and the conventional rates in accordance with the most favoured nation clause are 5, 7½, 8, 10 and 20 per cent ad valorem. As to export duty, all



native goods or products other than gold or silver bullion, other metals, gold dust, plants and samples in reasonable quantities are subjected to an ad valorem duty of 5 per cent.

The present customs tariff is to be maintained till 1920.

*Receipts from Public Undertakings and State Properties* amounted in 1913 to 13,940,926 Yen, of which those from Railways are the most important, namely 5,907,013 Yen.

*Public Loans.* The public loans or debts issued or incurred by the late Korean Government which were outstanding prior to annexation aggregated 46,011,247 Yen. The present Government issued loan bonds amounting to 56,516,570 Yen.

*Currency Reform.* The old copper and nickel coins were withdrawn from circulation and the currency of the Imperial Government of Japan whether coined money or bank notes were recognized as legal tender throughout Korea.

### Foreign Trade for 1914.

In the foreign trade for the year, the total value of exports was 34,388,787 Yen and imports 63,231,461 Yen or a total of 97,620,248 Yen. Excess of Imports 28,842,674 Yen.

The principal item in exports is rice amounting to 17,098,581 Yen. Other items of export include agricultural products, mineral products, cotton, coal, cow hides and live stock.—

The Bank of Chosen was established as a Government Bank and has issued bank notes to the amount of twenty five million Yen. Other private banks were established.—

*Monopolies.* Among them are the Ginseng Monopoly, Salt Manufacture, The Pying-yang Coal Mines, Timber Undertaking Stations, Printing Bureau, Building and repairing works, Brick and Earthen Pipe Manufacture.

*Railway Traffic.* The total length of the railway lines open for traffic, in 1913 was 970 miles, the mileage has since then considerably increased; as since then a line has been built from Seoul to Genzan and a branch line from Taidon to Makpo, also some strategic lines are being constructed from the northern border into Manchuria.

The principal work for which the Japanese are entitled to great credit is the construction of the Fusan-Antung Railroad which connects with the Antung-Mukden line, which is equipped with fine Pullman carriages and most of

the traffic which comes over the Trans Siberian route for Japan is diverted now at Mukden via Autung-Seoul to Fusan and from there the ferry boats leave twice daily for Shimonoseki, the crossing of the Straits taking about 12 hours and consequently this obviates the necessity to go from Mukden to Dalny and from there by steamer to Shanghai or from there to Shimonoseki.

*Cultivated Lands.* These cover above 10 per cent of the whole Territory amounting to 53,811,020 acres, which gives each family about 2.27 acres, which compares with the land held per family in Japan proper, where 14 $\frac{1}{10}$  per cent is under cultivation which gives each family about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of cultivated lands.

*State-Waste Lands.* The waste lands are estimated at 2,941,000 acres, covering nearly 66 per cent of the total arable area. Most of these lands belong to the State and these lands can be rented to any applicant, native or foreign, for utilization.

Several projects exist now for irrigation or water utilization projects. Also stations and schools are being established to instruct the people in improving agriculture, sericulture, cotton growing, tobacco, live stock etc, etc.

The Oriental Development Company has been established for developing some of the natural resources of Korea with a share capital of thirty million Yen.

*Afforestation.* The total area of mountains and plains termed "forests" amounting to about 39,200,000 acres, covers 75 per cent of the whole Peninsula. Owing to the indiscriminate felling of trees without public supervision the mountain slopes are denuded of trees. This general deforestation of the mountains and plains is the principal cause of injury to agriculture, owing to floods in the rainy season and lack of water for irrigation purposes in the dry season. Steps are being taken to encourage afforestation and the Government has promulgated forest regulations to protect and preserve certain forests.

*Sanitation.* Korea is not a tropical country, but the country is threatened with various plagues as proper sanitary measures have never been taken. The Japanese have introduced vaccination, organized hospitals and introduced measures for the prevention of epidemic diseases, checking the degenerate habit of opium smoking and are carrying into effect better sanitary conditions.

### Mining Undertakings

Considerable attention is given to mining in Korea and the tendency is to give the preference to Japanese Corporations. The Furikawa Partnership Co. have a concession over an area covering over 12 million tsubos in Kijo District, North Heian Province.—The Mitsubishi Limited Co. owns two million tsubos of iron deposits in Kosu District, Kokai Province.\*

The Mitsui Mining Co. also owns about two million tsubos of iron deposits in Kaisen District, South Heian Province.

The Fujita Co. operates a zinc mine in Neihen District, North Heian Province and employs several hundred men.

The Mining Concessions given to foreign Corporations or individuals by the ex-Korean Imperial Household or Government, embrace four Corporations of Americans. There are two English Companies, Two French, One Russian, and one Italian.

The American Oriental Consolidated Mining Co. has been carrying on gold mining since 1900 in Unsan District, North Heian Province, obtaining an annual average output of £300,000 sterling and paying regular dividends.

The aggregate output from the beginning of operations up to June 1912 reaches 2,922,000 tons of ore yielding £3,570,500 Sterling gold. They operate 240 stamps. Employ 77 Europeans and 2000 miners and other labourers.

The Suan Mine in Kokai Province is operated by the Seoul Mining Co. its output in 1912 amounted to £109,600 Sterling, but the number of stamps has been increased in 1915 and the output is much larger and owing to important ore reserves their production is insured for some time to come.

The Chiksan gold mine is also a gold producer and I am told that the French Company is getting very satisfactory returns and that they are developing a good body of ore.

The Kapsan Copper mine, South Kankyo Province which is extensive and promises to become an important producer whenever smelting works will be erected.

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\* The Kuhara Mining Co. are erecting furnaces to treat various ores.—

The official returns give the following mineral production.

	For 1913	For 1912
Gold, . . . . .	5,639,437 Yen	4,579,963 Yen
Gold ore . . . . .	74,218 ..	187,078 ..
Placer gold . . . . .	970,205 ..	670,692 ..
Gold and Silver ore . . . . .	18,237 ..	2,926 ..
Gold and Copper ore . . . . .	375,063 ..	293,098 ..
Silver . . . . .	— ..	15,089 ..
Sundry ores . . . . .	3,100 ..	1,521 ..
Copper ore . . . . .	— ..	5,119 ..
Iron ore . . . . .	210,406 ..	156,034 ..
Graphite . . . . .	238,920 ..	182,263 ..
Coal . . . . .	574,526 ..	546,388 ..
Total	<u>8,110,412 Yen</u>	<u>6,640,171 Yen</u>

*Education.* Until very recent years, there were no institutions for giving modern education. Now there are 200 schools established with 800 teachers and over 20,000 students, besides Government schools of a higher grade. An Agricultural College has been established. An Industrial training school, and several private schools. The different missionary denominations have also established schools. Although Korea may so far be a disappointment to the Japanese Conquerors from an economic and financial point of view, the possession of the Peninsula for strategetic reasons no doubt recompenses them for the struggle they have made for its possession and for the Korean people it is certainly better that they are ruled by Japan instead of a corrupt Oligarchy which surrounded the former Kings and Emperors and simply oppressed the poor people.





# **Part II**

## **Ancient Korea.**

Containing fragmentary extracts from the French book entitled.

**“Histoire de l’Eglise en Korée”**

by

**Père Daler. Apostolic Missionary**

**PARIS.**

1874



# Chapter I

## The Ancient History of Korea.

*NOTE.* The italicized portion in this part of the book are my own statements.



# Chapter I

## The History of Korea.

It is not easy to write the history of Korea, as there is none published by the Koreans and the learned men of that country attach no importance to the different versions which exist in connection with ancient Korea. The historical records are gathered from Japanese and Chinese writings, as for centuries Korea was at war with Japan and was the scene of internal feuds and disorders as well as the bone of contention between China and Japan, till in the present century Russian expansion in the Far East led up to the Russo-Japanese conflict.

The Emperors forbade the printing of the history of Korea, but documents relating to the same were preserved. Special Court dignitaries kept records of all noted events and these records were deposited in four trunks, kept safely in four different Provinces. When a Dynasty died out and another followed, their history was then compiled from these documents. It was also the custom in many of the notable families to note down in private registers all the principal events, with the precaution never to pass judgement or an opinion on the acts or doings of any person high in authority, as the writer would take the risk to have his head cut off if it came to the knowledge of the person whom he ventured to criticize in writing.—*Those interested in this subject are referred to Mr. Homer B. Hulbert's book on the history of Korea.*

Chinese chronicles mention Korea as early as 2350 B. C. when some of the northern Korean tribes came in conflict with China. They must have been successful with their invasions into China some time during the 16th. century B. C. and at that time took possession of a large portion of Manchuria including the Leaotung peninsula.

*In 1907 I accompanied the honorable Dr. Rutherford Harris, ex member of Parliament for Paddington on a mission into Leaotung, where we saw the ruins of large square lookout towers which the Chinese told us were built by the Koreans to whom the country belonged, and they placed the date of their construction as being a long time before the Han Dynasty, which means before the Christian era.*



Some Chinese records also exist dating from the 12th. century B. C. It is only during the second century of A. D. that something more definite becomes known.

*It is astonishing that Korea for thousands of years has been able to maintain a sort of independent position and a strict exclusiveness which kept her practically separated from the whole outer world and that she remained a sealed book.*

*Of course the country along the coast looks uninviting and is made doubly so by the dangerous approaches, owing to the many islands, banks, shoals and reefs which extend for long distances out into the sea and great care is needed by the navigator.*

*The Chinese records state that Kija was a refugee from China at the time of the fall of the Shang Dynasty in 1122 B. C., he emigrated to Korea with 5000 followers and settled in Pyeng-Yang and founded a Dynasty which lasted 1000 years.*

In 193 B. C., Wiman, a fugitive from Chinese justice crossed the Yalu with some followers and found an asylum with Kijun, the last King of Old Chosun. This Wiman found adherents and compelled Kijun to leave the country and flee south along the coast. The ancient Chosun occupied a large portion of the present Manchuria as far as Mukden and there are many old Korean graves existing there to-day. Wiman the Usurper did not occupy his position long, as his country was taken away from him by the Chinese Emperor Wu-wang and Northern Korea was divided into four provinces under Chinese rule. This continued until 36 A. D. when the kingdom of Koguryu was established. Under the Emperor Tsin who reunited China in 246 B. C. a wooden wall was erected to mark the boundary line between that country and Korea.

With the beginning of the Christian era there were three distinct states in Korea. In the north was the kingdom of Kao-li, to the west the kingdom of Petsi and in the south the Kingdom of Sin-la. Numerous wars were fought between these rival states, and interminable quarrels broke out between the Kingdoms of Kaoli and China on the one side and the Kingdom of Sin-la and Japan on the other side, which troubles continued during six centuries, till the Kingdom of Sin-la gained in the 7th Century A. D. a preponderating position in the Peninsula.

Korean history gives the name of Sin-la to the Dynasty which preceded the Dynasty of Kao-li or Korie.

The northern Kingdom seems to have been more or less under the suzerainty of China, whereas the southern Kingdom of Sin-la was continuously at war with Japan with varying successes or failures and the Japanese annals mention no less than fifty different treaties made between these people.

At the end of the 11th. Century A. D. under Ouang-kien the three Korean Kingdoms were definitely united and Ouang-kien is the founder of the Kingdom of Korea. The King of Kao-li, supported by China, conquered the State of Pet-si and Sin-la and in gratitude for the help given him by the Mongol Dynasty which was then ruling over China, he recognized the suzerainty of the Emperor of the Mongols.

When the famous Zenghis-khan ruled over China between 1209—1215 he treated the Koreans as vassals and his son Octai sent Mongol officers to rule the country, but they were all assassinated by the enraged population. Octai sent a punitive expedition to Korea, whereupon the King fled into the mountains and collected an army and drove the invaders back. Octai was induced to make peace, which was broken again and there was continued trouble between the two people till the great Kublai-khan came to the throne. He restored amicable relations with the Koreans and they joined him in a naval expedition against Japan in 1281 A. D. a powerful fleet was equipped in Korean ports to conduct the united armies of invasion, but the fleet was overtaken by a fearful storm in which the greater part of the ships were lost and those who were wrecked and cast upon the Japanese shores, were ruthlessly butchered by the Japanese.

After Kublai's death, his weak successors were conquered and the Ming Dynasty came to the Chinese throne.—The descendants of Keit-sa reigned for 300 years in Korea and they are the princes, which in the books and traditions are designated under the name of the Dynasty of Kaoli or Korie and from this the present name Korea.

In the 16th. Century when the Mongol Dynasty was dethroned, one Tai-tso, whom the Chinese historians call Li-tan or Nitán, a protégé of the Mings, took forcible possession of the Korean throne in 1392 and founded the now reigning Dynasty there under the official name of Tsi-tsien. The Mings profiting by this revolution extended their suzerain rights and it was then that there was imposed on the Koreans the Chinese calendar and the use of the chronology.—Tai-tso was proclaimed Emperor of Korea, and he abandoned the town of Siong-to or Kai-seng, where the former Kings had resided and established himself in the present Capital of Han-iang or Seoul.

He divided the country into eight Provinces and organized the system of Government and Administration which was preserved till the Japanese established their rule there.

The Litan Dynasty became extinct in 1864 by the death of the last King.

