THE KOREA REVIEW

Volume 2, November 1903.

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# Taxation in Korea.

The revenue of the Korean Government is derived from a dozen or more different sources. Among the most important are (1) land tax; (2) house tax; (3) salt tax; (4) customs; (5) ginseng monopoly; (6) gold mines; (7) fish tax; (8) fur tax; (9) tobacco tax; (10) gate tax; (11) forests; (12) guilds; (13) licenses (14) minting; (15) poll tax; (16) boat tax; (17) cowhide tax; (18) paper tax; (19) pawn tax. These include forms of taxation that are now obsolete as well as those actually in force, but a full discussion of the subject requires a mention of each kind.

The magistrate of each of the 360 districts in Korea is supposed to have in his office a map and a detailed account of every piece of arable land in the district, excepting kitchen gardens. This forms the basis of the land tax, which yields probably two thirds of the national revenue. Although there are no fences, the limits of the fields are clearly marked by earth banks or by the natural conformation of the land, and no farmer would dare to throw two fields together or divide a field into two without the cognizance and consent of the local magistrate, and even then the magistrate would have to obtain permission from the central government. This arable land is considered under two heads -rice-fields (\*) *non*, or ordinary fields (\*) *pat*. The owner of each field holds a deed for the same, stamped with the magistrate’s seal or signed with the magistrate’s name. In many instances where property has [page 482] been in the same family for a century or more these deeds have been lost or destroyed. But if they are sold new deeds must be issued. The magistrate’s records as well as the deed of each field indicate the grade of the field. There are six grades of rice-fields and three of ordinary fields. These grades are determined by several factors; the natural fertility of the soil, the ability to irrigate easily, the mountainous or level character of the locality and the lay of the land, for if the field slopes toward the north it is considered much less valuable than one which slopes toward the south. Rice fields are more carefully graded than other fields because in the first place they are much more susceptible of gradation and secondly because they are of far greater importance than other fields.

But new fields are constantly being made, which for a few years are not shown on the magistrate’s records and do not pay taxes to the government. For this cause the government periodically orders a remeasurement of arable land or rather a readjustment of the prefectural records so as to include the new fields that have been made since the last readjustment. There is no special and definite interval of time between these readjustments. Sometimes half a century passes without one and then again they may follow each other by an interval of only a few years. Korean history shows that with the beginning of a new reign or the inauguration of a new government policy or under stress of some national calamity which has emptied the treasury a readjustment of land values is likely to be ordered.

Let us suppose, then, that such a readjustment has been ordered and the agents of the magistrate go about the district to find what new fields have been made and arrange for the payment of annual taxes thereon. They come to a new rice-field and make a careful examination of the soil, the conditions of irrigation, the lay of the land, and they determine, for instance, that this particular field is of the second class and is a “thirty *kyul* field.” They do not actually measure it but they call witnesses who declare how many days it takes to plow that particular field with a bullock and how many measures of seed grain it requires to plant it. These things, together with all the other conditions, help the judges to decide the grade of the field and the number of *kyul*. Now the question arises as to [page 483] what is meant by the word *kyul*. So far as we can ascertain a *kyul* is composed of one hundred man-loads, or *chim*, of unthreshed rice and each *chim* is composed of ten *mut*, or sheaves. In the case of the field cited above the appraisers estimated that it would produce an average of thirty *kyul* and this was made the basis of taxation. Ten per cent being the usual legal rate, a field of thirty *kyul* would render a tax of three *kyul*. This again must be reduced to threshed rice, in the bag, as that is the form in which the tax is paid. It would seem to be easier to estimate how many bags of clean threshed rice the field would produce and then levy on that, but the Koreans seem to cleave to the old system still and the *kyul* remains the basis of estimate. In actual practice it is found that it takes twelve and a half *chim*, or loads, to make one bag, or fifteen “rice pecks,” of unhulled rice. The status of a field being once definitely settled, it is put down on the books as being liable to a certain definite amount of taxation each year. And this tax is due whether the year is a good or a bad one, whether the field is tilled or left fallow. It is only by a special dispensation of the central government that the tax on a piece of land can be remitted, whatever be the disabilities under which the owner or tenant may be laboring. In other words the government takes no chances. And yet it may be that, when we take into account the great infrequency of serious famines in Korea, this system is the best for the farmer, for were the regular government tax the only charge on the field there would be every incentive to cultivate the soil with care, to fertilize it heavily and to make it produce the very most that it was capable of. As a fact, however, the farmers are frequently subjected to further imposts which, though illegal, are unavoidable under a system which gives officials no opportunity to gain a competence except by indirection.

The description given above applies both to irrigated rice and to upland rice. As to other fields a different rule applies. They are divided into three grades only, according to the fertility of the soil, the number of days they require for plowing and the amount of seed used in planting. In deciding the amount of lax the appraisers take note of all the conditions and reckon the number of *kyul* in any particular field to be [page 484] o*ne fifth* as many as there would be were it a rice field. The reason is because rice is much dearer than the other grains and the magistrate must send only rice as tax. Rice then being the unit of measure, it takes five times as much land to raise the same money’s worth (or the same “riceworth”) of barley, beans, oats or other grain. It is the farmer who must sell his barley, millet, beans or sesamum and buy rice to pay his taxes with. Such for centuries has been the law, but today all taxes are collected in money, which simplifies the matter greatly. The tax today is six Korean dollars per *kyul*.

Now such is the law in regard to the land tax of Korea but there are great discrepancies in the operation and administration of this law. The magistrate and all his underlings receive a nominal salary which is deducted from the tax rice or money which is to be sent up to the central government, but it is well known that this salary is quite insufficient and that it is supplemented by special taxation. As this is an actual charge upon the productive portion of the population it demands mention. Of course the amount of special taxation depends upon the personal character of the magistrate and his deputies, the *ajuns*; but it will be possible to indicate the general lines upon which it is levied. According to law each field must render a certain definite amount of tax, and this is determined by an appraisal of the probable or average product. Now if this average product is exceeded in any year of plenty or through exceptional thrift on the part of the farmer the overplus or increment is commonly appropriated by the *ajuns* who share it with their chief. But it all depends upon the status of the owner of the field. If he be a country gentleman who has influence at Seoul the *ajuns* may not dare to take even the legal rate of tax. In fact he may go tax free. If he have slightly less influence he may pay the legal tax on fairly good years but pay less in bad years. If he have no influence he may always pay the legal tax but nothing extra in case of overplus. It is the common farmer who has practically no rights in the case and must always pay the full tax and whatever proportion of the overplus ajuns may require or, even if there be no overplus, he may have to give up part of the nine tenths remaining after his tax is paid. One exception must be made. No fields within the walls of Seoul [page 485] are subject to the land tax. The approximate amount at present received by the government from the land-tax is 5,800,000 Korean dollars but with the enormous fluctuation in exchange this may mean anywhere from Yen 4.000,000 to Yen 3,000,000. Just at present it is nearer the latter figure, and consequently there is talk of raising the rate of taxation. In the country the nickel five cent pieces do not pass current and so many farmers find it difficult to pay their taxes in money. The result is that they turn over their rice or other produce to the *ajuns* who act as agents and dispose of it. Naturally, they do not do this for their health, and it forms one of their handsomest sources of income.

The next most important asset of the government is the house-tax. All the houses of Seoul are exempt from this tax and the houses of the suburbs as well, excepting outside the East Gate. On the south, the river is supposed to form the limit of the city and no house in any of the river towns from Han-gang to Yang-wha-jin is taxed. On the east however the taxable property begins immediately outside the Gate. With the exception of Seoul and her southern and western suburbs, every house in Korea is subject to a tax of fifteen hundred Seoul cash or three hundred of the *yup,* which means sixty cents in the new currency. The tax is imposed uniformly, irrespective of the size or quality of the house. The annual amount actually collected from this source is about 500,000 Korean dollars. At the rate of sixty cents a house, this would mean that there are something less than a million houses in the empire. Reckoning five people to a house, it would give a population of five millions. This of course is an absurdly small estimate and the conclusion is irresistible either that all the houses are not taxed or that there is serious leakage in transit. When a new house is built the magistrate gives a deed for the same to the owner and from that time the house is put on the tax list. When a house burns or is swept away by flood the tax is always remitted.

