

Recent Journeys in Korea: 1883-4

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(This paper was published in *The Proceedings of The Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography* Vol. VIII, No. 5. May, 1886. pages 289 – 312, having been read at the Evening Meeting of the Society, January 25th, 1886. It has never been reprinted or published online)

Map, p. 352.

So much of the interest attaching to Korea is due to the ignorance of the country and its customs in which Europe has until quite recently remained, and to the incidents affecting those few occasions on which Westerns had been brought into contact with Koreans, that it seems desirable to refer briefly to her past history, so far as it has concerned other nations, before touching upon the present.

Of the Korean aboriginals scarcely anything is known, but there are historical records to prove that Korea was already inhabited in the twelfth century B.C., when Ki-Tze introduced from China the first elements of civilisation into the land. Both previous and subsequent to that date there had been occasional immigrations from Manchuria which have left a strong mark on the people of to-day. At the same time, though the facial characteristics of the people greatly resemble those of the Manchu, there is great variety of feature among them. Jews, Japanese, and Caucasians all seem to be represented, and that not in separate districts, but in almost every town of any size, so that foreigners on their first arrival in Korea are little troubled by the difficulty which is encountered in most other Oriental countries in distinguishing one native from another. Some faces are almost destitute of hair, like those of the Northern Chinese; others exult in rich silky whiskers and beard; others are almost hidden in a coarse tangle of hair. Among the gentry it is by no means uncommon to meet almost an English face, with round cheeks, small aquiline nose, well-cut mouth and chin. Even a bright blue eye is not unknown, and the hair is by no means invariably of a pure black.

Though it is very evident that many stocks have been drawn upon to produce the Koreans of the present day, the seclusion in which the country has remained, except during periods of invasion by China or Japan, has been marvellous. Almost the first knowledge that Europe

obtained of the country was through some Dutchmen, who in 1653 were shipwrecked on the coast, where they found their countryman Wetterree, who had already been a prisoner there for twenty-five years. After fourteen years of confinement some of them escaped to Japan and thence home to tell of their adventures.

They were not, however, absolutely the first Europeans to set foot in Korea, for the missionary G. de Cespedes had taken advantage of the Japanese invasion at the end of the sixteenth century to introduce Christianity into the land.

The seeds which he sowed were not utterly destroyed by persecution and a revival of Christianity took place in 1777, which was assisted by Chinese missionaries at different periods between then and 1835, when M. Maubant at last succeeded in entering the country, after attempts had been made for over forty years by different foreign missionaries of the Church of Rome. The footing which he gained was improved by his successors, in spite of repeated periods of persecution, until, in 1866, the only three who were left had to flee for their lives, after thousands of their converts had been put to death. How cruel the persecutions had been will appear from the fact that three out of five bishops, and nine out of sixteen missionaries, had been martyred, and the majority of those who had escaped martyrdom had succumbed under the trials that their life had entailed.

The fate of her missionaries provoked France the same summer to send an expedition to avenge their death; but the resistance which was offered led to the withdrawal of the force, and almost at the same time an American schooner which attempted, treaty or no treaty, to make an opening of trade, was burnt with her crew in the river below Phyong-yang. Once again, in 1871, an attempt was made, this time by the United States, to secure some security for shipwrecked crews in the future, as well as satisfaction for her murdered citizens; but again the resistance was such that no result was obtained, and Korea could again boast of having repulsed foreigners from her shores. In 1876 it fell to Japan to follow the examples of France and the United States; and as this time full means were taken to carry out the purpose, success attended the invaders, and at last treaty relations were established between a foreign country and Korea.

Of the half-religious, half-sacrilegious attempt which had intervened and been defeated, to the satisfaction of all foreigners except the missionary and adventurers concerned, I will not now speak; nor is it necessary to recall the events of the last few years, which have seen the Japanese Legation twice burnt to the ground, and in spite of these fits of anti-Japanese hostility, have led to treaties with the United States,

Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia, granting security for life and property to all foreigners in Korea.

The geography of the country is very simple. With a population of about 8,000,000 and an area of about 90,000 square miles, or very closely the same as that of Great Britain and Wales, Korea extends south from Manchuria in one large promontory, from the base formed by the rivers Amnok (Yalu) and Tuman. It is divided into eight provinces, or "Do" the names of which are taken from their two chief cities, e. g. Phyong-an is formed from the first syllables of Phyong-yang and An-ju; Chhung-chhong from Chhung-ju and Chhong-ju; Chol-la, by a euphonic change, from Chon-ju and Na-ju. Mountainous in the north, it is hilly in the south. At the extreme north lies Paik-to-san, the great mountain on which are the sources of the two rivers which form the northern boundary. With it are connected many myths and legends regarding the prehistoric times of the country. From it extends a range of mountains running north and south, which generally follows the line of the eastern coast at no great distance from its waters. This conformation has had considerable effect upon the country. The more extended slopes of the west are comparatively favourable for agriculture, while the slip which lies between the Japan Sea and the mountains is not only narrow but cut off from communication with the west by the precipitous character of the mountains on their eastern face. In the south, where the range trends inland, and the conditions no longer remain the same, Kyong-sang is one of the richest provinces in the kingdom.

A circumstance which tells against the prosperity of the east is the absence of rivers of any importance, and the scarcity of islands and harbours to afford protection to shipping. The value of such harbours as do exist is out of all proportion to their trading facilities, in consequence of their remaining open throughout the winter; and it is to this fact, and to the contrary being the case on the Russian coast of the Pacific, and on the shores of the Yellow Sea, that the importance of Port Lazaref is due. The rise and fall of tide along this coast is very slight; at Gensan only two feet, but from the south to the west its force rapidly increases, and at Chemulpo attains to a rise and fall of 38 feet. Whether due to this cause or not, along these shores are numberless islands, many of them so little detached from the mainland, as to have been frequently confused with it by navigators. The indistinctness of outline of the coast is further enhanced by the mud banks which extend far beyond the reach of sight out to sea. Their presence has sadly diminished the usefulness of the rivers for navigation. So greatly is this the case, that the native craft which come down the Nak-tong are said to have to tranship their cargo to other vessels for

conveyance to Fusan, on account of the shallows at the mouth of the river; on the other hand, along the west coast, the great extent covered by the delta of the rivers, has to a large measure done away with the bars which might have been expected from the violence of the tide and the volume of the streams. The rapid rise and fall of the tide and the vast area which twice a day is left bare by the receding tides, are the causes of frequent fogs which often are driven inland.

Of the rivers, the Mok-pho, the Keum, the Han, and the Tai-dong, though all alike important, give way before the Am-nok, which is by far the grandest river of Korea. Flowing through lovely mountain scenery, it has so many affluents that in summer its waters rise full 40 feet, even where its width is a mile or more. In the time of its highest floods, the rafts of timber are launched which have been awaiting water-carriage in the mountains.