### Japanese Records.

The first successors of Tai-tso seem to have acquired great power, as under the King Siong-siong, who occupied the throne between 1506 and 1544, there is mentioned a war with Japan, on the occasion of the revolt of Taima-to (the Island of Tsoushima) which was tributary to Korea. Peaceful conditions were again disturbed at the close of the 16th. Century.

In 1592 Taiko-Sama who was a soldier and diplomat sent a Japanese army of 200,000 men to Korea. His object was, to open a path through that country into China and in vain the Chinese sent troops to help the Koreans to fight the common enemy, but they were beaten in several engagements and three-fourths of Korea fell into the hands of the Japanese, who most likely would have remained masters of the situation had not Taiko-sama died in 1598, and his troops were obliged to return to Japan and abandon the conquest.

This was the opportune moment for the Chinese to take action and a Chinese army was sent to Korea and they succeeded in driving out many Japanese, but many remained and settled in the southern portion of Korea.

In 1615 at the fall of the family of Taiko-sama, the chief of the present Dynasty in Japan signed a definite treaty of peace with the Koreans. The conditions were very humiliating for the latter, as they had to pay an annual tribute of thirty human skins. After several years, this barbarous tribute was changed into an annual contribution of a certain quantity of silver, rice, linen, ginseng etc. The Japanese remained in possession of the harbour of Fusan on the south-east point of Korea, and were allowed to keep a garrison of 300 soldiers, and the fort was called Tong-nai. They were not allowed to penetrate into the interior of Korea and only could trade with the natives once or twice monthly. Japan retained possession of the island of Tsushima and Fusan was under the authority of the prince of Tsushima.

Until 1790 the King of Korea was obliged to send an embassy to Japan to notify his ascension to the throne and from that time there never were any friendly relations between Japan and Korea. Every ten years an embassy had to be sent to pay the tribute, afterwards this embassy had to deliver the tribute on the island of Tsushima, which required less pomp and expense.

In 1636 when the Manchu Dynasty came into power and the Mings were dethroned, the Korean kings took the part of the Mings who ruled over China for 300 years and the Manchu or Tsing Dynasty ruled in China till 1911 when the revolution established the Republic.

Korea was overrun by Manchu soldiers and the Capital Seoul was taken. There is still a temple in existence to-day near one of the gates in Seoul which was erected in honor of one of the Manchu Generals, who was in command of the expedition. The treaty concluded in 1637, without aggravating seriously the vassalage of Korea, only rendered in form this submission more humiliating. The Korean King had to recognize to the Chinese Emperor, not only the right of investiture, but also his direct authority over his person, which means the relation of the master to his subjects, from that time onward the policy of the Korean Government was one of strict exclusiveness and separation and consequently nothing of moment happened in the external relations of Korea which needs recording.

One of the articles of this convention, (as given in Père Dallet's book), which was signed the 30th. of the 3rd. moon of Tieng-tsiouk (1637 to 1638) regulates as follows the payment of the yearly tribute. Each year there must be delivered:

- One hundred ounces of gold
- One thousand ounces of silver
- Ten thousand sacks of rice
- Two thousand pieces of silk
- Three hundred pieces of fine hemp cloth
- Ten thousand pieces of ordinary linen
- Four hundred pieces of woolen cloth
- One hundred pieces of fine woolen cloth
- One thousand rolls of big sheets of paper (@ 20 in each roll)
- One thousand rolls of small paper
- Two thousand good knives
- One thousand buffalo horns
- Forty woolen Carpets with designs
- Two hundred pieces of dye woods
- Ten measures of pepper
- One hundred tiger skins
- Four hundred beaver skins
- Two hundred blue rat skins
- One hundred deer skins



The first delivery to take place in the autumn of the year Kei-mio 1639. This treaty remained in force with some modifications. The Korean embassy goes each year to Peking to pay the tribute and to receive the Calendar. This last clause is in the minds of the people of capital importance. In China, the arranging of the Calendar is an imperial right, exclusively reserved to the son of Heaven. The preparation of the Calendar was attended with a great many ceremonies.—

Several tribunals of Astronomers and Mathematicians were appointed and charged with the preparation of the Calendar and each year the Emperor promulgated an Edict to which the great seal of the State was attached, forbidding under death penalty the publication of any other calendar. The great dignitaries of the Empire amidst great pomp and solemnities received the same at the Palace in Peking. The Mandarins and employés in their turn receive the same from the Governors and Viceroy.

To receive the Calendar was equivalent to declaring oneself a subject or vassal of the Emperor of China—to refuse the same was open rebellion. The Kings of Korea never dared since the treaty to refuse the Calendar, but in order to maintain their dignity before their own people, they affected to make some slight changes before publishing the same in Korea.

Every new King of Korea was obliged to demand his investiture by a special Embassy of the Emperor. He had to give an account of everything concerning his family and of the principal events which had taken place in his country.

The majority of the Chinese Ambassadors were members of the imperial hierarchy, therefore one degree higher than the Korean King and he was obliged to meet them outside the Capital to offer his humble salutations and to do this he must go outside the city limits by a different gate and not by the one by which the Ambassador enters.

The Ambassador during his sojourn does not leave the palace assigned to him, and everything which is brought to his table, be it porcelain or silverware becomes his property, which causes the Korean government an enormous expense. The Korean Ambassadors had no right to pass through the gate of Pien-men, the first town on Chinese territory on the frontier, and they were obliged to make a detour.

The imperial Chinese colors were forbidden to be worn by the Korean Kings; and his crown can't be similar to the Emperors crown: All the civil

documents date according the years of the Emperors reign; and when any serious event happens in Peking, the King must send through an embassy his felicitations or condolences, as the case may be.

The treaty also stipulates that the Korean government can't mint their own coins, but this article of the convention was not obeyed.

*I have quite a collection of ancient copper coins and three silver coins which were minted 40 years ago in Seoul.*

The documents which exist show that Korea was a vassal state of China, and that the suzerainty of China was exercised to its fullest extent, and was not imaginary. According to the respective character of the sovereigns of each country, the bands of subordination were more or less relaxed or strengthened, but they existed.

The Chinese Emperors, as clever politicians, knew how to husband the resources of the country and not to offend the susceptibilities of the Korean government. They received the tribute but in exchange they made annual presents to the Korean Ambassadors and to the people of their suit; and each new King received a royal mantle and precious ornaments. Besides China had the right to demand from Korea subventions of eatables, and provisions, munitions and soldiers, but they never made use of this prerogative, and although they had the right to interfere with the interior administration of the Kingdom, they never made use of this privilege.

The Mongol Dynasty of Ouang interfered several times in making and unmaking the Kings of Korea, and for this reason their memory is execrated by the Koreans. The Mings who were wiser, treated the Koreans more as allies than vassals; they sent to the King an army to succor him during the grand invasion by Japan, and up to the present day the affection and gratitude is preserved *for the Ming Dynasty, as certain usages are preserved which were contemporaneous with that Dynasty, although they were abolished in China by the Manchu Emperors.* The Manchus, were never loved by the Koreans and on the registers of the Nobility none of the events are mentioned relating to the years of their reign.

Since 1636 Korea had no wars with Japan or China and the people had the good sense not to renew an unequal struggle and not to excite the ambition of their powerful neighbors. They made themselves as small as possible and to put forward their weakness and the poverty of the country and its people, from



this emanates the defense to exploit the gold and silver mines; and forbidding ostentatiousness and keeping the signs of opulence within bounds. For the same reason the absolute interdiction to communicate with foreigners.

By these means peace was maintained, and the history for nearly three centuries offers nothing of importance and no events are recorded except Palace intrigues which on few occasions succeeded in replacing a King by some other prince of the same family, and oftener resulted in the decapitation of the conspirators and their true or supposed accomplices, otherwise, the country remained dormant and there was no progress, improvement or change in the daily routine of these peculiar people. There was no political life or revolution in Korea. The nobility, who had the power in their hands, did not occupy themselves much about what the masses of the people were doing or how they were living, as they were only there to be taxed, so as to supply the revenues on which the Nobility battered.

The nobility is also divided into several clans who persecute one another with great hatred, but their division is not caused by different political opinions and administration measures; but they quarrel amongst themselves as to who is to have the higher dignities and official positions, the influence in business and at the court. For 3 centuries the history of Korea is only an account of the bloody quarrels of their nobility.

According to Korean documents and traditions which are spread over the whole country, the origin of these different aristocratic clans arose from the following quarrels. Père Dallet in his memoirs gives the following version: Under the reign of Sung-tsong (1567-1592) a dispute arose between two noblemen belonging to the best families in the Kingdom, as to who should occupy a great official position and to which each of them laid claim. The families, friends and dependents of the two competitors took part in the quarrel; the King, out of prudence, tried to pacify both parties and they were known as the Tong-in, (Orientals) and Sié-in (Occidentals). Several years after a similar cause brought on a like quarrel, of which one of the parties, was called Nam-in (Southerners) and the other Pouk-in (Northerners).—Soon the Orientals joined the Southerners and formed one party which assumed the name of Southerners—the Nam-ins.—The Northerners began to have dissensions amongst themselves and divided, and formed the Taipouk and Siopouk which means the great and the small Northerners. The Taipouks being mixed up in a conspiracy against the King were all executed, and those who remained combined with the Siopouk, so

that when Souk-tsong in 1674 ascended the throne, there were three parties, namely the Sié-in (the Occidentals), Nam-in (the Southerners) and the Sio-pouk (the small Northerners).

During the reign of Siouk-tsong, a ridiculous incident caused another change. A young nobleman named Sié-in, (called Toun) had as teacher, a sage of great reputation called Onam. Toun's father died, and he prepared an epitaph (an Ode), but his teacher prepared another. They could not agree which one should be read at the burial; and each author had his partisans, and the excitement was so great that the party of Sié-in divided again into two ranks, the one joining Toun under the name of Sio-ron, and the other joining Onam under the name of Noron. Such is the origin of the four parties which existed in Korea when the Russo-Japanese war broke out.

The whole nobility necessarily belongs to one of these factions, and their only design is to obtain all the emoluments of office and dignities and bar out their enemies. From these quarrels comes the continued discord and they generally finish up by the chiefs being executed when they are conquered. These quarrels do not result in open warfare with arms or by assassination, but those who succeed in supplanting their rivals force the King to condemn them to death or at least to send them into perpetual exile.

When the calm sets in, the dominating party, while preserving for themselves with jealous precautions the influential positions, allow the underlings and satellites of the opposing parties to occupy the inferior positions, so as to avoid a violent opposition, but they never live on intimate terms with them and the government tolerates that the members of opposed factions do not speak to one another, even when their administrative functions require it. These quarrels are hereditary, the father transmits them to his sons and there is not a single case where a family or an individual has changed his party, especially between the Nam-in and the Noron, which were the most numerous, the most powerful and the most rabid. There is no case known of marriages between parties of opposite camps. A nobleman who by the intrigue of an enemy loses his dignity or his life, leaves to his descendents the care of his vengeance.

Often he leaves to them an exterior token as a remembrance; for instance, he will give to his son a dress with the order never to abandon the clothing till he has revenged himself. He will wear the same continually, and if he dies without having accomplished his aim, he will transmit the same clothing to his children with the same conditions. Often are to be seen noblemen in rags for two or three generations, which remind them continually that they have a debt of blood to pay to appease the souls of their ancestors.

In Korea, not to revenge ones father, is to deny him; this is a proof that one is not a legitimate child and that he has no right to bear his name; otherwise he is violating the fundamental principles of the religion of his country, which is the cult of the ancestors. If the father has been put to death legally, the enemy or the son of the enemy must die in the same manner; if the father is exiled, the enemy must also be exiled; if he has been assassinated, the enemy must also be assassinated, and in such a case, he is sure of his complete immunity before the law, as he has the religious and national sentiment of the whole community on his side.

The means ordinarily employed by the rival factions, is the accusation of conspiracy against the Kings life. Petitions are made out, false testimony is procured; the ministers are corrupted by bribery. If, as it often happens, the first petitioners are put into prison, whipped, condemned to pay a fine, they collect the money in their clique and new efforts are made, which owing to the venality of the Judges and the feeble character of the King leads to success. The conquering party then gets high positions and dignity and they use and abuse their power to enrich themselves, ruin and persecute their enemies, till they in their turn find a favorable opportunity to supplant them and revenge themselves.

The different parties mentioned are in their turn divided into two colors. This was occasioned because the King who occupied the throne in 1720 had no son to succeed him. The division was made amongst the grandees of the Kingdom, as one party wanted to proclaim Teng-tsong, brother of the King, a crafty and cruel prince; the other party wanted to wait, hoping that the King before he died would have an heir. The party who wanted Teng-tsong to occupy the throne called itself Piek-pai and the second Si-pai. The Piek-pai party sent secretly an envoyé to Peking to obtain the investiture of the brother; but the Si-pais, who were aware of this mission, followed the emissaries and they were caught on Korean territory and they cut off their heads. Meanwhile the King died without issue and Teng-tsong mounted the throne in 1724.