The salt tax is no mean item in the government revenue. Salt is all made by evaporating sea water or salt spring water and the “works” are so easily accessible and salt is such an indispensable commodity that this government, like most oriental governments, finds it a reliable and lucrative [page 486] source of revenue. The tax is levied on the actual amount produced, and hardly ever exceeds four per cent, *ad valorem*. This amount seems small compared with the ten per cent levied on cereals, but it must be remembered that in the case of the latter nature does by far the larger part of the work. The evaporation of salt is exceedingly laborious. The apparatus itself is costly considering the annual output. The cost of fuel is heavy and the goods are marketable only in spring and autumn. For these reasons a heavier tax than four percent could not be levied without killing the business. The income from this tax amounts to above 90.000 Korean dollars annually. The best salt in Korea comes from salt springs in Hong-ju in South Ch’ung-chŭng Province.

The ginseng tax is an important one but in this connection the word tax is hardly applicable, since ginseng is a government monopoly. At the same time it cannot be passed without notice. The monopoly is of two kinds. In the first the government gives licenses to certain men to grow ginseng with the understanding that the whole crop be turned over. Having received it, the government markets it in China and then pays the producer his proper proportion. In other words the government acts as middle-man between the producer and the market and receives a commission of perhaps twenty or twenty-five per cent. In the other case the government itself owns the farms and having marketed the crop simply pays the men, who worked the farms, a proper salary. Most of the farms near Songdo are of this character. The annual revenue from this source differs widely with different years. In 1901 it amounted to above 150,000 Korean dollars.

All minerals are supposed to belong to the government, and no man has a right to open a mine even on his own ground without special permission from the authorities. The local magistrate, even, has no right to grant such permission. It can be obtained only from the Bureau of Agriculture, Commerce and Public works at Seoul -formerly called *Kong-jo* yamen. If a man desires to mine for gold (and the vast majority of native gold-mining is of the *placer* variety) he applies to the office in Seoul and if he has influence enough succeeds in buying a license to open a placer mine in a certain specified [page 487] locality. For this license he pays a round sum, though this may not be within the purview of the law. After opening the mine he will be called upon to pay over to the agents of the government probably sixty percent of his gross earnings. Of course the rate differs in different places and under different conditions but at the lowest the rate is enormously high. The idea seems to be that as he is working government land he must divide the proceeds, just as when a farmer lets out his land on shares, the crops to be equally divided between him and the tenant. The annual revenue from this source is of course a variable quantity. In some years it is as high as a quarter of a million and then again it may fall to a hundred thousand dollars.

Copper mining is a considerable industry in Korea but as the profits are relatively smaller than those of gold mining, considering the amount of labor involved, the government demands a tax of only three tenths, or thirty per cent. To be exact, the government receives five ounces out of every sixteen. It is impossible to get at the figures to show what revenue the government derives from this source. There are many iron mines in Korea but carried on in only a small way. From them the government receives a tax of about nine per cent on the gross product. There are said to be over fifty iron mines in Korea, most of them on the sea coast.

Korean fisheries annually render a neat sum to the national exchequer. The tax is levied not on the amount of fish caught, but upon the fishing-boats. There are about ten grades of boats, the grade being determined by the number of the crew and the size of the net. But when the tax is collected, cognizance is taken of the number and quality of the fish and the amount collected bears no special reference to the amount to be received by the central government. It has been said that the Korean government possesses no navy, but from time immemorial it has owned a large number of boats all along the coast which are supposed to be ready for use in case of war! But they are all let out to fishermen, and from them the revenue is, of course, much larger than from the native owned boats. Of late years very many of these “men-of-war” have been sold to the fishermen, but the proceeds are probably not sufficient to put the Korean navy on a modem footing.

[page 488] Furs have always been an important product of Korea. They have always figured in the annual tribute to China and in indemnities demanded by Chinese, Mongol or Manchu. Furs have always been considered a sort of government monopoly and many of the trappers have been specially sent out by the government. The entire catch is handed in to the government and is paid for. If others take furs, especially sea-otter, sables, tiger or leopard, the rule is to carry them to the nearest magistrate who will almost surely buy them in for the government at a nominal price. This method of procedure makes it quite impossible to estimate the amount annually received. It never comes out in the shape of dollars and cents. As for deer, fox, badger, squirrel and weasel skins there is no regular method of taxation, but the dealers in these simply pay what is called “mouth money,” which is about the same thing as a commission. This is not paid to any government official but to someone who knows how to handle and dispose of the goods to advantage.

Besides the fish-tax there is a separate tax on boats. This is not levied on small boats operated with oars but on regular merchant craft. The basis of taxation is the number of bags of rice a boat can carry. About three cash per bag is collected at the port of entry. This is only a small fraction of one per cent. Before government taxes became payable in currency these boat taxes were often paid by bringing government rice up to Seoul. The amount received from this source hardly exceeds seven thousand dollars annually.

The forests of Korea are considered crown lands, and lumbering can be carried on only by government permit. The tax or license is paid in kind, a certain amount of lumber being handed over to the officials. The tax amounts to only about three per cent of the product.

Cow-hides being one of the principal products of the country they form a special source of revenue. They are graded into three classes according to their excellence. The first class ones are taxed twenty cents apiece, the second class sixteen cents and the third class twelve cents.

Seoul is a city of guilds. There are few towns where the different trades and industries are more thoroughly organized than in the capital of Korea. These do not extend out [page 489] into the country however. We have here the guilds of the silk merchant, the cotton merchant, the linen merchant, the waist-cord merchant, the paper merchant, the hat merchant, the head-band merchant, the optician, silversmith, cobbler, fruiterer, grocer, furrier, book merchant, cotton-batting merchant and scores of others. Some of these are housed in government buildings at Chong-no. These guilds do not pay a regular tax but they are frequently called upon to help out in any good work that the government may be engaged on. Sometimes they are instructed to repair a road over which a royal procession is to pass. In case of a royal funeral or wedding each guild is supposed to make a gorgeous banner to be carried in the procession and the members of the guilds are called upon to act as bearers of the catafalque of the dead and the other paraphernalia of the obsequies.

Up to the time of the China-Japan war every man was obliged to carry on his person a small piece of wood on which was written his name, together with the year of his birth and his rank. Any man who failed to carry one was considered an outlaw. This tag was called a *ho-p’a* or “name tag.” Every two or three years, or to be more exact, every year in which a general national examination or *kwaga* was held, all these tags were changed or renewed. Each one of these bore the stamp of the Mayor of Seoul or of local country prefects and the application of this stamp cost each man the sum of five *yup* or country cash. This amounted to a poll-tax. Since the discontinuance of the *ho-p’a* the tax has of course been dropped.

There never has been in Korea a tax upon spirituous liquors nor any license required for their sale. In the country there is a slight tax on *nu-ruk*, the yeast or leaven used in making beer. This yeast is made from barley and comes in the form of cakes the size and shape of a small grind-stone. The tax on each cake in one cash.

Besides these different forms of taxation the government sells licenses for a large number of different forms of industry. These are not all worthy of mention but among them we find the pawn-shop license which amounts to two dollars a month in the case of large shops, while others pay a dollar and a half or a dollar a month according to their size. The government also sells licenses to cut firewood in government preserves.

[page 490] This practically ends the list of regular taxes, but it must not be imagined that these are the only sources of income. There is another long list of *chin-sang* (\*\*) or donations to the king. These are not taxes, and yet they are so fixed in Korean custom that they amount to the same thing, and their discontinuance would be the signal for instant and searching investigation. The principal objects of the *chin-sang* are fruits and vegetables. There are certain districts noted for the production of the best quality of certain particular kinds of fruit and vegetables. For instance the best pears are the Pong-san pears, the best persimmons are from P’ung-geui or Nam-yang, the best walnuts are from Ko-ryŭng or Sun-ch’ŭn, the best jujubes are from Ch’ŭng-san or Po-eun, the best tobacco is from Kwang-ju or Sŭng-ch’un or Kim-sŭng, the best turnips are from Kŭ-chang. From each of these places the growers of these products send up through the local prefect the best selections, for use in the Imperial Household. The amount is not regulated by law but the prefect is sure to see to it that the quantity and quality of these gifts do not fall far below the limit established by custom. A failure to attend to this matter would soon get the prefect into trouble.