Lying mainly between the 35th and 40th parallels, the climate of Korea is greatly tempered during the summer by the sea breezes, which render outdoor exercise quite possible, even when the thermometer stands at 100°. Such rain as falls is almost confined to June-September, and during the rest of the year the sky is bright and clear. In the winter, the cold even at Soul is very severe, and the river Han, though 400 yards broad, is frozen for three months sufficiently hard to admit of cart traffic. The chief products of Korea are rice, wheat, beans, cotton, hemp, maize, millets, and tobacco. The cultivation of rice is facilitated by the water-supply of the numerous valleys, which are barred across by bank after bank of mud from the head of the valley down to the sea. Fond as the Koreans are of society, they never seem happier than when in the early summer, gangs of men stamp in the rice roots, keeping time and line with their leader. With feet high poised, they wait the next note of the chant, whose echoes will soon be sung back to them from the hills, or returned to them from other gangs working in the distance. Studiously decent, even at such work they do not lay aside their clothes; and women who help their husbands in planting and weeding the rice fields, are reproached by their betters for their impropriety in tucking up their trousers to the knee.

Field after field of rice between low-lying hills, which in winter are scratched bare of tree and grass, present a monotonous prospect, which, as I have heard it described in Chol-la Do, must be wearisome in the extreme; but in the northern provinces, with which I am familiar, there is never any lack of beauty, and in the spring there is an exquisite variety of flowers and grasses wherever the ground has been left untouched by the plough. Even in the more thickly populated neighbourhood of Soul, many groves of trees are spared out of respect for the tombs which they shelter,

and the rounded outlines of hills of disintegrated granite are grandly broken by peaks of rock, which tower up, free from shrub or grass, 300 to 400 feet above their fellows.

Further north the character of the country gradually changes, until rice-fields are forgotten and give way to oats and potatoes, hemmed in between mountains whose sides are one dense thicket, except where clearings have been cut or burnt, and lack of terracing has brought down streams of detritus at the first summer storm. So wasteful has been the system of wood-cutting, that along the main routes it is only occasionally that glimpses are seen of the beautiful woods which lie back from the roads. Trees, brambles, and weeds, all give way before the pressing need of fuel in the winter, and the result would be dreary indeed if the dead did not protect their groves.

There is much in the general features of the country to remind the traveller of the north of Scotland. Of this great part is due to the geological formation, which is mainly of primary rocks. In Hwang-hai Do are mesozoic rocks, but granite and metamorphic rocks hold the larger part of the country for their own. On the road between Soul and Gensan are oval fields of lava, one of which I suppose to be 40 miles long, and lava and volcanic rocks are found in the north near Wi-won and Chhu-san. These fields of lava are generally surrounded for some distance on either side by conical peaks, showing that the area of disturbance must have been very wide. In Northern Korea it is seldom that the mountains open out wide enough to give an extended view, but from the centre of these lava-fields the panorama is very striking. Far away in the distance stretch range after range of mountains, while, for some miles round the spot on which one stands, the plain is so smooth and unbroken, that the eye is unable to tell in which direction the ground rises, though the slope over which the lava has flowed is in reality greater than that of a swift-flowing river. Where the lava-field meets the mountains a great chasm has been worn by the torrents. So deep are these encircling ravines, and so high is the table-land of lava, that the mountains seem to have been shorn of their bases, or else to have dropped through 100 feet and more of the earth's crust.

To describe a journey through Korea without first attempting to describe Soul would be vain, but the feat is no easy one. The city lies in a basin about three miles in diameter, the sides of which are cut down at the east and west, and rise 800 feet high to the north and south. Like Chinese cities, Soul has its battlemented walls of stone, and heavy gateways of woodwork and tile, studded with portholes, behind which cannon are supposed to be planted. But inside the walls the resemblance does not last.

The first impression is that there are no houses, but only huts thatched with straw. From the broad main streets it is easy to look over the roofs of the whole city to the beautiful hills, clad with fir, which lie at its back and foot. Ten feet from the ground there is hardly an object to break the view, until the narrow tortuous lanes are entered, alongside which most of the better class of houses are built. They, too, are low, and from the outside show no sign of comfort, for the servants' quarters are ranged along the lane, and the better buildings are hidden from view. Sometimes through an open doorway a glimpse is caught of a pavilion of unpainted wood, raised two or three feet from the ground, with windows and doors of trellis-work filled in with white paper. The eaves project far over the sides, and perhaps in the east is a little balcony running under their shelter. The courtyard is swept clean, and the neatness of the wood and paper is enhanced by the shining whiteness of the servants' clothes. Men are standing in the doorway in robes which reach almost to the feet. On their heads are conical hats of bamboo, split into little shreds and woven together so fine as to give free current to wind or rain. Every man has in his hand or mouth a pipe with a stem 3 feet long, fit to serve as an Englishman's walking-cane. On their feet are socks of cotton cloth and light straw sandals. Loose trousers, falling in a bag from hip to knee, are neatly bound round the ankle over the socks.

The quiet and cleanliness of this scene is widely at variance with what obtains in the streets. There bulls hidden under ponderous loads of brushwood block up the road; scores of tiny ponies canter along, with grinning urchins seated sideways on the empty packs; stalls of nuts, salt fish, turnips, chestnuts, brassware, pipes, pipe-stems, and all sorts of miscellaneous odds and ends, are planted at every corner and on either side of the road; and hundreds of foot passengers are making their way to and fro.

Hats of every kind and shape, except what one had previously conceived to be possible, are seen in every direction. There are black conical hats woven of split bamboo or horsehair, sometimes with wings projecting in front of the ears; white conical hats of wickerwork; Japanese parasols, of which children are the sticks; basket hats coming down to the ears; hats of straw-matting reaching to the shoulders; felt hats with broad brim and round crown, surmounted by a tassel or a bunch of plush; four-sided brimless hats of pasteboard; and, strangest of all, on top of the high conical hats is popped a little bee-hive covering of oil-paper, to protect them from the rain.

The women, of whom few are seen during the daytime, wear no hats at all. Their head-covering is a green mantle drawn over the head,

leaving only eyes and nose exposed; if they are slaves their heads are bare, or perhaps girt round with coils of hair inches thick, which make a fine stand for such things as they are carrying. Their petticoats are worn very full at the hip over baggy trousers, and this fashion and the manner in which the mantle is held with both hands under the chin, give them an ungainly gait, though when without their mantles they carry themselves well. Their jackets are very short, and, unless the petticoat is pulled up round their bodies, the breast is left bare, but their bearing is far modester than their dress.

It is only, however, of the poorer class of women that I am able to speak at all, for the others do not venture out until after nightfall when the men have to keep to their houses.

Spectre-like figures stalk through the streets in mourning robes of coarse hempen cloth gathered round the waist with a cord. A deep basket hat reaching to the shoulders, and a small screen of cloth held on two sticks before their mouth, completely secure them from recognition, and the dress was accordingly adopted by the Roman Catholic missionaries, to whom disguise was: absolutely necessary.

In striking contrast to their garb are the bright colours worn by the officials. Of the dresses worn by them, or their retainers, the gayest is of scarlet sleeves, yellow shoulder-pieces, and a bright blue body and skirt, but the court dress is comparatively sober, being generally of a dark puce colour, unrelieved by brighter colours. Sometimes a throat-lash of large red and yellow beads secures their hats. Of them some perched on high saddles clutch firmly to the peak, while their servants hold the reins and clear a way for their masters. Others are borne swiftly along the streets in covered chairs, so small as to render legs an inconvenience. Others are carried in arm-chairs over the backs of which are thrown tiger- or leopard-skins. Higher dignitaries still enjoy the privilege of riding on a monocycle, which is half carried, half pushed along the road.