The public voice accused him and not without reason, that he had opened the road to the throne by a double crime, by preventing the King to have children, by administering to him secretly certain poisons which made him impotent and then killing him by a deadly dose of poison. Exasperated by these rumours, and supported by the Piek-pais, the new King, hardly crowned, had a large number of the Si-pais executed, whom he knew as his enemies. A few years later, his oldest son died, and he named his second son Sato as his successor and associated him in governing the country. This second son was

an accomplished student and philosopher and he wanted his father to forget the past troubles against the Sis and asked him to proclaim a general amnesty and try a policy of reconciliation. Teng-tsong, irritated by these reproaches and pushed by the Piek party decided to kill his son. A large coffin was made and Sato was ordered to lay down in the same then the lid was nailed down and the royal seal was placed on it and the young man was suffocated.

His death exasperated the quarrel between the Si party, and the Piek who had the Sis condemned to the torture and the enmity continued into modern times.

The Sis wanted that Sato, who had been proclaimed as the crown prince and was associated in the administration of the State should receive posthumous honours and be placed on the list of the Kings.

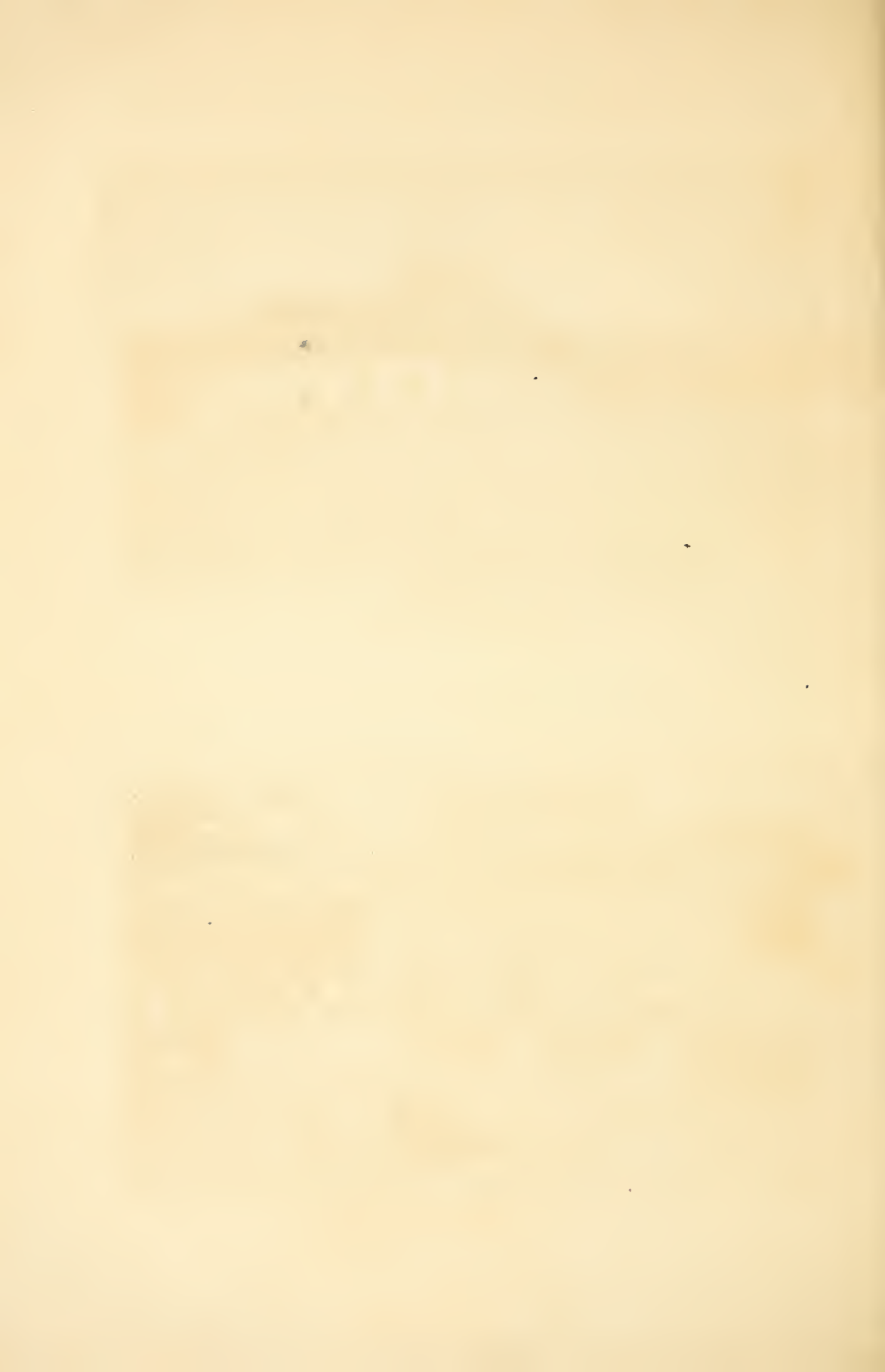
The Piek opposed this and prevented this rehabilitation.

The same distinction as between the Piek and Sis, exists between the Nam-ins and the No-rons. Each official associates himself to a certain colour according to his belief and inclination and it often happens that the father is a Piek whereas the son is a Si, and that brothers belong to different parties. These different political coteries do not prevent intermarriages and only the Piek's and the Sis differ in this respect.

Generally the more ambitious and active persons join the Piek, whereas the Si party has shown itself of moderate views and inclined to reconciliation.

When the Christian religion was introduced in Korea at the end of the 18th. Century, the majority of the noblemen who became converted belonged to the Si party; and later on many Nam-in became Christians; nothing more was wanted to stir up the Piek and the No-rons and the political hatred was the cause of the first persecutions. The Nam-in party, which was powerful up to 1801 could not resist the shock and was completely defeated, most of their chiefs were executed, and the No-rons became masters of the situation and had no competitors. The Sio-rons a numerous party of clever intriguers obtained a great number of dignities. Some high positions were given under great reserve to the Nam-ins and the Sio-pouk. The last named are in limited numbers and they had very little influence in the country.

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Kokomon Keitoku Kyu, Keijo  
The entrance gate to the old Palace, Seoul



This was one of the familiar sights before the Japanese occupation,  
when often prisoners were whipped to death.



A pagoda near the Buddhist temple of Kego



A Korean in mourning costume.

## **Chapter II**

How Justice was administered in former days.

Tortures and Punishments.



## Chapter II

How Justice was administered in Korea in former times.  
Courts or Tribunals.—Pretorians and Satellites,  
Prisons and Punishments.—Tortures.

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All cases which came before the civil courts or tribunals were tried by District Mandarins or Judges. When a contention could not be settled in a friendly manner by the village elder and when the contesting parties are obstinate and want the same to be decided by the judge, he pronounces judgement, against which there is no appeal. If the case is a very important one, the same is referred to the Governor of the Province or to the competent Minister and in the last resort to the King.

Criminal cases are judged by the military mandarins—but the inquiry is first made by the civil mandarins, who establish the facts of the case and usually this preliminary examination begins in the thieves court or Jeng-tsang and according to the gravity of the case the same is transferred to the Pieng-sa or to the Governor of the Province and then to the court of crimes in the Capital.

This court is composed of two distinct tribunals.

First is the court of inquiry called Po-tseng, where the witnesses are examined and their testimony is drawn out of them either by the gentle art of persuasion or by forcible means, be it bastinado or torture. The second tribunal judges the case. This court, the Jeng-tso, pronounces the sentences to be inflicted on the guilty. Below the court of crimes, in the Capital, is a police court, called Sa-kouang-tseng.

The court of crimes has only jurisdiction over the ordinary class of people and such noblemen who do not occupy any public offices or dignities.

A special tribunal called Keumpen, whose members are appointed by the King, have the power to try and judge public functionaries and nobles in cases of high treason and rebellion.

In cases of high treason, the whole family of the condemned is included in the punishment of the culprit, and his relatives are all impoverished or exiled or even condemned to death.



In 1801 at the time of the martyrdom of Augustin Niou, 26 Mandarins, his parents, all pagans, were impoverished and his older brother was sent into exile. When a murder has been committed in a district, the local Mandarin alone can't examine and decide the case; the Governor appoints two others who conjointly with him conduct the inquiry.

No ordinary Mandarin can on his authority pronounce the death sentence or exile a culprit. The provincial Governors only have this right with certain restrictions; and almost always, when it is a question of capital punishment, the sentence has to be approved by the Minister of Crimes. If during the interrogatory the culprit dies while undergoing the bastinado, which occurs quite frequently, (and often these means are employed to finish an embarrassing case), the Judges are in no ways responsible for the culprit's death. They employ also other means to simplify the formalities of a long procedure. One day, a young servant quarrelled with the son of a nobleman, and killed him with a stroke of a billet of wood. The assassin was brought before the Mandarin, and he gave the billet of wood into the hands of the father of the young dead nobleman and pointing to the culprit who laid on the ground with hands and feet tied said to the father "Show me how this man struck your son," and his object was to have the culprit killed by the father, so as to get rid of this embarrassing affair. This vengeance is permitted according to the customs of the country and everything would have been finished on the spot. The father was a timid man, and did not have the courage to strike the fatal blow and the assistants deprecated the father as a coward, and praised as just and natural the conduct of the Mandarin.

The civil Mandarins are at the same time prefects, justices of the peace, perceptors, custom inspectors, inspectors of forests and rivers, of the registry, and police etc., and it seems impossible that they could attend to all this work. Nevertheless they lead an indolent and idle life. They pass their time in drinking, eating, smoking and pleasuring. They hold court three or four times weekly for a few hours, and the cases are disposed off by a few phrases and having some bamboo strokes administered to the culprits, without hearing any of the witnesses or the interested parties. The military Mandarins act in the same manner, and in all the Tribunals, everything is left to the subalterns.

Here are some details regarding the agents of the Tribunals, who were such a power in the administration of Korea.—There were two kinds,

namely those who served the civil Mandarins and they were called pretorians or ajuns, and those who served the military Mandarins and occupied a rank similar to our police and mounted police, which in France are called gendarmes and these were called, satellites.

In each district there are a large number of pretorians, and they are the assistants of the Mandarins and occupy places of importance in a small way, as each provincial Mandarinate is organized on the same model as the Central Government.

They have often more authority than the Mandarin himself, and although he treats them like his varlets, he is led by them. The pretorians, are clerks, sheriff, and domestics. All these pretorians form a distinct coterie. They intermarry among themselves, and their children enter the same career, and from generation to generation they fill the same positions and without them there would be no administration.

They are experts in all the intrigues, stratagems and tricks, and know how to suck the people dry and how to protect themselves against the Mandarins. One can't offend them, one can slap their faces, they will support all sorts of injuries, they can be driven out of position but at an opportune moment they will turn up again, re-occupy their places and they know how to rid themselves either by fair or foul means of a Mandarin who is objectionable to them.

Although they are divided among themselves, and try to harm one another on each occasion, they forget their quarrels when it comes to defend their mutual interests should these be menaced. One of their axioms is to deceive the Mandarin, and to let him know as little as possible of the local affairs. With them it is a question of life and death, as they get no regular salary and they have to find the means to provide the unsatiable avidity of the Mandarins, and consequently they live by defraudations and exactions of the lower classes of the people. If they acquaint the Mandarin of their secret resources which they know how to exploit, he would take immediate possession of them, and they would have to starve to death.

The satellites are not like the pretorians a separate class, who occupy the positions by right of inheritance from generation to generation. They are servants who are recruited from the scum of the population and occupy their position often only for a few months. In each district are Satellites who occupy different positions, but those most feared and detested are those in position with the criminal courts of the prefecture of each Province. As

they have no fixed salary they live by exactions and take by force from the people whatever they like. Some act as policemen, others are servants in the house of the Mandarin, and others follow in the procession of his retainers when he goes out. They are exceedingly clever and in their hunt for thieves and robbers they always succeed. They never pay any attention to the petty larceny thieves. To arrest those and to punish them would only make worse subjects of them. As to the bandits and highwaymen, these are usually confederates of the satellites, and consequently they never capture them or give them up unless they are absolutely forced to do so.

In the big cities, the satellites have always on hand a few guilty rogues, who are paid by the police and brought before the tribunals when the people lose patience. Before they are captured an understanding is arrived at with them that they will be accused of some slight misdemeanour which the satellites testify to before the Madarin and which the guilty ones acknowledge.

As to any serious crimes, a complete silence is kept and very seldom the real culprits are punished. The Government tolerates many notorious criminals, so as to have them on hand, in case of necessity, as auxiliaries as they are unscrupulous and determined. At the Capital, there is a band of rogues, which are recognized by the authorities and whose depredations are never punished. In case of theft, if the owner gives notice thereof within 3 days to the Government, the goods or valuables are generally returned to him. But if three days have elapsed, the thieves become masters of the stolen goods and sell them.

In many villages, there are thieves well-known to the inhabitants and protected by them against the researches of the Mandarins. It may be that the peasants have a sentiment of pity for the bandits, but generally it is out of fear of their vengeance that they keep mum and don't betray them.

It can be seen by all this, how difficult it has been formerly in Korea to obtain justice when one had right on his side, without money and influence. In theory, everybody has the right to approach the Mandarin, and to present to him the complaint; but in reality, the access to the court was so well guarded by the pretorians and satellites, that one had to pass through their hands, and should one be lucky enough to place the petition directly into the hands of the Mandarin, nothing would be gained thereby, as the all powerful influence of the subalterns would thereby be aroused and all possible resistance be placed in the way of the petitioner.