Besides fruits and vegetables, several of the sea products are also sent up, such as edible seaweed, bèche-de-mer, dried clams, pearls, cuttle-fish, cod, and other fish. Then among Korean industrial products many kinds are sent, such as linen, cotton cloth, fans, screens, mats, tables, inlaid cabinets, pipes, paper, human hair, silk, furs, horses, hats, head-bands, pens, ink, ink-stones, candles, grass-cloth, tiger and leopard skins, deer horns, mountain ginseng, game, honey, ginger, crockery and porcelain, medicines, embroidery, cranes, musical instruments and coral. These are the principal varieties. It will be noticed that some of these are in the regular tax list, such as paper, linen, silk, cotton and tobacco, but in addition to the regular tax, gifts are also sent.

We have made no mention of the Maritime Customs as they are familiar to everyone. It is the most reliable source of income for the government and the only asset which it can use for collateral.

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# A Leaf from Korean Astrology.

In every Korean book-stall will be found a little volume printed entirely in the native character and selling by the thousands. It is called the *Yuk-kwă-ch’ăk* or “The Six Marks of Divination.” It is also called the *Man-bo O-gil-pang* or “The Five Rules for Obtaining the Ten Thousand Blessings.” It represents some of the grossest superstitions of the Korean people. The fact that it is written in the native character and has such an enormous sale, shows what a firm hold these superstitions still have upon the people. It is the common people who make constant use of this work but the women of the upper classes are almost equally sure to have a volume of it from which to cast the horoscope of their infant sons and daughters. The book is a curious mixture of Buddhism and the in-born fetichism of the Korean. It is probably the best sample of the manner in which Buddhism has adapted itself to and grafted itself upon the original and indigenous stock of Korean nature-worship. As such it is sure to be of interest to those who want to get an insight into the Korean nature. It is also a striking proof of the fact that, while Confucianism is the nominal religion of Korea, human nature as developed in this peninsula demands something more imaginative and idealistic to satisfy its religious tastes.

The first division of the book deals with what is called the hăng-nyŭn or “Procession of the years.” It tells which star rules the life of a boy or girl from his or her tenth year until his or her sixty-fourth year. Each year is ruled by a different star or constellation. It also tells what the person must do to secure health, happiness and success. The reason why it begins with the tenth year is because up to that time the person is considered a mere child and the star influences do not work. No one ever marries before the tenth year nor does a boy ever shave the head and become a monk before that age.

*The Tenth Year*. For a boy, this year is under the influence of the *Che-yong chik-sŭng* or “Man Image Star.” He [page 492] is also under the direction of that one of the twelve Buddhas who is called Mi-ryŭk Po-sal. The Mi-ryŭk is the name of the Buddha and the Po-sal is an honorific title applied only to Buddhas. In the third place he must light candles to this Buddha and in the fourth place his body during his tenth year will be like that of a rat thrown into the river.

For a girl the tenth year is under the influence of the *Mok-chik-sŭng*, “Wood Star,” (Jupiter). She is also under the direction of the Mi-ryŭk Po-sal and must light candles to him. Her body also is like a rat thrown into the river.

*The Eleventh Year*. For a boy, this year is under the *To-chik sŭng* or “Earth Star” (Saturn). His patron is Yŭ-ră Po-sal. He must be careful of his body. His body is like a hawk in the ashes. For a girl the eleventh year is under *Che-yong Chik-sŭng* or “Man Image Star.” Her patron is Kwan-eum Po-sal. Her duty is to show deference to the Spirits. Her body is like a deer in a deep gorge.

*The Twelfth Year*. For a boy, this year is under *Su-chiksŭng* “The Water Star,” (Mercury). His patron is Ch’oé-jung Po-sal. His duty is simply to be happy. His body is like a wolf in a field.

For a girl, this year is under *To-chik-sŭng* “The Earth Star” (Saturn). Her patron is Ami Po-sal. Her duty is to worship the Spirits. Her body is like a pig in a bag.

*The Thirteenth Year*. For a male, this year is under *Keum-chik-sŭng* “The Metal Star,” (Venus). His patron is Po-hyŭn Po sal. His duty is to wait on Po-hyŭn Po-sal. His body is like a tiger in the mountain.

For a female this year is under Su chik-sŭng, “Water Star” (Mercury). Her patron is Tă-se-ji Po-sal. Her duty is simply to pass the time well. Her body is like a pheasant in a mill.

*The Fourteenth Year*. For a male, this year is under *Ilchik-sŭng*, “Sun Star,” (Sun). His patron is Yak-sa Po-sal. His destiny is to enjoy a “great full year.” His body is like a lion in the grass.

For a female, this year is under *Keum-chik-sŭng*, “Metal Star” (Venus). Her patron is Ma-ri Po-sal. Her destiny is fairly good. Her body is like a lion in the garden.

[page 493] *The Fifteenth Year*. For a male this year is under *Whachik-sŭng, “*Fire Star” (Mars).His patron is Mun-su Po sal. His destiny’ is blessed above measure. His body is like a pheasant on the mountains.

For a female this year is under Il-chik-sŭng “Sun Star” (Sun). Her patron is Chŭn-dan Po-sal. Her destiny is lofty and brilliant. Her body is like a tiger in a blossom.

It would be tedious to give the whole list, but the above is enough to show the general style. Other stars mentioned are the “Fixed Star” and “The Moon Star” (Moon). So there are only nine stars in all which influence the fortunes of men and women between their tenth and sixty-fourth year. Of the *Po-sal* or Buddhas there are twelve, eleven of which we have named; the other being Chi-jang Po-sal. As for the destiny of each year we have given eleven. There are twelve kinds in all, the last one being “to bow to the Star T’ăeul in the west.” As for the kinds of bodies. there are many kinds, as for instance pig in hot water, deer in blossom, hawk in the mountain, rat in the garden, rat in the grass, hawk in the mill, wolf in the bag, pig in the field, tiger in the ravine, pheasant in the ashes, and lion in the river. It will be noticed that eight animals are named; the deer, hawk, pig, rat, tiger, wolf, pheasant, and lion. Twelve places are mentioned; the river, the garden, the ravine, the bag, the field, the ashes, the grass, the mountain, hot water, the blossom, the mill and the hill. Among the animals there is no distinction between the good and bad, but in certain positions the combination is unpropitious. For instance the rat in the river, the hawk in the ashes, the pig in the bag, the hawk in the mill, the deer in the ravine, etc., are all bad, while the deer in the mountain, the wolf in the field, the tiger in the mountain, the rat in the garden, etc., are all good.

The second division of the book is taken up in explaining the influence of the different stars.

*The Sun Star Year* (The Sun). Under the influence of this heavenly body one will have many blessings, a good salary, a chance to travel, and good words from everybody. But in the first, fifth and ninth moons he will be censured or lose money. In order to ward off these evils one must cut out a disc of red paper on the 15th of the first moon (in imitation [page 494] of the sun), fasten it to a piece of wild cherry wood, stick it up on the roof, and bow toward the four points of the compass. This will save him from all anxiety.

*The Moon Star Year* (The Moon). His body will be strong. He will get a good salary. He will be fortunate in everything he does, but if he travels far he will be ill and he will have a severe fall of some kind. If a woman, she will become pregnant. All danger will be averted by making three torches of wild cherry wood and burning them by moonlight on the 15th of the first moon, at the same time praying to the moon to ward off evil.