While in the streets all is bustle and confusion, in most of the shops there is but little stir. The shopkeepers keep at the back of their premises, smoking a pipe while squatted on the ground, unless some particularly troublesome customer requires something which is out of their reach.

All visitors to Soul are greatly struck by the beautiful whiteness of the clothes in a city where drains are unknown, and the foul mass of decomposing matter lying on either side of the street is never cleared away except by a storm of rain, and then only to be carried to the streams, which flow through the town, and serve as washing grounds for the linen of the households.

Near the junction of the two main streets are shops of two stories, built of stone, behind which are little courtyards lined with tiny stalls like those in a street of old Cairo. Their occupants hold these buildings from the king, and in partial discharge of their duties to H.M., are bound to render onerous duties of attendance on the occasion of royal marriages, funerals, and the like. How onerous these duties are may be guessed from the fact that a royal funeral is regarded as almost as great a calamity to the whole country as a famine; from the heavy corvée imposed upon the nation.

The only buildings of any importance in the capital are the palaces, which are approached by wide streets leading to high gateways built in the Chinese style. The western palace is especially fortunate in the latter respect, as the street which leads to it is 700 yards long by 100 yards wide, and is flanked by the larger public offices. The main buildings in the interior are two large halls, built in the Chinese style, and a summer pavilion about 40 yards square, raised some 12 feet from the ground, on obelisks and pillars of stone, standing some 16 feet apart. A large pool of water at its side, planted with lotuses, feeds a moat, across which light bridges of marble are thrown. Numerous courtyards, shut in by walls, contain the private rooms of the king and his family while his suite and servants are quartered in buildings which flank the great squares in which the halls of state are situated. Among the ruins of a part of the palace, which was burnt down a few years since, stand a number of strange-looking chimneys which rise out of the ground uninjured and scarcely blackened. These owe their existence to the custom of building the chimney at some little distance from the house. The plan is rendered possible, as the heating of the rooms is effected by a chamber underneath the floor, at one side of which is the receptacle for fuel and on the other, either an orifice by which the smoke escapes, or a flue to conduct it through the courtyard to the chimney.

This is not the only peculiarity of Korean domestic architecture. Another is the division of a house into winter and summer rooms. The latter are at the ends of the building, and are raised above the ground on corner stones which permit the air to circulate freely beneath the wooden floor.

The interior arrangements are like those of a Japanese house; doors and windows consisting of a light wooden framework, strongly papered on either side, which slides easily in grooves. The windows, which also serve as doors, are generally double, the outer one consisting of two battants opening outwards, and fastened back against the wall during the daytime.

The woodwork of the houses is very curious. It is on it that the whole house depends; but though the weight of the roof is very great, owing to the nature of the tiles employed, nearly a third of the value of the massive beams which support it is destroyed by their ends being pared away to fit them into sockets cut on the top of the upright wooden pillars. The brick or stone work between the pillars serves only to fill in the interspaces, and bears hardly any of the weight of the roof, which is often put on before the walls are built.

Another peculiarity about the structure of the houses is that owing to the scarcity and high price of lime, the stones, of which the outer walls are built, are tied together with millet stalks, before the interstices are filled in with mud.

Of the mud cabins in which the poor people live, all that can be said in their praise, is that they are warm and generally have clean floors. The dimensions of the best rooms often do not exceed 8 feet by 6 feet, and the height is generally about 5 feet. The doors are 3 feet 8 inches by 22 inches, and the windows 2 feet by 18 inches. In such quarters as these I have often had to sleep with two companions, and we were blest, compared to the ordinary travellers, of whom I have seen seventeen sleeping in a room so small that heads and feet overlapped, and the floor was positively carpeted with bodies.

The longest journey that I made in Korea was in the autumn of 1884, when, starting from Soul, I followed the main road to China as far as Wi-ju, and thence continued along the north frontier to Wi-won. At Wi-won I left the Amnok-gang, whose valley had been pursued by the road so far, and crossed by Kang-ge over a high mountain range to Chang-jin. From Changjin the track followed the Sam-su river almost up to its source, and then by a sudden descent dropped into the level country near Ham-heung, and so past Yong-heung to Gensan. From Gensan to Soul I took the ordinary route, which crosses the mountains at Ko-san, and continues almost due south past Boi-yang and Kim-hwa to the capital. The distance covered was about 1000 miles and the time occupied forty-three days.

The road from Soul to Wi-ju is that which has for centuries been taken by missions from and to Peking, and along its course the Koreans have fought many bloody battles against the invading armies of China and Japan. It is eminently the high road of commerce north of Soul, as every track to the west of the mountains converges on this line, and Kai-song, Phyong-yang, and Wi-ju are three of the most important cities in the country after Soul. It was therefore with eager expectation of discovering some opening for British trade that I undertook the journey, and the disappointment was very bitter.

From Soul to Kai-song the road passes across numerous valleys at the foot of low hills of disintegrated granite. These as a rule have been robbed by fuel seekers of all grass and undergrowth, and give a white or reddish background to the villages at their feet. On the hill-sides are numerous tombs, planted on greenswards, surrounded by a horse-shoe bank of earth and protected by groves of fir. Two or three roughly carved figures in stone and a rude gateway formed of a stone slab laid across two pillars are sometimes placed before the grave, but more usually the mound stands without any mark to identify it.

The Sam-keuk-san, or Three-horned Mountains, lie to the east, capped by sharp peaks of rock, on whose face is neither grass nor lichen. At their feet lies the hill-town, or city of refuge, guarded by priest-soldiers, whose wall is seen vainly attempting to reach the highest summit. Within its enclosure are granaries and temples, standing by the banks of streams, which flow through a beautiful park, whose glow of autumn maple is considered by Koreans to rival the spring beauties of the azalea-banks in the other hill-town which Soul possesses at Kwang-ju.

These hill-towns are found all over Korea, and are intended for the protection of the people of the cities in case of invasion or rebellion. Another relic of times of trouble remains in the beacons, which send their message every evening from all parts of the provinces to the capital, to certify that no enemy is off the coast and that all is quiet through the land.

A few miles beyond Pha-jun lies the Im-jingang, a river 300 to 400 yards wide and with 25 feet depth of water. It is, however, like many of the rivers on this coast, at present only navigable for a short distance, on account of sand-banks.

Chang-dan is the only place besides Pha-ju of any importance on the road to Kai-song, but villages of thirty to forty cabins are passed every four or five miles, and numerous dwellings nestle in dells and sheltered ground at the foot of the hill. Hidden behind a fence of wattle, they have little that is picturesque about them except the great gourds, whose weight threatens to cave in the roof on which they rest.

Kai-song is a place of great importance, in Korea, not only on account of its past greatness as the capital of the last dynasty, but as the site at which the cultivated ginseng is grown and prepared for the market. Of this root about 100,000 lbs. are exported annually, and the fees and duties upon it, which constitute the main source of the Korean revenues, amount to about 450,000 dollars. Even with all the restrictions that are placed upon its cultivation it is estimated that little more than a fourth of the export is through legitimate channels. That smuggling should be carried on to a large extent is no marvel, seeing that the duties on each

catty of prepared ginseng amount to over 12 dollars.