Ordinarily, the case is first presented to the assistants of the Tribunal, and if the business is of importance, they hold a council among themselves, examine what should be declared, and what should be hidden, what can be openly acknowledged, what should be denied and in what manner the case should be presented before the judge. And then, against a round sum in cash paid down, they take charge of the case and guarantee successful issue of the case. Very few of the Mandarins have the courage to resist the influence of the pretorians and lack the ability to counterbalance their intrigues.

Another cause of injustice in the Korean Tribunals, is the intervention of high persons. The families of the Ministers, the wives of the King, the high dignitaries etc., have a lot of servants and followers, who are attached to the household without any pay and even pay money, so as to be under their protection. These individuals, against a bribe, become go betweens in a thousand different transactions, and receive letters of recommendation which they present to the Mandarin. The Mandarin dare not offer any resistance, if a case is recommended to him from a high quarter, and no matter how unjust the cause may be, the same is won by right of superior protection. If a debtor can't pay a debt to his creditor all the creditor has to do is to promise half the sum to some high personage. He receives a letter to the Mandarin, who without examining if the reclamation is correct or not, condemns the debtor and forces him to pay. If the Mandarin hesitated for one minute in such a case, he would make an enemy in high quarters and would certainly lose his position.

In Korea, as formerly in the whole world and today in all non Christian countries, the means employed when opening a criminal case in court was the torture.

There are several kinds of torture and of different degrees, but the most terrible of all, is precisely the one which is not prescribed in the number of authorized punishments by the law, and that is the incarceration for an indefinite length of time in the prisons.

The prisons consist generally of a space enclosed with high walls, against which in the interior are built wooden shanties. The central portion forms an open court. Each shanty has a small low door where the light penetrates into the interior. The cold in winter, and the heat in summer, are intolerable. The floor is covered with coarse grass or straw mats and they are generally so crowded that the prisoners could not stretch out their limbs when laying down. Their sufferings in these huts are intense.



The blood and pus which runs from their wounds inflicted during torture rots the mats, the air becomes infected, and pestilential sickness kills many of them. The hunger and thirst added to this increases their sufferings. Twice a day they receive a bit of gruel and some of them eat the rotten straw on which they laid and what is still more horrible they ate the vermin of which the prisons are filled so that they can be caught by the handful, *which after all is a common sight in China, where I saw with my own eyes beggars picking lice off one another and eating them.* Such were the conditions of the prisons at the time of the persecution of the Christians when they were martyred in Korea.

These tortures are something horrible. The King Teng-tsong, who died in 1776, abolished a great number of them, amongst others the crushing of the knees, the application of the hot iron on different parts of the body, the putting out of joint above the calf of the leg; also the branding of the thieves on their front. During the persecutions, in 1839, the satellites left to themselves, employed against the Christians the forbidden tortures. Those which are authorized by the law and were daily practiced in court are as follows.

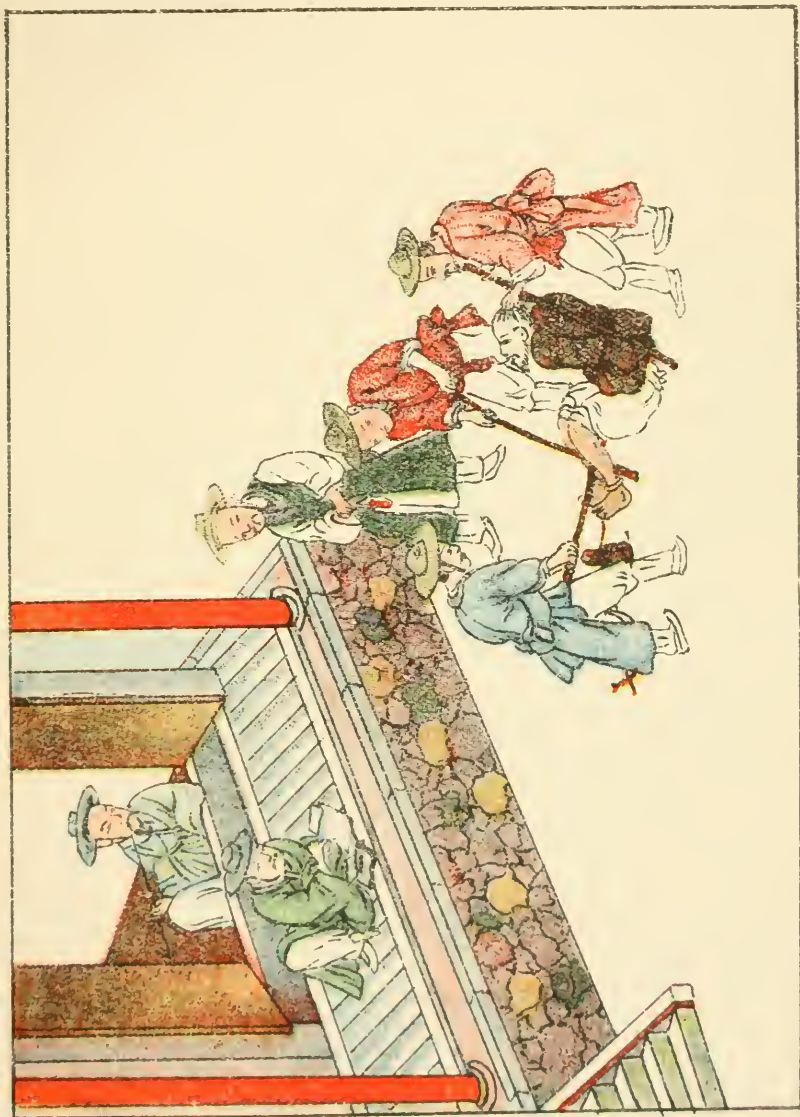
1) The board (tsi-to-kon). The culprit lays flat on the ground face downward, and with an oak board, his legs are struck above the calves. This board is from 5 to 6 feet long, 6 to 7 inches wide, 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick and at one end has a handle. After a few blows, blood flows, the flesh detaches itself and flies in pieces and after 10 or 12 strokes the barren bone is reached. Some Christians received as many as 60 strokes.

2) The ruler, the switch and the stick (lên-tsang). The ruler is 3 feet long, 2 to 3 inches wide and rather thin, with which the patient is struck on the leg. Ordinarily he is to receive 30 strokes at each interrogatory, and as the executioner should break the ruler at each stroke, he always has 30 of them ready at hand.

The whips are made of twigs and the naked body of the patient is fustigated with them. When sticks are used, the prisoner is surrounded by 3 or 4 executioners who beat him.

3) The dislocation and curvature of the bones. Of these there are three kinds. The Kasai-tsouroi, consists in binding the two knees together and the two big toes of the feet, and to pass between the legs two sticks which are drawn in a contrary direction till the bones bend in the shape of an arc, after





The Tsoul-tsouroi torture:  
Copied from an original painting



which they are allowed to come back into their natural position. The Tsoul-tsouroi differs from the preceding, by binding together the toes of the two feet, and between the legs is placed a large piece of wood and two men draw in opposite direction ropes attached to each knee till they approach one another.

The Pal-tsouroi is the dislocation of the arms. They are bound together on the back, one against the other above the elbow, and with two big sticks which are employed as levers and the shoulders are forced to approach one another. After this, the executioners untie the arms, and placing a foot against the breast, he brings the joints of the bones into their place again. When the executioners are expert, they know how to make the bones only bend, but it often happens, that novices and inexperienced are employed and the brutes break the bones on the first effort and the marrow with the blood escapes.

4°) The suspension (Hap-tsoum). The patient is despoiled of his clothing and his hands are tied behind his back and he is suspended in the air by his arms; then four men strike him with sticks. After a few minutes, the tongue covered with foam hangs out of his mouth, his face becomes of a dark violet color, and he would die if he is not lowered at once, and time is given him to recover, after which the operation is repeated.

The Tsou-tsang-tsil is another method of suspension, by which the patient is attached by the hair, and has to kneel down on broken pottery, while the satellites strike his legs with a stick.

5°) The Top-tsil, or the sawing of the limbs. With a hemp rope the legs are tied, and two men, each holding the end of a rope, saw his legs with it till they cut down the flesh to the bones. Then they recommence higher up in a new place. Sometimes the sawing is done with an irregular stick.

6°) The Sam-mo-tsang or incisions made with a hatchet which cuts away pieces of the flesh, etc., etc.

The application of these cruel tortures, is left entirely to the will and caprice of the judges, who, especially during the period of persecutions against the Christians, were carried away in their rage and invented such barbarous acts, that nature revolts itself to repeat them. It was an exception when after such an interrogatory with similar tortures, the patient had force enough to drag himself along; the executioners would pick him up, place him on two sticks and carry him, limp in arms and legs, to the prison.

When the accused was found culpable, and when in spite of the tortures he refused to confess his faults, the judge pronounced the death sentence and

from that moment it was forbidden to torture him any more. The law requires, that the condemned, before their execution, should sign the sentence and recognize the justice of the punishment which is inflicted on him. The Martyrs have often refused to sign, as the official formula of condemnation had the following sentence: "Culpable of having followed a false religion", a new and odious superstition etc.—

"Our religion being the only true one, they said, we can't attest that the same is false." In such cases, their hand was taken, and they were forced to sign.

When the condemned is a high dignitary, the sentence is executed in secret, by means of poison. Generally, the victim is placed in an overheated room, and a strong dose of arsenic is given to him, and he dies quickly. All other culprits are executed publicly.

There are three kinds of executions.—

The first one is the military execution, called Koun-moun-hio-siou.

The same is carried out in a special locality, at Sai-nam-to, some three miles from the Capital.

This place is sometimes called No-toul, from a village not far distant, on a river.

The condemned is carried there on a bed of straw. The execution ought to be presided by one of the commanding Generals of the Capital. The soldiers make a series of evolutions before the condemned; then his face is covered with a lime wash, his arms are bound behind his back, and a stick is passed under the shoulders, and he is walked around the place of execution. A flag is raised then to the top of the mast, and the death sentence is read to him; and a sharp arrow is passed through each ear, his clothing is torn off from him down to the waist and the soldiers, running and gesticulating, sword in hand, cut off his head.

The second kind of public execution, is that of the ordinary culprit. The same is carried out outside of the small western gate in Seoul. The culprit is brought on a cart in which is erected a cross six and a half feet high. The executioner brings the condemned on his shoulders and ties him by his hairs and arms to the cross, placing his feet on a small stool. Near the west

gate is a rapid descent; the executioner kicks the foot stool away and the driver lashes up the oxen which convoy the cart, and the poor devil suspended by the hair and arms is exposed now to the rough road over which the cart flies along at a rapid pace and he suffers terribly. At last they arrive at the place of execution, where his clothing is taken off, he is made to kneel down, a log of wood is placed under his neck and his head is cut off.

Rebels and conspirators are executed publicly; and after their heads are cut off, their legs and arms are severed from the body and these with the head and body make six pieces. Formerly the sword was not used to sever the members, but four oxen were attached to them and then driven in contrary directions which tore the body to pieces.

Military executions take place only in the Capital, whereas the others can be carried out in the Provinces. Ordinarily the bodies of the executed are surrendered to their families, or are secretly buried in places where they can't be found. When highly placed conspirators are executed and the body cut to pieces, the custom is to send them to the different provinces to frighten the people and to discourage conspiracy. The vile satellites are then prone to exhibit these terrible pieces of human flesh on the highways and compel the passers by to give them money. Nobody dares to resist, as they travel in the name of the King and on affairs of State. During the time of the religious persecutions in 1839 the satellites kept the bodies for three days so as to prevent the Christians from burying them. After that beggars took possession of them, tied a rope around them and dragged them before the houses in the neighborhood. The frightened inhabitants gave them money to be delivered of this horrible spectacle.

Before Korea was opened to foreigners, banishment seemed a more cruel punishment than death. The offender was usually sent to some isolated island where he was kept under strict surveillance. Occasionally the whole family was sent in banishment, and men suspected of high treason were sent in banishment and executed quietly.—What the official guilty of a crime most dreaded, was to be condemned to the chain-gang, as he is then made to work in the street, chained about the neck to several other unfortunates and exposed to the scorn of the public.

The curious part of the Korean penal code is, that the witnesses in a criminal case can be tortured for the purpose of obtaining evidence. Witnesses



can be seized and held as prisoners until the trial of the case and can be tortured so as to get the testimony out of them. Korea had no lawyers till the Japanese occupation, therefore the criminal has to conduct his own case. The witnesses to avoid torture will testify what the Judge wants to know and the difficulty they were under was for the witnesses to find out what the Judge wanted them to testify to.

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## **Chapter III**

How Korea was ruled in former times.





The Empress of Korea





## Chapter III

How Korea was ruled in former times.

The King—The Princes of royal blood—The Eunuchs of the Palace—Royal obsequies.

In Korea, like in all Oriental countries the form of Government is an absolute Monarchy. The King has full power to use or to abuse of everything in his Kingdom; he enjoys an authority without limitation over men, things and institutions; he has power over the life and death of all his subjects without exception, let them be noblemen or princes of royal blood. His person is sacred, and he is surrounded with all the respect imaginable, he is presented with the tithes of the harvest amidst religious pomp, and divine honors are shown to him. Although he receives from the Chinese Emperor a proper name at the time of his investiture, out of respect for his high dignity it is forbidden under severe penalties to pronounce his name, which is only employed in the official reports to the court of Peking. It is only after his death that his successor proclaims his name, which then becomes known to posterity.