*The Water Star Year* (Mercury). All he does will succeed and he will attain fame. His official rank will be raised and he will secure the services of a good servant. If he travels he will gain wealth. But in the sixth and twelfth moons he must look out for danger. If he would avert it he must never bow to the dead or ask about anyone’s health. Fire may burn or flood may carry away his house. This can be prevented on the 15th of the first moon by making a bowl of millet porridge and throwing it into the river.

*The Wood Star Year* (Jupiter), This is a good year to marry in. All the household will be at peace. If one is connected with a government office all will go well. But one is likely to have some eye disease. If a woman, she will have frequent bleedings at the nose and mouth. In the sixth and twelfth moons one is likely to be censured or to lose property, or if wood, other than firewood, is brought into the house there will be trouble. So on the 15th of the first moon the man must take a full bath, sit down facing the east, bow thirty times. Thus he will become secure against evil.

*The Fire Star Year* (Mars). Everything will go wrong. One will be ill and, if a woman, will become pregnant. One will receive censure. In spring or summer one’s house is likely to burn down. In the third and ninth moons the man is almost sure to be ill. In the fifth and tenth months one of his sons or grandsons will lose money and must be on the lookout for robbers. He must not travel far, nor must he engage a new servant. And yet there is safety for him if on the 15th of the first moon he will tear off the collar of his coat and burn it toward the south.

[page 495] *The Earth Star Year* (Saturn)., This is also a very dangerous year. His house will be in an uproar all the time. He will be severely blamed and will be ill. He will go far away and be very homesick. He will receive a severe fall and in the first, fifth and ninth moons he will lose property. He must not enter a boat nor travel far nor ascend any high place nor repair his house. On the 15th of the first moon he must ascend some “good” mountain and scatter food on the ground. Only thus can he escape.

*The Metal Star Year* (Venus) , Fortune will smile. If a long road is traveled success will follow. A good salary will be received. But in the ninth moon, only, property may be lost or sickness may come. In the third moon one may be blamed, so it is necessary to keep out of disputes. He may get into trouble through another’s fault. On the 15th of the first moon he must face the west and bow four times toward Venus. Then all will go well.

*The Man Image Star Year*. Ten thousand evils will arise. In the third and ninth moons one is almost sure to be blamed for something and have the eye disease. If a woman, she will become pregnant. In autumn and winter his son or grandson will have trouble. One must not travel nor engage a servant. On the 15th of the first moon the man must make a manikin of straw and stuff cash into it at different points and throw it away. If a woman, she must draw the picture of a woman and wrap up money in it and throw it away.

*The Fixed Star Year*. This year is also a very bad one. In autumn and winter one will lose a son or daughter or horse or bullock. Travel will do no harm but if he stays at home trouble will arise. In spring or autumn he must not walk out at night. But if on the 15th of the first moon he makes a paper stocking and fixes it to the roof with a piece of wild cherry wood he need have no more fear.

The next division takes up the different forms of destiny appointed for the various years and tells what evils will befall if one tries to thwart the fates. There are twelve kinds of destinies governing the different years. The twelve destinies correspond to the twelve Buddhas.

[page 496] *The Candle Lighting Year*. One must be careful what he does or he will lose his property. One is likely to be defrauded. A son or relative is likely to die. But it he is careful to *light the candles* to the Mi-reuk Buddha, on she 13th of the first moon he will escape these evils.

*The Taking-car e-of-the-body Year*. All sorts of evil spirits will enter the house and make trouble. Whatever one wants to do will fail. Goods will be lost. In the fifth and eleventh moons the dangerous crises will come. So he must be careful to light candles to the Yŭ-ră Buddha.

*The Great Good Year*. Whatever one does will prosper. A hundred fortunate things will happen. But there is one danger. One is apt to get into trouble through the wiles of a woman. The sixth and twelfth moons are the worst ones. Candles must be lighted to the Ch’oé-ung Buddha.

*The Year of Grateful Help*. A hundred things will prove fortunate, a great man will give the fortunate one increase of rank. Wealth will roll up. But sadness will intervene and the first and seventh moons will be dark ones. So candles must be lit to the Po-hyŭn Buddha.

*The Great Full Year*. Fortune frowns. Fetters await. Sickness dogs the footsteps. Distant travel makes the heart sick. One must not take the road. Look out for the second and eighth moons. Burn candles to the Yak-sa Buddha.

*The Thousand Blessing Year*. Nothing to do! The height of bliss. Banish the thought of labor! But sickness lies in wait. Forbear to mend the house. Suppress the longing to travel. A son or nephew may die. Beware the ides of March --also of September. Burn your candles at the shrine of Mu-su Buddha.

*The Evening; Star Year*. Evils are multiplied. Censure is imminent. Death dogs the footsteps. Goblins swarm. The fourth and tenth months mark the crises of danger. Make obeisance to the Chi-jang Buddha.

*The Year of Brilliant Fame*. Fortune smiles again. A noble and wise man will be met. Wealth will accumulate. Law suits will turn out well. But do not mend the house. Lie low in the fifth and eleventh moons. Light candles to Chŭn-dan Buddha.

[page 497] *The Year of Moderate luck*. The farm will prosper and the fruit of the loom will abound. But be careful in trading. Never ask about a friend’s health. Beware the sixth and twelfth moons. Light candles to the Ma-ri Buddha.

*The Year of Happy Outcome*. Build no house. Official position or salaried post will prove a snare. Stay not at home but keep on the move. The first and seventh moons are pregnant with evil. Light candles to the Tă-se-ji Buddha.

*The Spirit Following Year*. Evil, only evil! Imps will cause catastrophes and wailing. Goods will be stolen. The ox or horse will be a prey to robbers. The second and eighth moons will see the culmination of disaster. Light candles to the A-mi Buddha.

*The Demon Possessed Year*. Only hard words I Sickness will come. If a woman, pregnancy will oppress. The third and ninth months will be hard to pass. Light candles to the Kwan-eum Buddha.

The fourth division of the book deals with the five elements, metal, wood, water, fire and earth, and their influence on the lives of men. This is a form of necromancy practiced on the fifteenth of the first moon in order to find out whether luck will be good or bad during the year. The man takes in his hand five round discs of wood. On one side of each piece is written the name of one of the five elements. The other side is blank. While shaking these in his hand he says, for instance, “Beneath the bright heavens I stand and pray, I who live in Whang-hă Province, town of Hă-ju, ward of Puyong, by name Kim Yun-sŭk. To the bright heavens I pray that I may be truly shown what will befall the present year, or good or ill.” He then throws down the five discs. They may all fall blank side up or all with the names up or there may be many combinations of two, three or four characters. Each combination means something different, as the following list will show.

(1) If all the written sides turn up, the sign is most propitious. The fabulous animal called Ki-rin and the phoenix bird will send good fortune to his house. The tortoise and the dragon will announce prosperity. Every catastrophe will be warded off. Blessings will be multiplied and a good position will be secured. The five stars will shine and the radiance [page 498] of heaven will be shed on him. His descendants will all be happy and glory will be undiminished.

(2) If the disc with the word “metal” alone turns up, fortune will be of medium quality, neither very bad nor very good. Former mistakes will be corrected and a better start made. The fish will enter the dragon’s gate (indicating that there will be happy consummations), ailments will be cured. Any work begun must look toward the west, for therein lies success, as metal corresponds to west.

(3) If the word “wood” alone turns up, this also brings a medium fortune. As leaves are driven by the wind even so events will follow the impulse of his desire. Plans will succeed. He will not have to wait long for the fruition of his hopes. As a seemingly dead tree puts forth flowers in the spring so disease will be cast off.

(4) If the word “water” alone turns up the fortune is excellent. He is like a boatman finding a priceless pearl. And with it he will secure great advantage. It will dissipate all danger and bring blessings. To the north (which corresponds to water) the water is a wide expanse. So blessings and joys will abound and spread out like a sea.

(5) If the word “fire” alone turns up, the fortune will be fair or medium. As fire is of the south the flame will mount and cannot be extinguished. If the man go to law he will be worsted. Frequent calamities will overtake him. The will if unable to act promptly and there will be many errors to correct. There will be continual blame. Efforts will be in vain.