The ginseng gardens are chiefly in the valley to the south of Kai-song, and are protected by high fences against robbers. The plants, which require four years to arrive at maturity, are grown under screens to shelter them from the sun, and need constant attention and frequent transplanting.

The cultivated root commands, however, a far lower price than that of the wild plant, which grows in the Kang-ge mountains. So difficult is it to find this that the people credit it with magic properties, and assert that only men of a pure life can see it.

Much harm is undoubtedly done throughout Korea to honest labour by the rich rewards which await the lucky in other lines; and time which would be well spent in the fields is constantly wasted in the search for wild ginseng, deer horns, and gold dust.

The population of Kai-song is somewhat over 30,000, but its trade is insignificant, the chief native products consisting of coarse pottery, fine matting, and oil-paper. The crops are of rice, wheat, beans, maize, millet, cotton, sesamum, perilla, tobacco, chilies, cabbage, and potatoes.

Between Kai-song and Hwang-ju the geological formation is different to what I have seen elsewhere in Korea, embracing limestone, gravel, pudding-stone, and, as I fancied, occasional fields of loess. The land is more open and better suited for cultivation, and the woods that are left are more varied in character than is the case between Kai-song and Seoul. It is also said to be one of the best shooting grounds for pheasants in Korea.

It is to the coast of this province (Hwang-hai Do) that great fleets of herring-boats cross over from China. The fishermen are allowed to dry their catch on the shore, but no intercourse is permitted between them and the natives.

One of the most beautiful of the woods on this road lies on the descent towards Hwang-ju, from the hills behind Pongsan. Dark firs, mixed with oak and alder, are relieved by the bright tints of the maples, the crimson-leaved rhus (*R. semipinnata*), and the coral-coloured berries of euonymus. Delicate lime-trees and brown-tinted hornbeams are closely shrouded in veils of clematis, while silver-tinted bushes of elaeagnus and bunches of mistletoe increase the variety of foliage. Here and there are fine ash-trees, and most beautiful of all for its growth is the *Acanthopanax ricinifolia* which grows 40 feet high and spreads out its branches, apparently quite unhindered by the thick growth around it.

Hwang-ju, which stands 13 miles from the sea, is only important as the residence of the general in command of the troops of Hwang-hai Do. Like all Korean towns, it is beautifully situated. At its back, stands a hill

which is partially wooded, and along the crest of which runs the city wall. At its foot is the river which flows close to one of the gates, and the official buildings are all collected on ground which overlooks the city and commands a view of the plain beyond.

From An-ju to Phyong-yang, the country was remarkable for the richness of its soil. Almost the whole length of the road (100 li) ran through a plain, marking probably the ancient mouth of the Tai-dong river. The villages were hidden in little hollows sheltered from the wind, and beyond the plain stretched what appeared to be a great amphitheatre of mountains embracing the cultivated land.

For about two miles, before reaching Phyong-yang the road was lined with *seun-tjeung-pi*, the slabs which are erected to officials by the people in recognition of their merits. These slabs were of stone or iron, and in many cases were housed-in. Groves of sophora lined the river, interspersed with gleditschia, whose long pods hung waiting for the day when some Ning-po man will teach Koreans how to make soap, and how to use it. It is to be hoped that the slab to his honour will not be the smallest on the road.

Of Phyong-yang it is difficult to speak briefly. It is by far the most interesting and perhaps the most beautifully situated town that I have seen in Korea. What Shakespeare is to Stratford, and King Alfred was to England, Ki-tze was to Korea and is to Phyong-yang. Though he lived 3000 years ago, his memory is fresh in the name or every part of the city. His grave is kept in good repair, his portrait hangs in a shrine dedicated to his memory, and the standard of land measurement which he introduced is marked out by the same roads and dykes that he traced out.

If there are some who will question the genuineness of these relics they will at any rate not deny the events of more ancient history of which Phyong-yang has been the scene. Fierce have been the battles raged under its walls, and it might have remained in Japanese hands until this day, had not the god of war shown himself with his battalions and driven the foreigners away. A beautiful temple has lately been erected to his honour, here, as in other parts of the country; and the siege of the city is portrayed in frescoes, in a hall where hang the portraits of the generals of the allied Korean and Chinese forces.

The interest of the city has not died out in later years, for it was in sight of her walls that the *Gen. Sherman* was burnt with all on board, leaving their fate a mystery for many years.

Phyong-yang has a population of over 20,000, and is the only city which impressed me favourably regarding capabilities of trade. It is only 36 miles from the sea, to which it has access by the Tai-dong river.

The visit of the *Gen. Sherman* seems to settle the question of its navigability up to the city by light vessels; and higher up there are two streams by which produce can be brought down from a considerable area. Apart from the large bean and cotton trade of the province, some of which finds its way at present to Newchwang, there are gold washings at Keum-san, about 20 miles off, and rich iron ore close to the river banks at Kai-chhon. The city is the centre of a silk industry, which is said to be considerable, drawing upon Thai-chhon, Yong-pyon, and Song-chhon for its supplies. The cattle are very fine, and but little teaching is required to greatly improve the condition of the hides, of which the export at present is from Chemulpo, a port 170 miles off. Added to this, the people possess the spirit of trade, and are anxious for opportunities of foreign commerce.

Between Phyong-yang and An-ju, there is little to note, except that the increased width of the road denotes greater traffic, which continues as far north as Wi-ju.

An-ju owes its importance chiefly to its strong military position commanding the roads north and south and resting against a hill, of which the northern face would be difficult of attack. The Chhong-chhon-gang, which flows close to its walls, is a river of considerable width, but shallow except in summer floods. Enormous numbers of wild geese were feeding on the banks near its mouth.

As the road advances north from Phyong-yang, the width of the valleys decreases, and spur after spur of the hills has to be crossed or rounded. Evidence of a colder climate is seen in the more frequent cultivation of hemp, and in millet and maize largely taking the place of rice. The country is perhaps even more picturesque than previously, except for a few miles north of Yong-chhon. Eo-san and Kwak-san are especially remarkable, and when the valley of the Amnok opens to the view, the scene is exceedingly lovely. Woods all ablaze with maple stretch to the left towards the sea; in front is a wide plain, traversed by an avenue of trees four miles long, leading to Wi-ju. The town is perched like a castle on a hill. At its base flows the grand current of the Amnok, and to north and east are mountains, which stand out in bold relief to the tameness of the foreground.

Wi-ju is said to have a population of about 30,000, and is the great depot of all goods sent by the overland route to China. Until recently, a large strip of territory intervened between the two countries, which was regarded as neutral ground, not to be occupied or cultivated by either Chinese or Korean. In 1875, this land, to which many settlers had found their way, was incorporated into Manchuria by China, and a regular system of government has been established in it. Even at the present day,

however, the only points at which communication between the two countries is permitted, are Wi-ju on the west and Kyong-heung on the east. The trade that I found at Wi-ju was astonishingly disproportionate to what might be expected from such a state of things. On the river bank were 19 boats, the largest of which carried 10 piculs or half-a-ton; a string of salt fish was being carried away from the custom-house, and a few baskets of shrimps were on their way there. On the ferry boat were but three passengers, and the track on the opposite shore had not even been trodden hard. In spite of this state of things, and in spite of assurances to the contrary, I cannot help believing that the old system, under which trade between the two countries was only permitted at markets held three times a year, has not yet been entirely broken through, or that at any rate old habits are stronger than systems.