In the presence of the King, nobody can wear a veil with which the noblemen and all the people cover their faces when in mourning; nobody can wear eyeglasses before him. His body can't be touched, and no iron must approach him.—When the King Tieng-tsong-tai-oang died in 1806 of a tumor in the back, nobody dared to use a lancet which might have cured him and according to the rules of etiquette he was allowed to die. On another occasion another King suffered from an abscess on the liver. The doctor had the happy idea to bring a bonze (priest) before his Majesty, to make jests, plays, and humorous incantations, and the royal patient was so amused that he laughed so heartily that the abscess burst.\*

On another occasion a prince who had better sense forced his doctor to make a slight incision on his arm; but he had the greatest trouble to save the life of the unhappy doctor as he was culpable of high treason. No Korean can

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\* Père Dalet—The history of the Church in Korea.

present himself before the King except in his official robes and with interminable prostrations. Every man on horseback must dismount when passing the royal palace. The King never becomes familiar with any of his subjects. If he touches somebody, the spot so touched becomes sacred, and he must wear all his life, a sign, generally a ribbon of red silk in remembrance of this great honor. Naturally, all these prohibitions and formalities relate to men only, as the women are allowed to enter the palace ground, without attracting any attention.

The Kings effigy is never struck on coins, only Chinese characters. It would injure the Kings sacredness to place his sacred face on objects which pass through the hands of the most vulgar and often are dropped on the ground, into the dust or mud. No portrait is made of the King while he is living and only after his death is his picture taken, which is kept in the palace in a special apartment.

When the first foreign ships entered Korean harbors, the mandarins sent on board to receive them, were scandalized to see with what indifference these barbarians from the West treated the face of their sovereigns reproduced on their gold and silver pieces, and with what indifference they placed them into the hands of the first comer, without being in the least disturbed if any respect was shown to the image or not. The commander of one of the French ships offered to one of the mandarins the picture of King Louis Philippe, but he refused to receive the same. He was most likely afraid to be punished by his Government to have accepted something from the barbarians; or he might have thought that some trap was being laid for him by this act of politeness.\*

*I was quite astonished when I first came into contact with some of the high mandarins in the interior of China who on closer acquaintance told me confidentially that some of our habits and customs appear to them quite barbarous, but when I saw afterwards their ceremonies and customs of intimate life I began to understand why they call us Janguitzis or foreign devils.\**

According to the sacred books of China, the King should occupy himself exclusively with the general welfare of his people. He watches that the laws are strictly carried out, renders justice to all his subjects, protects the people against the exactions of the high functionaries and so forth. Such Kings were the exception not the rule in Korea. Most of them were good for nothing, they were corrupted, rotten with debauchery, aged before time, brutal

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\* The italics are my own. M. E.

and incapable. It could not be otherwise as the unhappy princes destined to the throne from their infancy, are petted and pampered and nobody dares to give them advice, and who are cloistered by a ridiculous etiquette in the palace, in the midst of a seraglio from the age of 12 or 15 years.

In Korea like in other countries under analogous circumstances, there are always ambitious Ministers who pander to the passions of the master, and try to enervate him with pleasures, so that he should become incapable to meddle in State affairs, and that they may reign in his place.

Therefore cases are rare when capable Kings ruled the country, administered the law, watched the Ministers and high dignitaries. When Korea was blessed with such a King, the masses of the people were the gainers, as the Mandarins had to be careful and fulfil their duties conscientiously. Secret emissaries reported to the King any case of oppression and injustice and the culprits were punished by disgrace or exile. The masses of the people are attached to the King and he is never accused of an act of tyranny and oppression from which they suffer and all the responsibility falls on the Mandarins who are the evil doers.

Formerly there was a box at the palace gate called Sinmoun-ko, which was established by the 3rd. King of the present Dynasty at the beginning of the XV<sup>th</sup>. Century, to receive all the petitions addressed to the King. This box still existed up to the beginning of the present century but became useless as one could not drop a petition into the same without paying a large sum of money. Those who had any grievance had to station themselves at the Palace gate and wait till his Majesty issued from the same.

They strike a gong, and at this signal one of the servants comes and receives the petition, which is handed to one of the dignitaries in the suit of the King, but this paper is pigeon holed unless the petitioner forks out a bribe so as to secure the necessary protection. Another means of attracting the attention of the King was to light a big bonfire on the high mountain which is near the Capital and which he could see from the palace grounds and opposite the houses he occupies. The King sees the fire and informs himself as to what is asked of him.

Beside the munificent gifts made on great state occasions, the King, according to custom has to provide for the maintenance of the poor. The census of 1845 showed 450 old men who had a right to the royal gifts. To the octogenarians there were given annually—five measures of rice, two of salt

and three of fish. To the septuagenarians were given, four measures of rice, two of salt and two of fish; a measure of rice I should explain, is sufficient to nourish a person for 10 days.

In spite of the great power which the aristocracy wielded, the princes of royal blood, such as brothers, uncles, nephews of the King were excluded from all state affairs. Despots are suspicious and jealous of any outside influence, and for this reason the princes are never called upon to occupy important posts, nor to mingle in state affairs. They had to follow these precepts or expose themselves to being accused of fomenting rebellion. Owing to court intrigues many relatives of the King were condemned to death and for this reason many of them led a secluded life. During the 60 years prior to 1870, although the royal family was not numerous three princes were executed. The royal power is supreme in theory but diminished largely as the high aristocratic families profited greatly in increasing their power through several successive regencies and when the throne was occupied by weak and insignificant Kings, and gradually absorbed all the authority. The Koreans say; the King sees nothing, knows nothing and can do nothing. The great functionaries and the Nobility ruin the King and on the other hand suck the life blood out of the people.

In speaking of palaces, an erroneous idea is conveyed to the European mind, as in the Far East the royal palaces are a series of courtyards, a veritable labyrinth, containing houses in which the guardians, servants and officials live. There is also a temple like building profusely ornamented and decorated which is the throne room or audience hall and the apartments of the Emperor and his intimate suite also consists of a series of low buildings.—The gardens contain ponds, shaded alleys with pleasure kiosks and in the most secluded spot is the seraglio guarded by eunuchs and as all these buildings and constructions cover several acres, the whole is surrounded by a massive stone wall in which are built one or two arched entrance gates, which form such a striking feature in the architecture of Korea and China.—The palaces are filled with women and eunuchs. Beside the Queen and the royal concubines, there are numerous female servants called palace girls. These are collected all over the country and if necessary they are taken by force and must remain there all their lives, excepting in case of some incurable malady. They can't get married, as often the King chooses from among them his concubines; and they are condemned to exile or even death if it is proven that they do not remain virtuous.



These seraglios are the theatre of unheard of crimes, and these unfortunate women are there for appeasing the passions of the princes, and their dwellings are the scene of many infamous acts.

The eunuchs are usually narrow minded, of a violent and unforgiving character. They are proud of their daily and familiar contact with the Sovereign and are not afraid of the highest dignitaries. They associate only among themselves and strange to say all the eunuchs are married and many of them have several wives. These are poor girls which they take from their homes by force or they buy them at a big price. They are kept very strictly, more so than the women of the Nobility, and they are so jealously guarded that their house is forbidden to persons of their own sex and even to their parents. As they have no children, these eunuchs have emissaries who scour the country for children and young eunuchs whom they adopt and instruct and secure for them employment in the interior of the palace.

The question arises where do the eunuchs originate. A certain number are so born; they are not so highly prized and after a medical examination are usually rejected. The Missionaries say that the mutilation of the sexual parts is not practiced and they never heard of a case. But it happens occasionally that the sex part of children is bitten off by dogs. In Korea like in other oriental countries, dogs are left to guard the house and babies up to the age of three or four years and accidents of this kind are not rare. These children when they grow up find through their infirmity an easy means of earning their livelihood, and if they get a good position, they can assist their families.

Beside the palace which is inhabited by the King, there is a special one which is exclusively devoted to the tablets of his ancestors. These tablets receive exactly the same service and attention as the King himself. Each day the dead are respectfully saluted, food is placed in front of the tablets in which the souls of the dead are supposed to reside, and for their service there are eunuchs and palace girls in great numbers, and all is organized on the same scale as in the King's palace.

In Korea, where the religion consists in the cult of the ancestors, like the Shinto religion in Japan, everything pertaining to the obsequies of the King is of an extraordinary importance, and the ceremonies of their burial are of the grandest description. The King being considered as the father of the people, everybody without exception must wear mourning for twenty seven months. This time is divided into two periods.



The first one, from the moment of his death till the burial, lasts five months. This is the time of the strict mourning. During this time all the sacrifices must cease in the whole Kingdom, marriage ceremonies are forbidden, no burial can take place, no animal can be killed and its meat eaten, the criminals can't be whipped nor can they be killed.

These rules are strictly observed, but there are some exceptions.

The poverty stricken of the low class people who can't keep the dead bodies for such a length of time in their houses, can bury them without noise and in secret; but the custom is sacred for the others. At the time when the grandfather of the deposed King died, owing to the great heat and the necessity to harvest the fields, his successor gave a general dispensation of abstinence.

Beside these special dispensations during this first period, there are other rules relating to the twenty two months which follow the burial. The clothing to be worn must be made of raw flax linen and all bright colors must be abandoned and costly garments dispensed with; these edicts must be obeyed or heavy penalties are imposed and the regular costumes can only be resumed when a ministerial ordinance to this effect is published. The women are not subjected to these rules, as they count for nothing in the eyes of the civil and religious laws; and most of them remain in the interior of their houses.

*Often the question is asked how a huge country like China with its 400 million of people is being kept together, and the answer to this is—because they have kept the patriarchal system. The Chinese and the Tartar people have shown a remarkable conservatism in their customs and habits and therefore didn't progress. Their religion—Confucianism also contributed to maintain their patriarchal existence. Filial piety is the one great moral principle in the Far East. Truth is unknown, honesty is certainly the exception and not the rule. The worship of the ancestors is the outcome of their patriarchal system and its observance is logically in keeping with their idea that there is a future life and that men are immortal.*

### The King or Emperor has as Councilors :

*First the Prime Minister* with his Minister of the Left and his Minister of the Right. They are the rulers and form the highest tribunal of all affairs of State.

Then comes the Censor whose position equals that of the Prime Minister; and he scrutinizes all the acts of the three Ministers.

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Then come the six great Cabinets, namely:

The *Ministry of the Interior*, had control of the Prefectures of the country and the same appointed the officials and had charge of the public examinations.

The *Law Department* with the Bureau of Police, looked after the peace of the country and in regard to the detection and apprehension of the criminals.

The *Ceremonial Department*, had charge of all the government ceremonies, royal marriages, funerals and sacrifices.

The *Department of Finance*, collected the taxes of the country, took the census. In former times the revenues were mostly paid in kind.

The *War Department* had charge of the Army and Navy, superintended the great military examinations and controlled the lands set aside for the use of the army.

The *Industrial Department* had charge of the government properties, repairing the roads, public buildings.

The *Educational Department* with that of Religion were controlled by the Confucian School which was held responsible to the Prime Minister.