(6) If the word “earth” alone turns up, the fortune will again be medium. As earth is the middle element, at first it will be bad but afterward it will be good. He will be put in jail, though innocent, but will be released. Earth is merely dirt, but as from that dirt there grows the hope of man’s sustenance, so out of evil shall come good.

(To be continued.)

# Reviews.

*Trade Reports* of the Korean Imperial Maritime Customs for the year 1901. We have received a copy of this valuable [page 499] work which has been most thoroughly done, giving not only the returns for 1901 but comparative tables of returns for the past six years. It is a volume of 253 pp. small quarto, and the press work and general get-up of the book are worthy of great praise. In all the reports from the different ports special mention was made of the famine conditions which prevailed during the latter part of 1901, and it seems to have been the universal impression that the raising of the embargo on the export of rice had no effect on the export of that article, as the low price in Japan prevented the realization of any profit on rice exported from Korea. This is a gratifying fact even though it shows that our protest against the forced withdrawal of the embargo was without point. But it is something of a puzzle to understand why, since the Japanese authorities must have known that the relative prices in Korea and in Japan would prohibit export, they were so persistent in their demands that the embargo be removed. That eagerness to see the prohibition discontinued argued a belief that it was injuring the Japanese exporters.

But in spite of the untoward conditions in the peninsula we are told that the volume of trade was greater than in any previous year, the direct foreign trade exclusive of gold being $2,778,000 more than in any other year, and the total trade, domestic and foreign, being $3,900,000 greater than in any previous year. But this good showing was the result of a heavy trade during the early part of the year before the famine was announced. In one sense the year was less successful than the previous one, for in 1900 the balance of trade was $2,132,457 in Korea’s favor, while in 1901 it was $1,241, 170 against her. The tendency however is toward an equilibrium, which places Korean trade in a favorable light compared with Japan, where the balance of trade is always heavily against her. That the tendency is toward an equilibrium is shown b}’ the fact that while between 1892 and 1896 exports were 40 per cent of the trade and imports 60 per cent, between 1896 and 1901 the exports were 48 per cent and the imports 52 per cent, approximately. Again, while imports have increased 100 per cent during the decade, exports have increased 175 per cent.

The total revenue of the Customs was $1,325,414.11 [page 500] which is $212,245.47 better than any previous year. To this increase Chemulpo contributed almost twice as much as any other port. It is somewhat of a surprise to learn that Wonsan contributed to this increase more than twice as much as Fusan. One important feature of the year under review is that the heavy imports, followed by a partial famine, resulted in leaving over heavy stocks of goods to be disposed of during 1902 and the consequence is a temporary falling off in the importation of certain classes of goods. Of course cotton goods are the most important import and the Japanese have been making bold incursions into a field hitherto supplied almost wholly by English houses. How far the Japanese have succeeded may be gathered from the statement that “of the increase of some $1,250,000 in the total importation of cotton goods during 1901, as compared with the average of the last seven years, two thirds has been gained by Japanese manufacturers.”‘ That Koreans know a good thing when they see it, or feel it on their backs, is proved by the rather sensational leap in the import of woolen goods which in 1901 outdid any previous year by two hundred per cent. Another evidence of financial prosperity, or at least of there being plenty of money in the hands of the higher class people, is the fact that the importation of silk piece goods was almost twice as large in 1901 as in 1900 or any previous year.

The Trade Report speaks encouragingly of the trade in hides, affirming that “Korea seems to be turning to account her fine breed of cattle, in which, with systematic selection and rearing, undoubtedly lies one of her best resources.” There ought to be plenty of pasturage in Korea, considering the fact that with an area almost equal to that of Japan, Korea has less than one third the population.

As to the export of Gold, the following figures speak for themselves; beginning with 1892 the total export for the ten years has been as follows: $852,751; 918,659; 934.075; 1.352,929; 1.390,412; 2,034,079; 2,375,725; 2,933,382; 3,633,050; 4,993.351. It will be seen from this that the increase between 1900 and 1901 was $1,360,301. which is twice and a half as great as the increase between any other two years.

There is much of interest in each of the reports from the [page 501] different open ports, but Song-chin , the newest of the open ports is so little known even to most of the readers of the Review that we venture to make an extract from the report on that port by C. E. S. Wakefield. Esq., Commissioner of Customs at Wonsan.

“The Port of Song-chin, which lies on the 40th parallel, facing nearly northeast, midway between Wonsan and Vladivostock, has a very fair harbor, though quite unsheltered from the northeast. The prevailing wind, winter and summer, blows from the southwest, and it is only in times of atmospheric disturbance, an infrequent condition in these latitudes, that a northeast blow renders the anchorage unsafe and compels vessels to shift their moorings to the northeast end of the bay, where the Sarako headland gives them shelter. The holding-ground is good, and water to the depth of five fathoms obtains within 200 yards of the shore. The rise and fall of spring tide: is about two feet. No obstacles present themselves to the building of a landing-stage and boat harbor.

“When the port was opened a few huts represented the native town. Since then about 250 houses have been erected and more are being built, and at no distant date it is probable that Song-chin will displace the neighboring Im-myŭng as the market-place.

“The foreign community is represented by a Japanese\* Consul and staff and police force, postal staff, schoolmaster, shipping agent and workmen, and a British doctor and his family, belonging to the Canadian Mission. The only foreign house erected within the settlement limits is that occupied by the Japanese Consul.

“The climate is almost all that can be desired, and owing to the sea wind it is said to be more temperate at all seasons than Wonsan. Fogs and winds in Spring are the only drawback. The crops most cultivated are beans, millet, barley, oats, buckwheat, hemp, potatoes and some rice. The best quality of millet is cultivated in water like rice, and attains about the same size of stalk as that plant. This would seem peculiar to this district.”

On the whole, this annual report is extremely full and complete and its comparative tables are sure to be of immense value to anyone who wishes to study up the subject of Korea’s growth in material prosperity.

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*A Maker of the New Orient* (Samuel Rollins Brown), by Rev. William Elliot Griffis. Heming H. Revell Company, Chicago, U. S. A. We have received a copy of the above book from the publisher and have examined it with much pleasure, as we do everything from the facile pen of Dr. Griffis. The book deals with the opening years of Japan’s new era and the part that Dr. Brown played in helping. on. this good work. It is a sympathetic and appreciative study and, while it is a fixed rule with us to review nothing that does not bear directly on Korea, yet we cannot forbear saying that such a work as this is most valuable in preserving a record of the life of a man who rendered such a service to Korea’s nearest neighbor and most intimate friend -Japan.

# Obituary Notice.

## Miss Christine May Collbran,

For the second time within a month the foreign community of Seoul has been called upon to mourn the death of one of its number. First it was the highly esteemed and distinguished Italian Consul, Count di Malgra, and now it is a young lady, taken in the very flower of her youth when life, with all its opportunities and promises, was before her. Death is a sad guest at any age and in any condition of life but there seems something particularly touching in the loss of one who, having spent years in preparation for life’s work and having formed noble plans for the future, is cut down on the very threshold of life. It makes us feel the futility of all earthly things and we are almost tempted to throw down the implements of earthly work and give up the fight; and were it not for that noblest of all merely human qualities, the sense of duty, who knows what havoc such bitter disappointments might not work even in the most strenuous life? But, like soldiers in line of battle, when one falls his comrades, so far from throwing down their arms, close up the gap and fight the harder; not forgetting their dead comrade but spurred on to greater achievements by the memory of what that comrade was and of his loyalty to the cause.