The river is not seen at its best near Wi-ju, as a little distance above the town it divides into three branches each about 250 yards wide. The boat traffic on it is entirely in the hands of the Chinese, who carry up supplies to colonists on the north bank of the river; but advantage is taken by the Koreans of the summer floods to float down enormous rafts of timber from the mountains east of Chhu-san. Of the volume of these floods, an idea could be formed from the drift caught in branches of trees 40 feet above the river, in parts where it was three quarters of a mile wide.

From Hwang-ju to Wi-ju the road runs at no great distance from the coast, though a view of the sea is only obtained by climbing some of the higher hills in its neighbourhood, and the ridges crossed are all low, in no case exceeding 600 feet. But turning inland from Wi-ju, the country gradually becomes more mountainous. Stream after stream is followed by the road to its head or descended to its junction with the Amnok. The crest of the mountains is topped by a ledge of rocks, which generally runs along the whole length, and affords a pathway for hunters or game, but is too narrow for traffic. The steep faces of the hills admit of little cultivation, and where an attempt has been made, the detritus has quickly poured down and ruined the plots of better soil beneath. As no terracing has been done to prevent this waste, the streams sometimes have to force their way through 18 to 20 feet of moraine-like matter; and so full of stones is the ground that the bulls which draw the plough are attached to a yoke wide enough to allow the ploughman to see the dangers ahead.

The people seem to have been discouraged by their ill-success, and were extraordinarily listless, sitting smoking in their houses when their crops were waiting to be carried, and leaving a large share of the outdoor work to the women of the household. The streams abounded in small fish, for which bag traps were set, and fine fish were easily procured from

the Amnok by net or line.

Occasionally the road ran along the bank of the Amnok through maple woods, where the undergrowth was almost impenetrable, but excepting at these places the scenery was rather monotonous, being generally confined to the valley of some affluent of the big river. Of the beauty of the Amnok it would be hard to say too much. Its width of half a mile and more, the extraordinary clearness of its waters, the absolute quiet, and the absence of life, except where a flock of ducks are playing on the water or a fleet of boats are working slowly up stream under the cliffs of a mountain on the opposite shore, make a picture that charms the traveller without fail.

The marches were long for a hilly country, and we were generally benighted, but the pony drivers seemed rather to enjoy what would else-where be a disaster, for the villagers were generally awaiting us with bundles of reeds, which they used as torches to guide us on our way until we reached the next relay. The blazing torches and the excitement of travel by their light cheered up men and beasts, and one dark night over 10 miles were covered in three hours, in spite of rocky ground and, of a 30 miles' march by daylight.

Near Wi-won the road left the Amnok and struck across the hills to the Kang-ge river, which is one of its affluents. The ranges crossed up to this point had gradually increased in height, rising at the last ridge before Wi-won to 1250 feet, but there was no perceptible difference in the level of the river, my aneroid showing 29' 70 at the place where the Wi-won river joined it. The country between Chhu-san and Wi-won shows considerable traces of volcanic action in tufa, &c., and opposite Wi-won is a hill greatly resembling a volcano, which I had not time to explore.

The last 10 miles before reaching Kang-ge were very bad travelling. For a long distance the road ran through boulders and over slippery ledges which sloped down to the river. The ponies found it almost impossible to keep their footing, and two or three slipped into the stream. The drivers were in despair over the difficulties of the road and gave way to tears. Rain fell heavily and the night closed in early, but the stolidity of my Chinese servants was proof against everything. Mounted on their rolls of bedding, they stuck to their ponies or fell in with them, and showed little discomposure. They certainly were excellent servants for a journey. One of them, it is true, was by nature almost a cripple, but he stuck to me gallantly, though he was at daggers drawn with his fellow, and became later on so home-sick as to refuse food for two days and to cause me serious uneasiness. Fortunately at Gensan he met some friends who comforted him with wine and oil and reconciled him to his food, but I fear

that he subsequently succumbed to consumption brought on by exposure.

Two of my ponies had broken down before reaching Wi-ju, and at Wi-won one of the drivers became quite knocked up. It was impossible to leave him there and impossible to send him home, and a day's rest and half a bottle of whisky were needed to set him on his legs again. None of us indeed were sorry to rest, for since leaving Wi-ju we had travelled nearly 235 miles in eight days, and that over hilly ground.

From Kang-ge (bar. 28' 78) the ascent was very constant. Snow fell the whole of the first day out and hid the country almost completely from view, but the next morning was clear, and found us on the out-skirts of a virgin forest (bar. 27' 47). The snow was knee-deep, and had not been trodden. Branches of trees, weighted with snow, barred the path. Trunks of trees lying across it frequently necessitated wading up a stream, and the cold became more and more intense as the day grew older. But nothing could rob the forest of its beauty. Birch, rowans, oaks, and maple were for some distance the commoner trees. Magnificent *zelkovas* were seen here and there out-topping all their comrades, but the finest seemed to have suffered greatly from the storms, and one monster, whose stem was 2 feet 6 inches in diameter 50 feet from the base, had fallen across the track, where it had been sawn in two, as too large to clear away. The forest was almost impenetrable from the number of dead trees lying on the ground, and scores had been felled to form bridges over the streams, on which traps could be set by fur hunters. Nearer the crest of the mountain (bar. 24' 84) the woods were entirely of fir, which grew 130 to 150 feet high, with perfectly straight stems. As their branches were bent down to their sides with the heavy weight of snow upon them, they were quite unrecognisable, but from cones sent to Kew they have been determined to be the *Abies micro-sperma*.

Not a soul was met, and only one cottage seen on 20 miles of this road, but after leaving the woods on the east slope a few villages were found in the plateau near Chang-jin (bar. 26' 77). The population a few years since was greater, as silver-mines were at that time worked there with success, but latterly the quality of the galena has fallen off, and the ore is now sold as lead to the mint in Soul.

From Chang-jin I followed the Sam-su river for three days, until I reached its source in the mountains above Ham-heung. A large part of the country was open, and looked well suited for pasture, but the people complained bitterly of their poverty, relying as they did entirely on their crops of hemp, oats, potatoes, turnips, and cabbage. The snow, which lay deep on the ground, had buried a large part of the harvest, and it was probable that nothing could be done in the fields before May. Such

produce as was being moved was drawn on sledges, but few people were stirring, and in the winter, they said, they never left their houses, except to collect fuel or keep open the road. The houses were, however, generally more comfortable than in other parts of Korea, and many immigrants had been tempted by the cheapness of the absolute necessities of life to try their luck there as colonists.

Bears, tigers, leopards, and deer were said to be numerous, but, strangely enough, wolves are unknown in Korea, though found to the north of the Amnok.

While crossing the plain, two or three gold washings were passed, at which a few hands had been employed during the summer, but the work seemed to have been of a fitful character.