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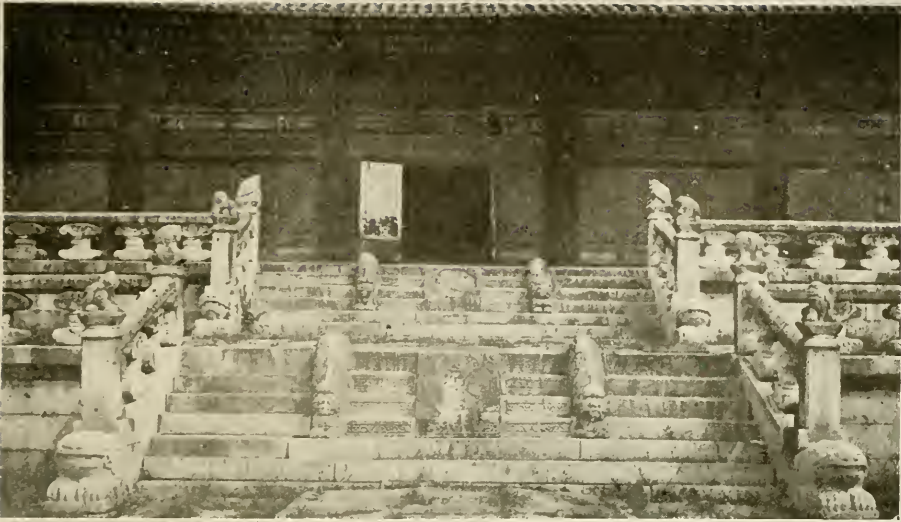


## **Chapter IV**

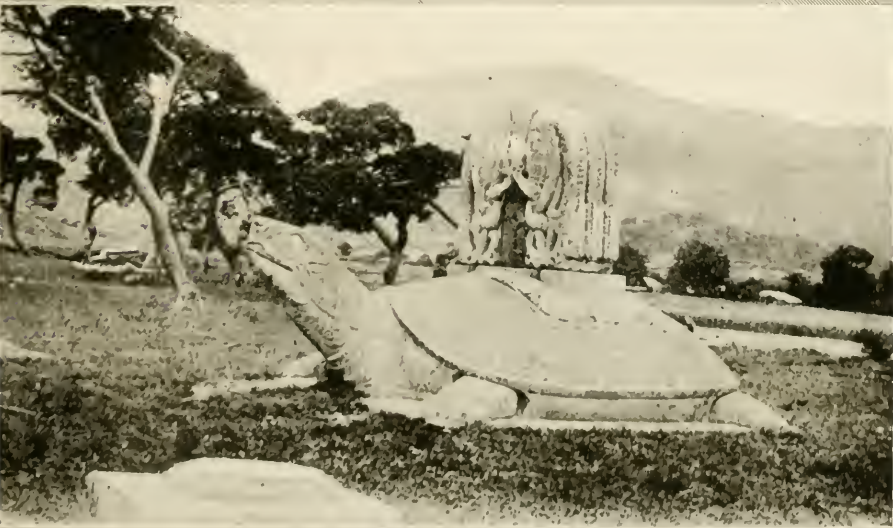
Religion—The Cult of the Ancestors.— Superstition—Christianity.—







Entrance to the throne room in the old or North Palace showing  
the beautiful marble steps



The monument on the grave of King Muryol Kyong Chy



This is the most interesting gate in Korea, at Suwon, built on a bridge.  
Note the mural decorations and the walls in the distance



A hall in Kyong Pak Palace

## Chapter IV

### Religion—The Cult of the Ancestors—Bonzes—Superstition.

Buddhism or the Doctrine of Fo was introduced into Korea in the fourth Century of the Christian era, at the time when Korie united the various states into a monarchy, it became the established religion of the country. At the end of the 14th. Century the Korie Dynasty was overthrown and the priaces of the Tsi-tsien Dynasty became the rulers, and they no doubt influenced by China adopted not only the Chinese Calendar by also the religion of Confucius. Buddhism is still tolerated to this day but is in decadence and the priests who still exist in the decaying monasteries are not revered by the people. Confucianism gave rise to the persecutions when the Catholic Missionaries attempted to introduce Christianity into Korea.

Beside the observance of the ancestral rites, Confucius teaches the people the observance of five laws, namely: "The duty the people owe to the King." "The duties the children owe to their parents." "The relation between husband and wife." "The respect due to old people." "The relation between man and man."

Like most half civilized people they have indistinct notions of heaven and have a certain veneration for the great men and the sacred books of China. They believe in destiny and in good and bad spirits. They claim to believe in a superior being who created the Universe and that he takes care of his creation by giving good harvests, keeps away sickness and pestilence and when they offer sacrifices they appeal to a supreme being or to heaven, but their ideas are confused on the subject.

They evidently believe in the spirits of their ancestors.—They firmly believe that there is a ruler of the Universe, a Jehovah and consequently they are monotheistic.

In times of famine the Emperor of China repairs to the Temple of Heaven in Peking which also shows that they have the conception of some great Divinity which rules the Universe.



Here are some details regarding the sacrifices which are brought in case of drouth or pestilence. An order is issued to the mandarin to go to a certain place with his attendants and to wait there without taking any nourishment till the propitious hour arrives, which is usually about midnight and then to kill some pigs, goats and sheep, the raw meat and blood is offered as a sacrifice to the divinities. This operation is repeated every second day till the rain comes. If after the third sacrifice no rain comes, a change of locality is ordered which is considered more propitious and fresh sacrifices are brought. If the prayers offered prove useless, the State Ministers take the place of the mandarins, and if these have no success, the King comes himself amid great pomp to pray for the salvation of the people.

When the rain at last comes neither the sacrificator nor the people must seek shelter, but must remain there exposed to the rain till midnight, as heaven might be insulted if anybody tried to escape the blessings conferred on them.

The mandarin who has succeeded in obtaining the rain is recompensed by the King. At the Capital the rain ceremonies are carried out near the South Gate, when the same remains closed while the ceremonies last. In times of great calamities, like cholera, many sacrifices are brought and the King proclaims a general amnesty and the convicts are liberated.

The laws and observances relating to the mourning ceremonies, the choice of burial places and the conservation of the memorial tablets are very interesting and were used as arguments during the persecution of the Christian Converts.

The choice of a grave is for a Korean a very important affair, as from its location depends the future happiness of the whole family, also the prosperity of his descendents and nothing is spared to find a propitious place. No wonder that the divines and geomancers are legions there as they make a specialty of this study. When the place for the grave has been discovered and when the body has been buried, nobody else can be buried in the vicinity.

For the graves of the Kings, the land reserved for it extends for several miles in circumference, including the neighbouring mountains from which the grave can be seen.—The Nobility take as much space as possible, they plant trees and in time forests surround the graves. Should anybody succeed surreptiously to bury another corpse within the reserved precinct already occupied, the land becomes by law the property of the last corpse and should the previous graves belong to rich people or noblemen, the corpses must be exhumed, or the tombs are levelled so as to make them disappear.

This causes violent quarrels, which among Koreans become transmitted from generation to generation.

The law forbids the exhumation of dead bodies except by the family to whom the deceased belongs.

*"A visit to the graves of the Kings and their Queens which exist in the neighborhood of Seoul, is convincing proof that the dead are very well cared for and the monuments around them are very similar to those seen in Nanking or at Mukden where the former Manchu Emperors are buried—An Avenue of stone figures generally elephants, lions, sheep, dogs leads up to the enclosure in which are beautiful temples, pagodas and other structures, and the grave represents a hemispherical mound several hundred feet in diameter under which are beautiful apartments which are walled up and in which the body of the Emperor or King is placed in a sarcophagus. When it is considered that not so very long ago the barbarous custom prevailed to have the favored wives and concubines buried with the Emperors and also with the high Mandarins, the impression one carries away when visiting these monuments of a past civilization is that we must be grateful for the efforts which the Missionaries have made in opening up these countries to the civilizing influences of the western world."*

After the dead are buried, the tablets are prepared in which the soul of the defunct is to live in future. They are made of chestnut, painted white and the name of the departed is written on them in Chinese characters. On the sides small holes are bored through the tables by which the soul of the deceased enters and the same is then placed in a box and the rich people have a special apartment in which the tablets of the ancestors are kept. The poor have a cupboard in one of the rooms in which they are kept. During the 27 months of mourning, sacrifices are daily made before the tablets. After the period of mourning, sacrifices are made several times during a month, either before the tablets or before the grave. In the fourth generation, the tablets are buried and the cult ceases, excepting for great men whose tablets are kept in perpetuity.

*"The graves in China and Korea are maintained intact in perpetuity, for miles and miles one travels through grave-yards. In mountainous regions the graves are excavated in the rocks and I have seen whole ranges for miles in length devoted to this purpose.—The approaches of Mukden are for miles simply dotted with graves. Some of them are ornamented with grave-stones and those usually seen in Manchuria and Korea are large turtles in granite or marble supporting either a column or square slab with inscriptions."*

*"I saw one tablet 12 feet high at one of the Manchu Emperors graves having inscriptions in Mongol, Manchu and Chinese Characters.—Some of the turtles are 12 feet in length and they are evidently emblematic of long life."*



In every district Confucian temples are erected which are usually situated in beautiful grounds. The learned men hold their meetings in these temples and sacrifices are offered here at new and full moon.—Temples are also erected to the memory of great men and their portraits are preserved in them.

The sacred books of China are also the sacred books of Korea. Some of the pagodas built by the Buddhists still exist; but very little is left of this religion in Korea; and most of their temples are in ruins. The localities in which they existed were the choicest sites in Korea.

The Koreans are very superstitious. They consult frequently the fortune tellers or necromancers and the common people believe in congruances, sacrifices and sortileges before and after each action in life.

*"I noticed in Mongolia and Southern Siberia during my travels, that after a weary ascent of some steep mountain road or trail; on reaching the summit, there were tied to the trees or bushes rags or ribbons offered by the superstitious Buriats or Mongols to the genius of the mountains, or there was a pile of rocks on which each traveller placed a rock, till it assumes the dimensions of a Monument, and the same custom prevails in Korea. The hunters observe ceremonies, the sailors offer sacrifices to the winds and the waters, to the heavens, stars and the earth. The snake is never killed in Korea and this animal fills them with a superstitious fear.—The man in mourning must not kill anything living, even the insect life which infests his body, and the women are afraid to kill a chicken."*

Among the richer classes there is a custom to keep a cauldron in which burning coal is always maintained and it is never allowed to go out and as long as an ember is burning the family will never become extinct but woe to the one where the life spark under the ashes is allowed to go out—that race is sure to die out.

Small pox rages in Korea and the idea among the populace is that it is a lady who visits the villages and imparts this sickness and this legendary lady is always received with a great deal of ceremony and before every house a table is set laden with fruit and delicacies. When this sickness breaks out in any house, a flag is hung out, the doors are barricaded and yellow earth placed in front, so that nobody shall come in to disturb the illustrious lady. No pains are spared to treat the illustrious lady with great respect, prayers and songs are intoned, sacrifices are offered, sweets are prepared and distributed among the neighbors. Sorcerers are invited and among great ceremonies the invisible lady is requested to leave the house. These sorts of superstitions and numerous others are spread among the people, and especially the women believe strongly

in everything which is supernatural and the atmosphere of the palace down to the lowest hovel is permeated with these beliefs.—The result is that the country is full of sorcerers, charlatans, astrologers, diviners, jugglers and fortune tellers of both sexes who live on the public credulity. They choose the land on which to build a house, on which to dig the grave, the day on which an enterprise should be undertaken; to read in the stars the future of a newly married couple, to conjure away misfortune, sickness or accidents, recite formulas for various ailments, exorcise the devil; and this is always done with a great deal of ceremony, much noise, eating of various meals, as this gentry is known and is famous for their voracity.

The most successful ones are the blind men who since childhood exercise this profession and they transmit their secrets to the children who are born blind. In the country each individual exercises his profession, but in the larger places and in the Capital, they form strongly organized corporations, recognized by law and pay a special tax to the government. They alone have the right to circulate in the streets of Seoul at night. *"During the day they are met with a frequency which surprised me, as never before have I seen so many blind people, they go in groups, three or four, holding one another by their hands and one taps the ground with his stick and utters a peculiar cry to draw the attention of likely customers. It is simply astonishing and I call it marvelous, and something difficult to explain, of their ability to find their way in this labyrinth of narrow and crooked lanes or streets of Seoul, as they are so tortuous and innumerable and when a house is indicated to them, they go there by feeling about a little with their sticks and with an assurance which is incomprehensible to me. I am informed that the blind children for years first practice the circumambulation of the streets of Seoul.—Seoul is certainly a curiosity to see and the Globe-trotter will find it worth the while to explore this, the quaintest of places on the face of the globe—but to my mind it is the most horrid agglomeration of the most miserably constructed houses."*

*"To come back to the so-called sorcerers, the most interesting ceremony gotten up for my benefit, was to drive the devil out of a house, for this purpose six of them were engaged and they indulged first in mumbling a lot of prayers, then the voice is raised and then they beat with their sticks copper cymbals."*

*"Gradually these charlatans work themselves into a state of frenzy and with loud cries till their operations are finished and they in a state of exhaustion. The devil is eventually driven into a corner of the room and he is forced to take refuge in a bottle where he is hermetically sealed up, and thus properly secured a chant of victory is intoned. During this ceremony sweets and other dishes are offered as a bait to the devil, which afterwards are consumed by the blind men."*

The blind exorcists are called Pansu.—The female sorceress is called a Mudang and they are very low creatures.

*“When I first came to China I was told that the average Chinese have no religious conception and that their heads are full of superstitious beliefs and from what I saw and heard in Korea, similar conditions must exist there.”*

*“There must have been a time in the old history of Korea when the country was dotted with Buddhist shrines, temples and monasteries of which some remnants are still to be seen to-day and no doubt these were the seat of learning and science, from here Buddhism filtered into Japan.”*

*“The monasteries were built on the most beautiful sites in the land and these monks who were the architects of these structures must have been men of learning and erudition. That Buddhism gradually lost its hold on the people is not to be wondered at as the priests meddled too much with the administration of the country and were the cause of countless intrigues, plots and assassinations and when the new dynasty ascended the throne the whole Buddhist system was outlawed and the priests were not even allowed to enter the capital.”*

*“The priests in Korea stand on a very low level and are not treated with respect by the populace and the religious ceremonies are not carried on in a reverential spirit owing to the moral degradation of the priesthood.”*

*“We do not see in Korea the magnificent temples any more which are so abundant in China and Japan. Everything looks dilapidated and neglected.—Here and there one sees a devil post near the villages, which are supposed to be idols or josses to keep the bad spirits away.”*

Christianity was introduced into Korea through embassies passing through and bearing tribute to Peking and they brought copies of the Scriptures in Chinese back to Korea and in this way the Koreans in the North heard of the Christian Catholic religion and secretly some of the French Missionary fathers came to Korea.

The difficulties which the first Catholic Missionaries encountered who wished to penetrate into Korea were enormous as the frontiers were so guarded that nothing could escape the vigilance of the men entrusted with that task; Military posts were established along the coast and on the northern borders, so as to prevent the entrance of any strangers or the escape of any of the natives. They had blood hounds with them trained for that purpose.