[page 503] Miss Christine Collbran was born in Blackheath, England, on February the eighteenth, 1881. The following year her parents brought her to America and settled in Denver. Colorado. In that beautiful city of the plains she grew to girlhood and womanhood. When she was sixteen years old she graduated from Jarvis Hall, a ladies’ seminary in Denver, and soon after left America to study French and music in Paris. After two years of assiduous study she returned to Denver but very soon decided to take a trip to the Far East, her father then being in Korea. It was in 1899 that she first came to the East, and after spending some time in Japan and just touching Korea for a few weeks at Chemulpo she continued on around the world by way of Suez. She happened to be travelling by the Steamship *China*, on the trip when she was wrecked on the island of Perim at the entrance to the Red Sea. Proceeding to Paris she once more plunged into study, perfecting herself in the use of the language and developing her musical talent. She remained there until April, 1902. Meanwhile, although as yet only nineteen years old, she had determined to write up her experiences in the Orient, and with characteristic American pluck she set to work. She had been a keen observer and was gifted with a large sense of humor, so that while her book “An American Girl’s Trip to the Orient and Around the World” is quite serious in its intent, it abounds in humorous passages and shows a mind rarely endowed both with solid common sense and a lively appreciation of the absurdities and inconsistencies of human nature.

Early in 1902 she again started for Korea in company with her father and the other members of the family and since that time she has resided in Seoul.

Early in the month of October a gay party went out into the country on a camping expedition and it seems to have been at this time that Miss Collbran contracted the germs of typhoid fever, for shortly after her return she was taken ill, and in spite of medical skill and most careful nursing she succumbed to the disease on the 15th of November. Dr. Wunsch and Dr. Baldock were both unceasing in their attention to the sufferer and Miss Mills and Miss Wambold did everything that nurses could do, but without avail. The [page 504] world is the poorer by one sweet and generous life. She had planned to follow up her literary work by further books upon Japan and perhaps other portions of the world, and the work she had already done gave promise that she would add something of even greater value to the world’s knowledge of the Far East. Her aspirations were noble, her ambition high. She aimed at the very best -and she found it sooner than she thought.

I wonder if ever a rose was found

And there might not be a fairer;

Or if ever a glittering gem was ground,

And we dreamed not of a rarer.

Ah, never on earth shall we find the best,

But it waits for us in the Land of Rest.

And a *perfect thing* we shall never behold

Till we pass the portals of Shining Gold .

# Editorial Comment.

We were greatly pleased lately to note the promptness with which the Japanese authorities at the consulate took up the case of a common Korean who had been cheated by a Japanese dairyman, and forced the latter to make good the injury. It is such evidences of good will that go far toward building up a friendly spirit between the Koreans and the Japanese.

There is solid satisfaction in knowing that at last Seoul is to have a hospital worthy of the name. The Severance Memorial Hospital, the corner stone of which was laid on Thursday last, is so thoroughly planned, so finely situated and so well superintended that we believe it will leave little to be desired. Another foreign physician is coming from America to assist in the work and so with the present efficient Japanese [page 505] nurses and the trained Korean help, things will be put on a fine working basis. We wish it as many years of prosperity as there are bricks in its walls.

It is gratifying to see the manner in which the Japanese government officials are attempting to prevent the counterfeiting of Korean nickel coins. The numerous arrests at Kobe and the vicinity must convince the public that Japan is sincerely trying to do her duty in the case, which is perfectly plain. Of course it is to Japan’s advantage, too to stop this illegal coinage, for the only ones who benefit by it are the rascals who do the counterfeiting, while the Korean public and the Japanese merchants are all equally victimized. It is reasonable to suppose that the Japanese are, if anything, more injured by it than the Koreans, for it has a very depressing influence upon foreign trade of all kinds; and while the nickel coinage is not enough to affect seriously more than a small fraction of the Korean people it works havoc with the Japanese trade.

# News Calendar.

A Japanese merchant in Seoul bought goods in Japan and the creditor drew on the Dai Ichi Ginko for the money. The bill was presented here through the bank but payment was delayed. The bank sent one of its clerks around to the merchant’s place to ask for payment and this the merchant took as an insult. He therefore published in the native papers a statement that he would hereafter have nothing to do with the new bank notes issued by the Dai Ichi Ginko. The matter was promptly taken up by the Japanese Consul and the merchant was compelled to make a public retraction of his threat, published every day for a week.

The Belgian Government has purchased a piece of land of 7000 metres in Chang Dong, near the Japanese Consulate, as a Consulate site. We understand that building will begin in the Spring.

During the last month Seoul and Chemelpo have been visited by a virulent form of typhoid. Among the foreigners in Seoul there have been four cases and in Chemelpo among the Japanese there have been a dozen cases. In each place one case has terminated fatally.

[page 506] We have received from W. F. Sands, Esq., Adviser to the Imperial Household, a report of *The Provisory Cholera Committee* on its work between September 20th and October 20th, 1902. It is as follows:

On the 20 September, 1902, the Imperial Government entrusted to the Chief of the Police Department of Seoul the sum of Yen 3000 for use in preventing the spread of the Cholera. The Chief of Police, Mr. Ye Pong Eui, requested the Adviser of the Imperial Household to carry out the necessary measures for preventing the spread of the disease, and entrusted the Court-physician, Dr. Wunsch, with the disbursement of the money, under his (the Chief of the Police) control, in the expectation that the permanent Medical Board then contemplated would be speedily formed. The provisory cholera committee was composed of Mr. Sands and three police officials.

Their first act was to organize an intelligence service by which all cases were reported to a Central Station.

For 5 days 20 policemen were sent every day from the central office to the Imperial Medical School where they were instructed by Drs. Kotake and Kim Ik Nam in the nature of the disease, and the handling of the necessary medicines and disinfectants. These 100 men were very useful later in the distribution of medicines and in disinfecting the affected districts.

Outside the West and the South-east Gates, cholera isolation camps were formed, where the teachers and students of the Medical School and the physicians of the Home Department undertook the treatment of the patients.

In the East Camp, about 100 patients were treated, (with 48 deaths) and in the West Camp 104 (54 deaths) .

A large number of pamphlets containing simple rules relating to cholera were freely distributed by the police. The boiling of all water used was especially recommended. Medicines also, and disinfectants, were distributed by the police to the sick, and a large number of persons not affected by the sickness were vaccinated, as a precautionary measure, with Dr. Kitazawa’s cholera vaccine.

This vaccine was generously furnished by the Japanese Consul, Mr. Mimashi. All those whose duties called them to the cholera camps, as also the officials and messengers of the Communication Dept., were obliged by the Committee to undergo this precautionary measure. Of those thus vaccinated none took the sickness. A large number of the members of the Police Department were also vaccinated. These vaccinations were undertaken by physicians engaged by the Police Department.

The barracks were all visited by Dr. Baldock and Mr. Sands and their hygienic condition inspected. One of the principal sources of danger, the city prison, was also visited by Dr. Baldock and thoroughly disinfected. No deaths occurred in the prison subsequent to this disinfecting. One hundred and ninety-two of the inmates of the prison had been vaccinated, before the formation of the provisory Committee, by Dr. Ino.

[page 507] Five hundred of the 2000 bottles of Carbolic Acid Solution presented to the Imperial Household Department by Mr.Tanaka Zotaro, were sent to Chinnampo for use in disinfecting.

At the time of the formation of a Medical Board in August, measures had been taken to stop the progress of the epidemic at Pengyang and Chinnampo, and even after the breaking up of the Medical Board these places received all the support, from Seoul, that the limited means at the disposal of the Committee permitted them to offer.

In Pengyang Dr. Wells was placed in charge of the work, in Chinnampo Dr. Koto.

When the provisory Committee was formed on the 25th September the number of deaths reported had reached 317. From the 26th to the 20th October 1606 further deaths were reported. From the 20th October no deaths were reported, and the epidemic may be considered as having ended about that date.

The sum of money placed at the disposal of the Committee was used as follows:

Salary for Dr. Baldock / Dr. Kim / Dr. Kotake Yen 685.00 Salary for Medical students 210.00 Medicines and disinfectants 325.62 Materials for Isolation Camps 147.00 Transportation, coolie hire 119.00 Printed matter, stationery, telegrams 83.70 [Total] 1570-32 For Chinnampo and Pyeng Yang 582 98 ------------Yen 2153.30 There remain, therefore, Yen 846.70 and a certain quantity of medicines, drugs and disinfectants which were not distributed.