The ascent to the crest of the ridge (bar. 26' 10), overlooking Ham-heung, was very gradual, through woods of fir, laden with long streamers of lichen. The south face was very steep, and commanded a beautiful view of the plain between it and the sea, while to right and left stretched grand mountains which hemmed in the plains with an almost precipitous wall of rock. The descent was very rapid, falling from bar. 26' 10 to bar. 28' 78 in less than three hours, and on the following day we reached Ham-heung (bar. 30' 05).

The journey from sea to sea, or more correctly speaking from Wi-ju to Ham-heung, occupied sixteen days (Oct. 14-29), being in length about 410 miles. There is said to be another route from Wi-won east to Hui-ju and Tan-chhon, both of which are interesting on account of their minerals; but south of the line which I followed, the valleys generally run north to south, and thus oppose so many obstacles to anyone wishing to cross them, that there are said to be no other roads running east and west above the latitude of Phyong-yang.

After the rude villages of the mountains, Ham-heung with its 3000 houses had a most imposing appearance, approached as it is over a bridge nearly 400 yards long. It has, however, no trade of any importance, except in hempen cloth, which is of very good quality, furs, beans, and hides.

The mode of separation of the hemp fibre is, according to the description given to me, different to that obtaining in China. At the bottom of a large pit paved with stones, large stones are placed which are heated by a fire at the side. Bundles of hemp are pressed down on the stones and kept in position by stakes, the heads of which are above ground. On the hemp, piles of grass are thrown, and the grass is closely covered with earth, until the pit is air-tight. The stakes are then withdrawn and water is poured in through the holes left by them. The water falling on the stones

produces a dense steam, which in about twenty-four hours leaves the hemp ready to be pulled to pieces.

The fringe of country west of the road from Ham-heung to Gensan, which lies between the mountains and the sea, is little over 30 miles in width at any part. A great portion of it is very flat, and much harm had been done by heavy rains. A large portion of the rice crop had been ruined and the people were looking forward to a famine before the winter had passed. The population is, however, not exclusively agricultural. Pottery works exist in several places; gold-washings of an extensive nature are carried on at Yong-heung and on a smaller scale at Chong-phyong; north of Yong-heung is a bed of graphite, of which the boxes of cart-wheels are made; and, as is the case throughout the Phyong-an and Ham-kyong provinces, a small quantity of silk is produced by the women.

Gensan, with its neat streets of Japanese houses, well-kept bridges and pier, is a most astonishing surprise in Korea. The surprise is increased by the distance of the town from the foreign settlement, and by the almost complete absence of shipping, facts which at first sight make its existence at all a matter of wonder. But its position at the entrance to Port Lazaref has encouraged hopes of trade from abroad, and the market in the native town has a sufficient stock of grain, furs, and fish, coupled with an export of gold-dust, to induce Japanese traders to settle there. So far, however, only three or four Chinese had followed their examples, and no Europeans had yet been attracted there, except the staff of custom officers in the employ of the Korean Government.

On leaving Gensan, the first object of interest was the traces of volcanic action in the rocks, and the existence of a field of lava 20 miles long by 10 miles wide. On crossing the mountains near Ko-san other fields of lava were found beyond Hoi-yang and Keum-song, and even as far as Kim-hoa many of the stones in the brooks are of lava. The rivers have cut their way over 100 feet deep through this mass, but the action of the atmosphere upon its surface has been very slow and the greater part of the plains have still too little soil upon them to permit of cultivation.

Of the extent of this volcanic field I became more fully aware in the spring of 1885, when on a journey to Phyong-kang, I found two other fields of lava. The first of these is in the Yon-chhon district, and is about 10 miles long by four miles wide. The second reached from the neighbourhood of the town of Chhol-won to the extreme border of the Phyong-kang district, and as far as I could calculate was 40 miles long by about 10 miles wide.

In each case the features were the same; a large plain covered with grass was surrounded by precipitous ravines, through which ran

rivers at the base of the mountains, to which at one time the lava undoubtedly extended. In the centre of the Ko-san plain is a pool about 300 yards long, which is the only one that I have seen in Korea. As it was situated on the highest part of the field, the question has since occurred to me whether it might possibly have been the mouth of a crater.

Between Hoi-yang and Soul the road is very pretty, running between high mountains, which are in high repute among the natives for the gold-washings that are found in these streams. Many signs of workings were seen even from the road, which, as the summer floods wash away the banks that are thrown up by the gold-seekers, must all have been of quite recent date.

The road from Gensan to Soul is important as one of the great lines of commerce between the east and west coasts, but the traffic seems to be confined to copper, galena, hides, fish, and tobacco from the east, and foreign shirtings, watches, and miscellaneous foreign and native articles from the west.

The number of travellers when I came by it was considerably decreased by the disturbed state of the country near Hoi-yang and Ko-san. Several parties were met who had been robbed of everything that they possessed, and no resistance had been made to the robbers, who were said to go about in parties of thirty, armed with matchlocks. Neither here, however, nor elsewhere, was I in any way molested, and the temper of the common people seemed very favourable, while the conduct of many of the officials had been most courteous and friendly.

My first journey in Korea was made in the early winter of 1883, at the time that a treaty between Great Britain and Korea was being negotiated by the late Sir Harry Parkes. In spite of the fact that our party of three had no right at the time, under treaty, to travel in the country, and that foreigners in foreign garb had hardly been seen in the interior, the greatest civility was shown us by officials and people alike.

The part of the Kyong-kwi and Kang-won provinces which we visited was said to be the richest in Korea for minerals and game, but proved disappointing in both respects. Later on I learnt that its reputation for game was not undeserved, and that it holds tigers, leopards, mountain antelopes, and several kinds of deer, while pheasants, bustard, geese, and swans are to be found in considerable numbers. But at the time we almost discredited the existence of big game, except in one place, where a woman had been carried out of her house by a tiger the same day that we arrived. It seemed impossible to believe that, at the same time, tigers could be so plentiful as to commit, as we were told, almost nightly raids on the pigs and dogs of the villages in which we slept, and that the villagers would be

so apathetic as to disregard our offers of lavish rewards if we were shown big game. As to the hunters who were to find us tigers, after a time our only care was to secure ourselves from their matchlocks. But game existed, as I afterwards discovered for myself, and the real difficulty in the way of securing good shooting is the necessity of speaking Korean, and knowing the country intimately, so as to organise the hunt oneself, in such a manner as to suit fire-arms.

The manner in which big game are shot by Koreans requires great nerve in the sportsman, for the gorges are driven upwards by a large hody of men, and the guns are stationed at the head of each defile, sometimes behind a rock, but more frequently behind a screen of brush-wood, and the cover is so thick that neither the game nor they are aware of each other's presence until scarcely thirty yards apart. A man told me, however, that he had shot over thirty tigers stone dead without receiving a scratch himself until the last occasion, when he had been considerably mauled, and his matchlock broken to pieces.