By land Korea could be only approached by two routes:—namely the one coming from Tartary or the present Russian possessions, by the way of

Kieng-ouen, or by the Chinese route by the way of Pien-men. As stated before the border land is composed of mountain deserts or impenetrable forests. Over the two routes the passage could only be risked on the legally recognized market days and consequently one had to be amongst the crowd or attached to the Korean Embassy returning from China. The difficulty was to arrange the hair, if worn Chinese fashion one would be stopped as a Chinese and if arranged in the Korean fashion one would already be detected in China.

On market days the Chinese are forbidden to enter Korean houses and numerous satellites watch in the streets and at the gates.

By the way of Pien-men the difficulties are equally great. Every Korean who follows the Embassy is searched when he leaves for China. In his passport everything is minutely described. In case they return accompanied by a Missionary and if they succeed in passing the Chinese customs they had to cross a neutral zone fifty miles wide before they came to the Korean line of custom houses and had to travel over a difficult country covered with impenetrable forests. If they were fortunate enough to reach the shores of the river where the guards were stationed and crossed in a barge to the custom stations on the south bank, the passport had to be shown followed by a close search and the Missionaries could not expose themselves to this risk and had to remain on the North Shore and wait till the winter, when the river would freeze up and cross on the ice and creep across between two posts and then they took the chance of being detected by the ferocious bloodhounds which the guards had with them and if they succeeded in evading them they had to wander about in the wilderness till they struck a trail. This is the way the first French fathers entered Korea, but in spite of all these precautions some were discovered and forfeited their lives. Subsequently attempts were made to enter Korea by the sea and a few Missionaries succeeded in getting through in this perilous undertaking. The Government watched with jealous care over the isolation of Korea which they considered a political necessity for the security of the country and no consideration of interest or humanity made them deviate from this course.

*"As late as 1868 over 70 Chinese fishing boats were captured and burnt and 300 fishermen were massacred without cause or reason. In 1871 and 1872 a great famine broke out and people by the thousands were dying of hunger and the Government would have allowed half the people to die before permitting rice to be imported from China or Japan."*



*"By nature the Koreans are not inimical to foreigners now. Numerous Koreans visited China to learn about the Christian religion and thus the beginning was made over a hundred years ago in the Northern portion of Korea and the news was then carried further south and today five per cent of the population are Christians belonging to various denominations and are followers of the Master..... from what I saw in Korea I believe owing to the progress which the Missionaries are making that a large portion of the population will be Christianized by the time the new generation grows up, as the Korean is more impressionable and will be easier to convert than the Chinese."*

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## **Chapter V**

**Korean Social Customs.—Dignities.—Language.—Schools.**



## Chapter V

### Public Examinations,—Dignities,—Schools.

It is well known that in China, there existed legally only one aristocracy, and that was the aristocracy of the literati or the learned men.

In no other country were men of learning held in such high esteem, nor was such a high value placed on Science as in China. Study was the only road which led to dignities and the school rooms were open to all.

Under the Manchu Dynasty only Manchus occupied high military ranks and the highest positions were given to hereditary Manchu princes, and by these means the Manchu Emperors counter-balanced the influence of the Chinese dignitaries, but nowhere does Chinese history present other examples where impediments were placed in the way of the scholarly Mandarins. To obtain high positions in the Civil Service, it was only necessary to succeed in the public examinations.

No scholar was asked if he was rich or poor or the fortune of his parents and all he had to do was to give proof of his mental capacities. Only those were excluded from the school room whose parents exercised an infamous calling, such as barbers, professional beggars or brothel keepers.

In theory, every individual, no matter how poor or humble, can, when he has mastered the high literary grades become the first Mandarin of the Empire; but the one who can't pass his examination, let him be the son of a millionaire or a minister, is debarred from exercising any public functions. Without a doubt this fundamental law is often evaded in practice, but everybody knows, that it forms the basis of the administrative organization of the Celestial Empire.

Korea was for many centuries the humble vassal of China, and had no commercial or political relations with other countries except Japan and therefore came under the influence of the Chinese religion, Confucianism, adopted Chinese civilization, their ideas and customs, which were not imposed on the Koreans, but which they freely adopted. This is no doubt the reason that in

Korea we find the same respect for science, the same enthusiastic veneration for great philosophers and in theory also, the same system of literary examination for positions and dignities as prevail in China.

The learned men are considered the teachers of the people and they are consulted at every opportunity. The highest dignities are open to them.

When Christianity was introduced in Korea, the majority of the first converts were celebrated doctors, and the King Tsieng-tsong had for them such a high consideration, that in spite of all the intrigues their enemies could not persuade him to pronounce the death sentence over them, and it was only after his death in 1800 that they were condemned and died as martyrs.

There is however, a great difference, between China and Korea in regard to the literary studies and examinations. The first one is that in Korea, there is nothing national about their studies. Their books are all Chinese books, the language they study is not Korean, but Chinese; the history they study is not Korean, but Chinese; and the philosophic system is also Chinese and the copyists are as usual inferior to the model, and the learned Koreans are very far from equal to the Chinese savants.

There is also another important difference, whereas the whole of China is so to say a democracy under an absolute ruler, there is in Korea, between the King and the people, a large nobility, very jealous of its privileges and powerful enough to maintain the same. Although every Korean who has passed his examination has in theory the door open to him to all positions and honors, very seldom the poor Korean arrives to the station of a high Mandarinate, whereas one seldom sees a Nobleman who does not occupy a lucrative place.

Examinations take place in all the Provinces, but these have only value for inferior positions in the prefectures. If the aspirant wants a higher position he must come to the Capital and pass his examination there. He can study where he likes, but the examinations are made in the name of the Government, and the examiners are appointed by the Government, be it for the literary examination or for the military examinations.

Once a year, all the students assemble, in small or big bands, and as they are so to say convoked in the name of the King, their insolence knows no limits and without impunity they commit all sorts of excesses and treat the hotel keepers like conquerors and their passage is feared by them, like those of the satellites and the mandarins. When they reach the Capital, they disperse to find lodgings.

When the examination day arrives, they instal themselves in the building designated for that purpose, composed of many small rooms and very badly constructed. A terrible confusion results, and during the night, when several thousand of these young fellows are assembled, the noise can be imagined, while they eat, drink, smoke and swear.

The examination finished, those who have obtained their degree, clad in their new uniform, horseback, accompanied by a musical band, they render their official visits to the principal state dignitaries, their protectors and professors. These ceremonies when finished are succeeded by another, which although not prescribed by the law, is absolutely necessary, if the incumbent wishes to be recognized, by the nobility.—He, accompanied by a friend pays a visit to one of his relatives or protectors, salutes him and sits down. The host then smears ink all over his face and then covers him with flour, all the other visitors do the same, and after he is washed and cleaned the same operation is repeated a dozen times. During all this time everybody eats and drinks at the expense of the victim and it is only after this farce, that he can take his position in Society and assume his literary title.

The different grades which are obtained at these examinations, are:

Tcho-si, tsin-sa and keup-tchiei, which are comparable with the title of bachelor of science, doctor's degree. The examination is either oral or in writing, a composition to certain questions. The diplomas are issued in the name of the King, the tsin-sa on white paper and the Keup-tchiei on red ornamented paper.

The tsin-sa, according to law and custom, are intended to fill administrative charges in the Provinces. After their promotion, they are made mandarins, or guardians of the royal tombs etc., but they never reach any of the higher dignities.

The keup-tchiei are attached to the state offices and they are gradually promoted and fill positions in the palace or administrative functions in the Capital. They are often sent as Governors to the Provinces or as Mandarins to the big cities but only temporarily. Their place is in the Capital, in the Ministries, and near the King.

The military examinations are different from the literary ones. The sons of the nobility do not present themselves at all at the examinations and they find means to obtain their Diplomas without them. Poor noblemen or sons of the people are the only pretenders. They have to pass through military exercises and some literary composition.—They very seldom attain any high positions, which are reserved for the nobility.



The public examinations have become a farce and the diplomas are given to those who pay for them and not to those who are learned and capable. The King Ken-tsung sold publicly, literary grades and positions and since then the Ministers traffic in them. The result is that nobody studies any more and many of the Mandarins do not know how to read or write the Chinese which is the official language, and the learned people are completely discouraged.

Those who do study make it an object to know something about the arts and sciences, but these are not so much honored as the literary and the philosophic studies. There are some families in Korea who were in the Kings and the Ministers service and enjoyed certain privileges and were treated with great respect. They were the literati of the court and are to this day the students and wise men of Korea. They occupy an intermediate position between the nobility and the ordinary people—they intermarry between themselves and their employment passes from generation to generation to their descendants. They are exempt from military service, and are entitled to wear the nobleman's headgear; and these treat them on a footing of equality. After a certain examination they are appointed as interpreters, doctors, astronomers etc., etc., and they remain in these positions during their life-time.

Before they receive their degrees, they must furnish proofs of their descent, like the nobility, and their appointment is decided by one of the Ministers, assisted by two other dignitaries and they have the right to compete at the public examinations, civil or military, and if they succeed, they can become mandarins up to the degree of mok-sa and pou-sa, but not higher. The majority of the Piel-tsang (small military mandarins or sub-lieutenants), Tsiem-sa (sub-maritime prefect) and Pi-tsiang (Secretaries of governors and other high mandarins) belong to this middle class.

The functions which are exercised by the members of this class are divided into eight classes.

1°) The interpreters. This is the most desired employment. Their studies are confined to the acquisition of four languages. Chinese (Tsieng-hak), Manchu (Hon-hak), Mongol (Mong-hak) and Japanese (Oai-hak); and when the diploma is issued for one of these languages they can't present themselves to obtain the diploma for another language. There were always a certain number of interpreters with the Chinese Embassy. At one time an interpreter occupied the post of Ambassador to Japan.

2°) The Koan-sang-kam or the School of Sciences, which was subdivided in three branches; where are taught astronomy, geology (ancient magic), and the art to choose a favorable day. This school is for the exclusive use of the King's subalterns.

3d) L'Ei-sa or Medical School. Here are two subdivisions, according as to whether the students are intended for the service in the palace or for the service of the public. But the doctors who have graduated in either of them are admitted to the palace and promoted to official positions.

4°) The Sa-tsa-koan or School of Charts, where the students are employed with the conservation of the archives and with the preparation of the official reports which the Government sends to Peking.

5) The To-hoa-se or School of Drawing, for making maps and plans, and especially the portraits of the Kings.

6) The Nioul-hak or Law-school. This establishment is annexed to the Criminal Court. Here the penal code is studied and the employés indicate to the Judges the exact punishments which the law dictates in each case, in accordance with the proceedings in court.

7) The Kiei-sa or School of Mathematics, where the employés of the finance department are drawn from. Besides the ordinary accounts of receipts and outlays, they are presumed to make up the costs of all the public works and even to supervise their execution.

8) The Hem-nou-koan or School of Clocks. It is here that the Directors and overseers of the Government clocks are brought up, these were the only ones existing in Korea. This is an hydraulic machine which measures the time, by letting fall drops of water at equal intervals into a receptacle moving a mechanism indicating the time. The palace musicians are also included in this category, but they are counted a degree lower to the above eight grades.



## Korean Social Customs.

Different Classes,—The Nobility,—The People,—Slaves.

Five centuries ago when the present Dynasty came into power, the military coterie had disappeared and the King found no party strong enough to oppose him and he introduced civic rule. The King is called the Ingum and there were at that time only two classes in society, namely the nobility and the slaves.

Korea had its happiest days during the first two centuries of the present Dynasty. In the middle of the 16th. Century various political parties contended for supremacy and conditions arose which are described in this chapter.

The nobility consisted of the partisans of the founder of the Dynasty, of those who helped him to ascend the throne, and who as a reward obtained riches, honors and the exclusive right to possess dignities and to fulfil public functions. The masses of the population were slaves and the common people went down in the social scale while the nobleman or Yang-ban went up.

The descendants of the first nobles and those of other persons which at different periods rendered services to the King, constitute the present aristocracy. In course of time and by gradual evolution it happened that slaves acquired their liberty and formed the class of free laborers, soldiers, merchants, artisans etc., etc., so that today there are three classes in Korea; the nobles, the free people and the slaves, but the last exist only in very small numbers today.

The nobility is hereditary, and as positions and dignities are the exclusive patrimony of the nobleman, each family preserved with jealous care its genealogical tables and records and a complete list of all its living members, and they maintained amicable relations in each family and with the principal representative of their clan, so as to get support and protection when required.