Deacon Thing, the founder of the Ella Thing Memorial Mission, has turned over all his property in Korea to Pastor M. C. Fenwick of the Korean Itinerant Mission, to be used at his discretion in missionary work. The two missions have now become one and will be known in the future as the Gordon Mission, after the late A. J. Gordon, D.D., who fostered both missions in their infancy. We congratulate Pastor Fenwick on this new development in the work. We understand that it has been accompanied by handsome cash donations. It is evident that Deacon Thing’s interest in the Korean work is not abating. By this move the two different Baptist movements in Korea are made one.

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company has sent out a notice informing the public that the Steamship *Korea* on her first eastward trip across the Pacific beat all previous records between Yokohama and San Francisco. We suppose this was found necessary to refute certain derogatory remarks in the *Kobe Chronicle* and elsewhere regarding the speed of that boat. The fact remains that there is no other boat on the Pacific that can touch her in the point of size, power, speed or appointments.

[page 508] Yi Hak-kyun memorialized the throne in favor of putting tobacco and wine, or beer, on the regular tax list, reviving the system of national examinations, or *Kwaga*, making boys resume the wearing of a hop’a, or name tag, raising the land tax to twenty dollars on each *Kyul*. The last of these suggestions was already under contemplation and will probably become an accomplished fact.

Japanese Buddhist monks have established a new monastery in Seoul. It is called Pon-wŭn Monastery or “Native Desire Monastery.” Whether the name is apposite or not we have not inquired from the “Natives.”

The Superintendent of Trade at Masanpo informs the government that some Russians are prospecting for gold in Hap-Ch’ŭln, near that port.

Chung Hă-yong has been made Chargé d’ Affaires in the Korean Legation at Tokyo since the return of the Minister.

The postponed celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the accession of His Majesty the Emperor will be held in December, beginning with the third. This is the Korean part of the function. The one to which foreign guests are invited will take place in the Spring, as already announced.

The removal of the Queen’s remains to the tomb in Keum-gok will take place on the fourteenth of December.

The place of the late Count di Malgra in the Italian Consulate is being filled by Lieut. Carlo Rossetti of the Italian navy, pending the arrival of the newly appointed Italian Minister.

Lady Om has been raised one step, her rank now being *Kwi-pi* instead of *Pi* as heretofore.

The Minister of Education has recommended the issuing of an order commanding all boys of eight years old and upward to go to school, excepting those engaged in commerce, agriculture or manual trades; also to forbid boys to smoke cigarettes, play pitch-penny or fly kites.

Cho Chŭng-pil has been appointed Governor of North Ch’ung Chŭng Province.

U Yong Sŭn and Kim Kwi-hyŭn, who were imprisoned in 1900 because of their connection with the Independent Club, have been liberated.

It is said that before the celebration next Spring a large sum of money will be spent in repairing the drains and sewers of the city and in cleaning up generally.

A man who dared to memorialize the throne against the cutting of hair got a hundred blows with the paddle and banishment for three years.

Yi Kun-t’ăk has been appointed acting Minister of War.

Pak Che-sun, the Korean Minister to China, presented his credentials to the Emperor on the 31st of October.

Cho Pyŭng-sik has been made full Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Educational Department has sent $4666 to Prince Eui-Wha in America to defray his education expenses.

The Korean Minister to, England, Min Yung-don, will shortly return to Korea on account of illness.

[page 509] Over three hundred houses were burned in Fusan on the 4th. Over twelve hundred people were rendered homeless and many received severe injuries. Report says that some thirty people were killed.

At last reports are to hand of the terrible storm in Kyŭng Sang Province last September A great monastery near Tăgu was buried under an avalanche or landslide caused by the rain and 420 *kan* were destroyed. In various places a total of 1310 houses were destroyed and 108 lives lost in this storm.

The police in Kobe on the 6th inst. arrested two Koreans who were seeking an opportunity to assassinate Yi Chun-yong, the grand-son of the late Regent.

Kim Chu-hyŭn has been appointed Minister of Home Department in place of Yi Kön-ha, resigned.

A branch of the Dai Ichi Ginko has been established at Mokpo.

Because of complaints lodged by the English and Japanese representatives the Mayor has withdrawn the prohibition of the use or sale of foreign washing soda.

It is rumored that Yi Yong-ik is trying to secure a loan of $5,000,000, offering as security the ginseng crops for the next five years.

Yi Yong-ik has received a decoration of the second order because of meritorious service.

Ki Kön-tăk has been appointed acting Chief of Police in place of Yi Pong-ei, resigned.

Of the three military officers who went to Japan to witness the manoeuvers, Yi Hak-kyun has been given a Japanese decoration of the third degree, Yi Heui-du of the fourth degree and No Păk-in of the fifth degree.

As the Government has failed to pay the mortgage on the Electric Railway the creditors have announced that the road will be offered for sale to some other nationality, but the Foreign Office says that this will not be necessary as the Government will pay.

The shrine in honor of the Chinese General O Chang-gyung who died in Seoul in 1882 is to be repaired by the Chinese aided by a Korean grant. The shrine is near the Hun-yŭn-wun, inside the East Gate.

Yun Ung-yŭl has been appointed acting Judge of the Supreme Court in place of Yi Yong-ik, resigned.

Japanese counterfeiters of Korean nickels arc being sharply handled by the authorities in Kobe and elsewhere. Several have been arrested *in flagrante delicto*, and committed to the peaceful quietude of the jail for periods of from two to four months.

The 26th instant saw 5000 bags of rice exported to Osaka.

The Imperial household has made a gift of a solid gold cup to each of seventeen Buddhist monasteries in the vicinity of Seoul.

Kwŭn Chong-sŭk and Yi Chong-jik have been arrested on suspicion of having conspired to assassinate Yi Yong-ik.

Gen Yi Hak-kyun and Col. Yi Heui-du, who have just returned from Japan, have been arrested on suspicion of having had converse with certain disaffected parties in foreign parts.

[page 510] The Seoul Fusan Railway line has been laid as far as Su-wŭn and it is hoped that trains will soon be running over this section of the road.

Many pirates are said to be carrying on their nefarious work along the coast of Whang-hă Province.

Thanksgiving Day, by proclamation of President Roosevelt, was observed in Seoul on Thursday the 27th. inst. The regular Thanksgiving Service was held, at which Rev. Mr. Hounshell delivered a most appropriate address. A solo was sung by Mrs. Morris, which gave great pleasure to the audience.

It is said that game is very plentiful this year, especially pheasants. One of our local nimrods flushed six birds and secured four within sight of the Yong-tong-po Station, and only a few minutes’ walk away,

Seoul is fortunate in having access to such fine stocks of Christmas novelties as are to be found at the office of Mr. J. W. Hodge, at Mr. Rondon’s store and at On Cheong\*s store. Heretofore we have had to be content with a very small assortment, and much credit is due these firms for their enterprise in supplying the market here, which at best can be little better than precarious, owing to the smallness of our numbers.

The many friends of Mr. and Mrs. English were very sorry to learn that the latter had contracted the smallpox. The disease developed about the twenty-third inst. Mrs. English had been vaccinated only a few months previous but it had not taken. It is not necessary to say that all her friends wish her a speedy and happy recovery.

The ceremony of the laying of the corner-stone of the new Severance Memorial Hospital took place at three o’clock in the afternoon of Nov. 27th in the presence of a large number of guests, among whom were most of the Foreign Representatives and a goodly showing of Korean officials. The site is a commanding one on the east of the main road outside the South Gate.

The exercises were opened by Dr. O. R. Avison who invited Rev. H. G. Underwood, D. D., to occupy the Chair. Dr. Underwood made a short speech in accepting the position. Prayer was then offered by Rev. Geo. Heber Jones, Ph. D., and this was followed by a prayer in Korean by one of the native church members. The scriptures were then read by Rev. J. R. Moose and also by one of the native brothers. Dr. Underwood then, in a few graceful words, introduced the speaker of the day, Hon. H. N. Allen, the United States Minister. In introducing him Dr. Underwood referred to the fact that it was Dr. Allen who inaugurated the medical work in Seoul, and that it was largely owing to his pioneer work that the present happy consummation had been reached.