Curiously enough the same words, *pom* and *horang*, are used to specify both tiger and leopard. The latter animal is said to be the more savage of the two when wounded. But it is the tiger which appears on the standards of the troops and in paintings as the emblem of valour, and the tiger's skin is the more honourable as the insignia of office. Tiger's bones too fetch the higher price as a specific for courage and strength. A Chinese gentleman in Soul bought the whole carcase of a tiger and ate its flesh for the same object, but I am not aware that the custom obtains generally in Korea. The tiger appears to be of the same species as the Manchurian, with longer hair than the Indian tiger, and measuring, it is said, sometimes 13 feet. The largest that I have measured was 11 feet 10 inches and the largest leopard 9 feet 6 inches.

By the hunters or *paoshus* themselves the danger of attacking the larger game is fully recognised, and a man who has not the pluck to pursue them will not hesitate to state the fact. The arms used are most inadequate, consisting of a matchlock lighted by a slow match from a cord which is wound round the arm, and the balls, of which there are three to a charge, are little larger than a pea and imperfectly rounded.

The prize which is most coveted by the hunters are the horns in velvet of the large deer. These in July and August are at their best for the market, when a good pair will sometimes fetch 50 to 60 dollars. I have never seen this species of deer myself; indeed, I think that the hunters were unwilling to put me on its track, but it is by no means rare on the higher mountains of Kang-won Do. The horns are about 3 feet long each, and the footprint is like that of a red-deer. Besides it there are a species of

Axis (maculata?), a larger deer resembling the *Pseudaxis mantchurica*, the *Hydropetes inermis* (the common deer of the Shanghai plains), a musk deer, a kind of roe, and the mountain antelope.

The fauna of Korea. is undoubtedly very considerable, and besides tigers, leopards, bears, includes pigs, tiger-cats, badgers, foxes, beavers, otters, and several species of martens, among which is a sable, whose skin is of small value.

The number of birds is very large, as the position of Korea attracts many migratory birds to make it a stopping-place on their travels. Eagles, among which is a large black kind, are very numerous, even in the neighbourhood of Soul. Buzzards, harriers, peregrines (largely used by the natives for hawking), sparrow-hawks, kestrels, and falcons are among the commonest of the Raptores. Swans, geese, mallard and mandarin duck, common and spectacled teal, afford very good shooting in the winter. Bustards are by no means rare, but very difficult to get near. Imperial cranes, ibis, herons, and egrets are common in the rice-fields. Curlew, godwits, redshanks, double, single and solitary snipe, and woodcocks seem to breed in the country. The large halcyon kingfisher is little rarer than the brighter kinds. Woodpeckers are numerous. Among them is a large black species with a red spot on its head and white marks on its body and wings, which may perhaps be the same as the *Troponax richardsi* of recent discovery. Of the smaller birds I am quite unable to speak, except as to the number and variety which pass through Soul in April.

But to return to my journey. Though a few towns such as Hoi-yang, Kim-hwa, and Keum-song, are marked on the map as existing on this route, they are little more than the residences of the local authorities and places at which travellers can stop for the night. The valleys are so narrow as to admit of little cultivation, and fear of wild beasts prevents farmers from occupying land in the mountains, whose recesses are only known to the miners. Their work is frequently seen in gold washings, and galena and copper mines are found in several places. The largest gold-washings in the district are to the west of Phyong-kang, where about 500 men were at work last spring, but there, as elsewhere, the reports were not very encouraging.

Though this is the district in which most mines are to be found within a limited area, they are also scattered over most of the provinces. By far the richest copper-mines of Korea are said to be in the Kap-san district, but the production of copper is insufficient for the needs of the country, which imports copper and spelter in large quantities. So small is the out-turn of silver, of which Chang-jin was one of the most famous centres, that almost all the "shoes" on the Soul market bear the stamp of

Manchuria or Shan-tung. The richest gold-mines that are worked at present are in the Yong-heung district, but so small is their out-turn that Gen-san, which lies quite close to it, only exported 80,000 dollars' worth in the first ten months of 1884. The greater part of the gold which is exported finds its way to Japan; the mint at Osaka received in 1882-3 over 13,000 oz., and in 1883-4, 21,630 oz. of dust, the average fineness of which was 788.2 per mil. Of the gold received at the mint, a portion consists of ornaments sent there to be melted down, but gold ornaments are very little in use, except as clasps for the cap or filigree vinaigrettes.

Of iron there are traces in many places, but the best mines are probably at Tan-chhon in Ham-kyong Do, and on the banks of the Tai-dong river above Phyong-yang.

It is, however, early to speak of the mineral wealth of Korea, and as the part between Soul and Gensan lies close to an area of volcanic disturbance of vast extent, and has apparently itself been affected by it, it is not impossible that it may be rich in ores. Of its beauty there can be no doubt, and though I have never visited Keum-gang-san, the mountains to which Koreans award the palm of loveliness, the country near it, seen even in its winter garb, was only rivalled by parts of the woodlands bordering the Amnok-gang.

Travelling in these mountains is far from luxurious, but its hardships are not unaccompanied by retrieving merits, and seldom have I seen a quainter sight than the yard of a farm at night. The sheds in which our animals drank up their mess of beans and hot water, ran round three sides of a square, in the centre of which blazed a bright fire to scare wild beasts and robbers. Round the fire sat some half-dozen Koreans, totally regardless of the intense cold, chattering and smoking, and occasionally replenishing the flames with a pile of reeds or brushwood which sent up a blaze of light the moment it was kindled. Squatted as they were on a manure heap, they seemed, with the bright stars above them, to be more favoured than we in our low kennel, poisoned with cakes of salted beans which hung from every rafter. Now and again the silence was broken by the screams of a fractious stallion, biting and kicking his neighbours, who in their turn plunged and squealed, until blows had brought them into order. How such nights of sleeplessness and riot brought any refreshment to man or beast seemed a marvel, but in the morning there was no sign of fatigue, except in those unfortunate persons who had slept in the foul atmosphere of the heated hovels.

Considerable care was taken of the ponies by their drivers. As soon as the packs had been removed, the animals were rubbed down, and after they had been cleaned, a thick blanket of straw was tied close to their

bodies. Sometimes when the stable was very crowded, or the ground very deep in mud, a rope was passed from over the rafters underneath the belly in such a way as to take part of the weight of the body off the legs, and the care that was given to the cooking of their beans almost equalled that bestowed on their master's dinners. The latter point struck me greatly, as the manner in which the food was served up for the men was far superior to that seen among the same class even in Europe.

Before closing this paper it seems necessary to advert to the religion, trade, and some of the other main characteristics of the country.

In spite of the great admiration which Korea has always professed for Chinese institutions, and to her adoption of competitive examinations for the selection of officials, caste has a great hold in the land. The distinctions between the nobles and the middle and lower classes are very wide. No office of even local importance can be held except by nobles, and in the higher posts in the capital it is the exception to find a man of even the second grade of nobility. Trade or industry disqualifies nobles and their descendants for the privileges of their rank, and fear of this degradation not unfrequently produces the most absolute poverty without any possibility of relief, except in the chance of obtaining office. As its conferment generally goes by favour, and empty purses are the worst recommendations for office, the condition of these men, who prefer to starve rather than place their children in an inferior position to that of which they themselves have been born, is pitiable in the extreme.

The middle class is comparatively small, and consists of doctors, painters, interpreters, scribes, and the lower officials.