During centuries the law recognized only the legitimate descendants of a nobleman, and the only exception were the bastards of the King, who were treated as nobles. As the illegitimate children of the nobility became

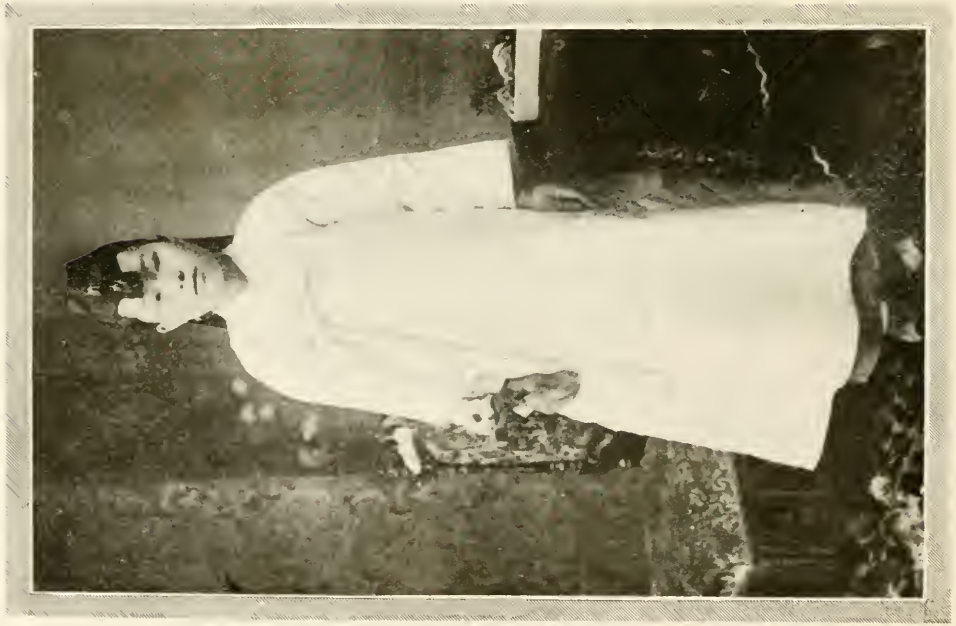


Washing gold bearing gravel



A Korean Orchestra





A Giesang or dancing girl



Women nursing babies wear a short waist exposing the breasts.



very numerous and strong, they usurped the privileges of the true nobility. In 1857 a royal decree annulled the last barriers which separated them from the legitimate children and opened to them the avenues which lead to high dignities and positions. Nevertheless the ancient aristocracy has still a strong prejudice against these parvenues, although outwardly this is not shown.

The decline of the morals was not the only cause of this important social revolution in the customs of the aristocracy. The violent struggles of the various political parties and consequently the great advantage for the high placed families to have a numerous following has contributed toward the emancipation of the bastards, and as these men were ordinarily turbulent and audacious they lent their assistance in times of revolutions and disturbance. Although not recognized legitimately they belonged to the family, enjoyed their protection and if they got into a scrape the father had to intervene with the Judge.

The noblemen have many privileges, they are not inscribed on the military list, their persons are inviolable as well as their houses and they wear the nobleman's bonnet. There are several degrees of nobility. The family of those who have rendered signal services or have done an act of great devotion to the King or have the reputation of great scientific knowledge, have more influence than others and obtain higher positions at court. The Korean nobleman's ambition is to gain a place where he might get revenge upon his enemies and then confiscate their wealth.

Princes of blood, their descendents, by reason of belonging to the royal family have honorary, fastidious titles, but no important political positions. The Kings of Korea, like most absolute Kings are very jealous of their authority and are very suspicious of plots and therefore no relative has the least participation in State affairs. The same rule applies to the relatives of the Queen. The first wife of the King is chosen from one of the best families in the land and her father and brothers obtain high dignities, are well paid, but they get no functions which gives them any real authority and they have no influence at court.

The title of the nobleman can be lost for many reasons. When a nobleman is convicted for conspiracy or treason to his Majesty, his parents, children and all members of the family are degraded, they are deprived of positions, titles and put back in the ranks of the common people. When a nobleman marries a widow or a slave, his descendants lose all privileges. When he is dismissed from an office for some offence, his titles are annulled and he loses his rank.

There are times when the patience of the people becomes exhausted through the oppression and the exactions of some of the high officials and when the limits of the people's endurance is reached, and they take the bit between their teeth—a popular riot is the result. The Governor or Yang-bam is removed from his post by this uprising and even the King has not the power to reinstate such an official, as there is a sort of unwritten law that such a person is not fit to rule the people any more.

The Korean aristocracy was the proudest and the most powerful. In other countries, the Sovereign, the magistrates, the different corporations, are forces which keep the nobility in check and counterbalance their power. In Korea, the nobility was so numerous, and in spite of their intestinal troubles, they knew when to hold together so as to maintain and enlarge their power, that neither the people, the mandarins, nor the King himself can combat their authority. A nobleman of high rank, who is supported by a number of powerful families, can have the Ministers dismissed and even defy the King in his own Palace. The Governor or mandarin who would dare to punish a high placed nobleman would run a good chance of being immediately dismissed.

The nobleman acts everywhere and in every thing as master and tyrant. When he is in need of money he sends his servants to seize one of the merchants. If the same forks out the money demanded he lets him go, if he demurs he is put into prison, starved and whipped till he shells out what is asked of him. The more honest and conscientious nobles hide their thefts by borrowing voluntary loans which they never repay, or they buy landed property which is never paid for.

According to law and custom, the greatest respect is shown to the nobleman, let him be rich or poor, learned or ignorant. Nobody dare touch his person, his house is sacred, to enter his courtyard is a crime, except by women who have permission to enter anywhere. A commoner on horseback must dismount when passing a nobleman's house. When he travels, all the country inns are open to him, nobody dare smoke before him and he is entitled to the best room.

When a commoner meets him on the route he must dismount and if he does not do it voluntarily, the nobleman's servants drag him from his horse. His horse is always conducted by a servant and several retainers follow on foot, he never trots or gallops his horse.

The nobles are very punctilious in regard to their prerogatives and they resent the least omission of respect due to them and it is no wonder that the people are afraid of them and nourish a silent hatred against them.

The Nobility has become so numerous that many of them are destitute and live by pillage and robbery as they are too proud to work and earn an honest living. When a nobleman gets lucrative employment, he is obliged to maintain his parents and relatives, even the distant ones. The public positions are for the Korean nobility the only honorable career and the only means of gaining a livelihood and one can easily imagine the crowd of flatterers, parasites, petitioners and candidates filling the antichambers of the ministers and the other high dignitaries from whom these positions depend. These aspirants are known as Mounkaiks. *"In China every town has numerous mandarins without positions, and they are called Expectant Taotais."*

Public offices were bought and sold like other chattels; and positions are bought from a 1000 dollars upwards to any sum and the purchaser had to recoup himself by the taxes which he collected from the poor people and he kept up the fleecing game till he was dismissed, driven away, or perhaps killed.

In the Provinces the administration is really in the hands of the lower class of officials commonly called Ajuns or satellites and they are a hereditary class and act as advisors to the Governors, and each Province is in miniature a counter part of the Central Government. The Governor is the King of the Province and the Ajuns are his ministers and he is confined in his choice to the Ajuns who surround him. They belong to local families and through them Korea as a political body has been held together for Centuries. *"One often wonders how China has been held together, but when one gets to know the organization of the country and the patriarchal system, by which each hamlet or village constitutes a small Republic with its village elders as headmen, a better understanding is arrived at how these hundreds of millions of people have been kept together under the sway of the Central Government of Peking."* The Ajun or satellite has his home and his family in a fixed district where he must make his living and he must keep in the good graces of the community and he must check the oppression and exactions of the rapacious Governor and at the same time keep in his good graces, while he is protecting his community—and in this way he acts as a buffer between the people and the Governor.

Beside the legitimate nobility there are the Nobles by adoption. There are rich individuals who buy their title of nobility, not from the King or his ministers, but from some powerful family. They are inscribed in the genealogic register of these families as being the descendent of Mr. So and So, and then every member of the family recognizes him as a parent before the public and the Government. This practice is contrary to the laws, but has become a custom and is tolerated by the King and his ministers.

In Korea like elsewhere the title of nobility is usurped by adventurers especially in distant Provinces where they assume all the insolence of the real aristocrats. When the frauds are discovered they are taken to the nearest prefecture and a good caning is administered to them, but if they have talent, ability and especially money, the mandarins close their eyes and they generally escape punishment.

The number of slaves is gradually diminishing and they are only met with in the larger cities living with the noble families. Slaves are those who are born from a slave mother or those who sell themselves or are sold by their parents, or abandoned children who are brought up in some family; but in this last case, the slavery is personal and such children are considered free born. Slavery is very mild in Korea and only young people are kept to perform household duties.

When they become of an age to get married, the master gives them permission to leave and they have to pay him an annual tax. Occasionally girls marry and remain with the master as servants. Her children remain as slaves with the master.

Theoretically the master has the right of life and death over his slaves, but he is responsible to the tribunals if he causes them bodily injury. The slaves are generally better off than the poor people in the villages and many poor people ask the nobleman to take them into slavery, which protects them against misery and the abuse of the mandarins. Many of the slaves are just kept because it is an old custom and they would be the sufferers if they were thrown on their own resources.

The Government formerly also owned slaves and they were attached as servants to the many administrative buildings. This sort of slavery was especially hard on women, as they were treated like animals and they were at the mercy of every body.

To be condemned to Government servitude for some crime was worse than death for an honest woman.

### The Korean Language

All the examinations are made in the Korean Language. In the eight government schools only Chinese literature and science is studied, and the national language is neglected. The history of the country explains that for over 2 Centuries, the country was a federal state of China and during that time Chinese became the official language and also of Korean Society. All the



Government employés had to write their reports in Chinese. The annals of the Kings, all the proclamations, the Edicts of the mandarins, the judgements of the tribunals, the scientific books, the inscriptions on the monuments, all correspondence, the books and accounts of the merchants, the signs over the business premises were all in Chinese characters.

Not alone the sages and learned men, but also a large number of the ordinary people know how to write and read the Chinese characters. It is taught in the families, in schools, especially to the children of the nobility, and this is, so to say, their only study. No Korean dictionary is in existence,\* and to know the sense of a Korean word, one must find it out orally by inquiry. In China, the alphabet for the children's schools is printed in large characters, like our A. B. C. Very often, first the Tchouen-ly or the book of a thousand characters is studied, which dates from the emperors Tsin and Han. The same book is used in Korea, only under each Chinese character is found to the right the Korean pronunciation, and to the left the corresponding Korean word.

The manner in which the Koreans pronounce the Chinese is so different, that it really forms another language.

*"It is well known that in China, the inhabitants of the different provinces speak a different language, so that the Cantonese does not understand the Northern Chinese and the Eastern does not understand the Western. The written characters are the same and have the same sense for all. Therefore there is no need to be astonished that the Korean Chinese is not understood by the inhabitants of the celestial Empire and that the two people can only converse with one another by writing or making signs on the palm of their hands."*

*"The better and higher class Chinese in China speak what is called Mandarin Chinese and this is the official language of the upper classes and is in use over the whole Empire."*

The question has often been asked if the Koreans had a literature of their own before the Chinese conquest and what this literature was. It is very difficult to answer this question as all the old books and records have disappeared.

Children learn to read Korean, without knowing that they are in reality learning Chinese. Women and poor people who have not the time to learn the Chinese characters study only the Korean characters, which they make use of in their correspondence and in keeping their accounts. All the books

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\* Of late the foreign missionaries have prepared Korean dictionaries.



printed by the Missionaries and which are of a religious character are in Korean characters and by these means all the Christian converts have learned to read and write their language in alphabetic letters, which children learn rapidly.

*"The Japanese also use Chinese characters, but they have devised an alphabet which is called Kata Kana and a similar one exists in Korea and which is reproduced here."*

like a = ㅏ	io = ㅗ	i = ㅣ	z = ㅈ	s, t = ㅅ	kh = ㅋ
., ia = ㅑ	ou = ㅜ	à = ㅛ	z, r = ㅊ	ng = ㅇ	zh = ㅊ
o, eu, e = ㅓ	iou = ㅠ	k or g = ㄱ	m or b = ㅍ	zs, zg = ㅆ	ph = ㅍ
o = ㅓ	eu = ㅡ	n = ㄴ	p or b = ㅍ	zch = ㅆ	h = ㅎ

The complete absence of Korean books, the scant attention paid by the learned men to their national language, and especially the barbaric custom to interdict foreigners access to their country under penalty of death, is the reason that the Korean language is entirely ignored by orientalists. For over a century French Missionaries have penetrated into Korea, and they are the only ones who have learnt to write and read this language; and strange to say, no sage or learned man has ever thought to get information from them on the subject.\*

Monseigneur Davelny had prepared a Chinese-Korean-French Dictionary. Mr. Pourthié had composed one in Korean, Chinese and Latin. Mr. Petitnicolas had a Latin-Korean Dictionary of 30000 words in Latin and over 100,000 Korean words. These Dictionaries, and also a grammar were finished and they were at work copying them, so as to conserve in the Mission a copy, while the original was to be sent to France to be printed there, when the persecutions of 1866 broke out these documents were burnt. *Since then Mgr. Ridel the bishop of Korea, and his confrères have taken up the work of their martyred predecessors and have prepared, with the assistance of some learned indigenous Christians a Grammar and a Dictionary of the Korean language, I think they are in print now and the Missionaries of the other denominations have also published some books, but I have not been able to procure in Seoul a Geography or a condensed history of Korea in a foreign language.*

From the studies made of the Korean language, it is evident that the same belongs to the family of languages which are usually called, scytic or tartar, from which the ancient name of Scyth or the modern name of Tartars, by which are known the peoples of Northern Asia.

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\* See Histoire de l'Eglise de Corée par Ch. Dallet, Missionnaire apostolique de la Société des Missions—Etrangères.



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