The lower class includes all who are engaged in manual labour of any kind, while far below all others are the butchers and tanners. As this class possesses no privileges, it is upon it that falls almost the whole cost of the administration of the country.

Religion as a stimulating influence seems to have no existence in Korea. Of superstitious observances there are many, mostly the outgrowth of Taoism. Shrines to the spirits of the mountains, with cairns to which stones are added by passers-by, stand at the top of almost every ridge crossed by the mountain paths; trees and bushes often have their branches laden with cotton streamers; stones or fossils of unusual shape are placed in the shrines; and where hollows have been worn by the weather in sloping rocks by the roadside, every little cavity is frequently occupied by a stone placed there by suppliants for a fair journey; grotesquely carved wooden figures, called syou-sal-maki, are erected at the entrances to villages to ward off evil spirits; and Taoist priests offer prayers, for a consideration, on behalf of wayfarers, to the spirit of the mountain by

which their road lies.

The philosophy of the country is Confucian, and great restrictions have been placed upon Buddhism; but in spite of all penalties imposed, its followers are very numerous, and on crossing over the hills, away from the main road, it is a common thing to come upon Buddhist temples hidden away in a ravine, with perhaps a large figure of Buddha carved in the natural rock overlooking the temple.

Evidence of some other religion exists in the *miriok*, which are half-length human figures carved in stone. The largest of these is at Un-jin, near the Keum river, in Chol-la Do. From a photograph taken by Lieut. G. C. Foulk U.S.N., the body and head of the figure, which is estimated to stand 62 feet high, appear to be drawn on the model of the idols in Buddhist temples, but the cap is quite different. A column about 10 feet high runs up from the head, and supports an oblong slab of about the same length. On this stands a smaller column supporting another slab. From the corners of the two slabs bells are pendent by chains.

The largest mirioks that I have seen are between Ko-yang and Pha-ju. They are about 25 feet high, cut out of some large boulders in the heart of a fir-wood on a hill-side. One has a round, the other a square hat, showing, according to Mr. Aston, that "the former is meant to represent Heaven, or the male element of Chinese philosophy; the latter Earth, or the female element."

The trade of the country is at present insignificant. In 1882 the total of imports and exports amounted only to 3,467,325 Japanese yen, the principal exports being beans, peas, hides, and cotton-cloth. The best of their manufactures are paper (which of its kind is superior to that of Japan or China), mats woven of grass, split bamboo-blinds, and oil-paper. The wealth of the country from a Chinese point of view lies in its drugs, which are valueless in a European market. Many causes have combined to hinder the development of the country. Among these may be reckoned ignorance, insecurity of property for the poor and consequent lack of inducement to work, caste prejudices against working up leather or utilising skins of beasts for dress, and a preference generally for agricultural life to that of an artisan or manufacturer. To these have to be added a debased coinage, so cumbrous that a pony cannot carry more than 10*l.* worth, and in addition a multiplicity of guilds and corporations, which exist on a subdivision of trade which is quite ruinous to the country at large.

The domestic animals in Korea are very few. Its cattle are excellent; the ponies are very small, seldom exceeding 12 hands, but hardy and well-bred; the fowls are good; but goats are rare, sheep, tame ducks, and geese almost unknown, and the pigs smaller and worse than I

have ever heard of.

Before the paper,

The CHAIRMAN in introducing Mr. Carles, said that the writer of the paper after passing a competitive examination and receiving an honorary certificate, went out to China when he (Sir R. Alcock) was Her Majesty's Minister there, and he had fully justified his early promise. He was now Vice-Consul in Korea, where he had lived for fifteen months. Those who were not experts in geography simply knew of Korea as a peninsula to the north of China from which Western nations had been more carefully excluded than even from Japan. Absolutely nothing was formerly known of the people or their customs, or of the physical geography of the country. Mr. Carles, however, had had the enviable opportunity of being a resident there for a sufficient time to be able to give a clear account of the customs of the Koreans. It was only during the past very few years that it had been possible to make any treaty with them, all the previous attempts to approach their coasts having proved fatal. One American vessel which adventurously penetrated into one of the rivers was burnt with all the crew. The French missionaries had obtained a good many converts, but the persecutions were so furious that most of those who passed the frontier never came out again. Even of late years persecutions had raged, and it was said that 3000 converts had been massacred. That was a sign that the missionaries had made some impression upon the people, though no one could live in safety who attempted to lead the people to Christianity. The Americans, the British, the French, and the Russians now had treaties with them.

After the paper,

Mr. M. BEAZELEY, C.E., said he had never been in Korea though he had lived for ten years in China. In 1883 he had the pleasure of crossing the Pacific from Yokohama to San Francisco with the Korean ambassador to Washington, who formed the first Embassy that had ever left Korea. Through their Chinese interpreter he learned a good deal about Korea. He particularly inquired about the mineral resources of the country, but he was assured that there would be very little return to any foreign Power that attempted to open up the country. Very good tobacco was grown there as well as silk, but the principal wealth for export was timber. He also learned that backgammon was a Korean game. The board is divided and arranged exactly like ours. The men are placed in the same order, and the moves are identically the same; the only difference being a single move for doublets instead of a double move as with us. It is very singular that

this game should exist in Korea, as it is unknown in both China and (he believed) in Japan. He had mentioned the pleasure he felt in crossing the Pacific with the Ambassadors, and it certainly had never been his good fortune to meet with more agreeable and intelligent travelling companions than these Korean gentlemen.

Mr. FORBES said that as Korea had been shown to be a poor country, the only interest attaching to it was in connection with its strategical position. As an American he congratulated Great Britain on having secured Port Hamilton.

The CHAIRMAN said he once met with a French officer in China who had a strong opinion that Korea was rich in minerals, especially gold, but there could be no doubt that it was a very poor country. There was one feature in connection with the Koreans which entitled them to respect. They had shown a very courageous spirit of independence, and had resisted the attacks of both China and Japan. At one time the latter country conquered nearly the whole of Korea, yet the Koreans had managed to maintain their independence. Miss Edgeworth had said that in social relations the great matchmaker was propinquity, but propinquity did not always lead to alliances or friendships in the case of nations. Powerful nations like China and Russia were now seeking alliance with Korea, but no one could say whether the match would be a happy one or not. The chief interest in Korea seemed to arise from her position at the entrance of the China Seas, which would make her of inestimable value to more than one European nation. Physical geography had much to do with the policy of governments, and people were apt to forget that there was perhaps a sort of necessity for some nations to spread out in one direction more than another. During five or six months of the year all the ports of Russia were ice-bound, all her commerce was stopped, and her fleet sealed up. The result was that she was driven southward, to the Bosphorus, to the Persian Gulf, and towards Japan or Korea, where the harbours were not frozen in winter. Any European Power having possession of such a harbour in Korea would be a menace to Japan and Peking, and would have the command of the Pacific trade to America, and in the China Seas. There was not much promise of trade in the country itself, but it was impossible to say what might be developed if a friendly footing were secured with the Koreans, and commerce and agriculture encouraged. It appeared from what Mr. Carles had said that the people were disposed to trade, so that there was no need to despair of Korea becoming a valuable market for European commerce. He thought they were all very much indebted to Mr. Carles for his valuable paper, and moved a vote of thanks, which was cordinally responded to by the

meeting