Dr. Allen began a most appropriate speech by referring to the beginnings of hospital work in Seoul in 1884, and mentioning by name and in chronological order his successors in the government hospital. Special mention was made of the arduous labors of Dr. O. R. Avison, the present Physician in Charge. A tribute was also offered to the generous friend in America, Mr. Severance, who, though he had never seen Korea, had put down the money for this fine building. The speaker closed by a [page 511] reference to the fact that this institution is a hand of greeting extended by the young west to the old east and he hoped that it would prove of great benefit to the Korean people.

After Dr. Allen finished, his speech was translated into Korean by Rev. J. S. Gale, and then Dr. Allen took in his hand the silver trowel, which had been made of Korean metal and by a Korean, and superintended the placing of the corner-stone, under which was deposited a box containing copies of the Scriptures, hymn books, Christian papers, the daily papers, coins, and several other objects. He then declared the stone laid and the work formally begun. Dr. Avison made a few remarks expressing his gratification at the completion of the work and giving some of the events which led up to the formation of the plan and the raising of the money. After prayer by Rev. W. D. Reynolds the meeting was dismissed with the benediction by the chairman.

It seems that there has been a combined effort on the part of a very powerful body of Korean officials to secure the down-fall of Yi Yong-ik who has been having his own way so long in Korean affairs. As we go to press the report is that Mr. Yi is in hiding, which would indicate that the combined effort has been at least partially successful. In this, Korean history is but repeating itself, for it has been demonstrated time and again that no man can continue to hold power for any length of time without having a strong personal backing.

A letter from Tă-ku announces that on a recent country trip Rev. Mr. Adams shot a wild boar weighing 300 pounds. He is preserving the head. It will be our endeavor to secure a detailed account of this interesting event. This is the first wild boar shot by a foreigner in Korea as far we as have heard.

[page 513]

# Korean History.

Modern Korea.

On the seventh of the moon the royal party crossed the Tă-dong River and entered the gates of P’yŭng-yang.

Two days later a messenger was seen approaching at a rapid pace. He was swiftly ferried across the river and hurried into the king’s presence where he said, “Yi Yang-wŭn, the defender of Seoul has fled, and the city is in the possession of the enemy.” The king exclaimed, “This is bad news indeed, we must appoint someone whose work it shall be to continually attempt to retake the capital.” He thereupon appointed Gen. Yu Hong to that arduous and dangerous position. He was to go with three thousand men and do what he could to stop the progress of the Japanese and if possible regain control of the capital. Gen. Yu received the appointment with the worst possible grace. After the headlong flight with all its hardships and privations, to be told that he must go back with three thousand men and meet what he supposed was a blood-thirsty horde of savages was too much for his patriotism; so he stayed in his rooms and sulked. Two days passed and still he did not start. The king called him up and said, ‘‘How is it that you let the time slip by like this when you ought to be on the way to Seoul with troops?” The mighty warrior replied, “I fear Your Majesty will have to excuse me from this duty as I am suffering from a boil on my leg.” One of the courtiers, Yi Han-guk took him to task saying, “How is it that after receiving such favors at the hand of the king you shrink from this duty? You are a coward and are afraid to go. You are like a sulky dancing-girl who refuses either to dance or sing. You are not only not brave but you are not even clever. Do you suppose you can impose on His Majesty with any such story as this about a boil on your leg?” The king was immensely pleased with this well merited rebuke and laughed long and loud at the discomfited general, but finally said, “Well, then, since our doughty Gen. Yu cannot go let Gen. Han Eung-in go instead.” The next day Gen. Han started south with 5000 troops picked from [page 514] the northern bother guard, and in good time he arrived at the banks of the Im-jin. River, midway between Song-do and Seoul. This was the great strategic position that must be held at any cost. It was the key to the north, the gateway to Whang-hă Province and to P’yŭng-an Province beyond .

Now that the king and the court were in comparative safety, an attempt was made to bring together the loose ends of things and make some sort of headway against the Japanese. Gen. Yi Hang-bok who had so gallantly escorted the Queen from the palace, the night of the exodus from Seoul was made Minister of War. A council was called to discuss the demands made by the people of Song-do in reference to the punishment of certain officials whom they had accused. The result was that Yi San-ha was banished to P’yŭng-ha but the king refused to punish the father of his favorite concubine.

We notice that the military prowess of the Japanese, their thorough equipment and their martial spirit took Korea by surprise. It caused a universal panic, and for the first few weeks it was impossible to get the soldiers to stand up and fight the enemy, to say nothing of the generals. The troops and the generals were muturally suspicious of each other and neither seemed to have any faith in the courage or loyalty of the other. But now the time had come when the impetuous sweep of the Japanese was stopped, for the time being, by their occupation of Seoul. The fall of the capital was looked upon by the king and the people as a great calamity, but in reality it was the very thing that saved the king from the necessity of crossing the border and perhaps it saved Peking itself. If the Japanese had kept up that impetuous, overwhelming rush with which they came up from Fusan to Seoul, and, instead of stopping at the capital, had pushed straight for the Yalu River they would have swept everything before them and would have been knocking at the gates of Nanking before the sleepy celestials knew that Hideyoshi dreamed of paying back in kind the haughty summons of Kublai Khan four hundred years before. The stop at Seoul gave the Korean forces a breathing space and an opportunity to get into shape to do better work than they had done. The people came to see that [page 515] instead of painted devils, as they had at first appeared, the Japanese were flesh and blood like themselves and the terror which their fierce aspect at first inspired gradually wore off and in-so-far lessened the discrepancy between the two combatants. On the side of the Japanese there was only one favorable factor, their tremendous fighting power in battle. There they had it all their own way. But on the other hand they were in a thickly populated and hostile country, practically cut off from their base of supplies and dependent entirely upon forage for their sustenance. Under these circumstances their position was sure to become worse rather than better and the real strength of the Koreans was sure to show itself. If a Korean regiment was swept off in battle there were millions from which to recruit, while every Japanese who fell caused just so much irreparable injury to the invading army. We shall see that it was the abandonment of the “double quick” that eventually drove the Japanese back across the straits.

Chapter VII.

Mutual jealousies... first Korean victory ... .successful general executed ...people disgusted ...another general executed .. .operations in the south ...troops mass in Kong-ju... unfortunate engagement ....troops scattered ...naval engagement in the south under Admiral Yi Sun-sin. . . .a great Japanese defeat. . . .Japanese army cut off from reinforcements . . .the tortoise boat... another naval victory ....and another naval campaign closes.... Admiral Yi is decorated. . . the fall of Yŭng-wun Fortress. . . .Japanese checked at the Im-jin River... they seemingly prepare to retreat.... jealousies among the Koreans ...divided counsels. .. .Koreans cross and attack . . .defeated . . .Korean army retreats... the Japanese cross ....Japanese jealousies.... they separate. ..the news of defeat reaches the king... a trifling Korean victory... a great council the king decides to go to Ham-heung.

The wretched party strife among the Koreans was the cause of their weakness. No sooner did a capable man arise than he became the target for the hatred and jealousy of a hundred rivals, and no trickery or subterfuge was left untried whereby to have him degraded and disgraced. A particular [page 516] incident will illustrate this. Gen. Sin Kak had been associated with Gen. Kim Myŭng-wŭn in the defenses of the Han River, but when Gen. Kim fled after throwing into the river the engines of defense, there was nothing to do but fall back. Gen. Sin retreated to a place of safety but immediately began collecting troops from Kyŭng-geui Province, and he was also joined by a contingent from Ham-gyŭng Province. While the Japanese held Seoul, large bands of them scoured the surrounding country for booty. One of these bands was trying to make its way across the hills to Ka-p’yŭng and Ch’unch’un, and had gotten as far as the Kye Pass in the town of Yang-ju when they found themselves face to face with the troops of Gen. Sin Kak. A fierce fight took place, in which the Japanese, who were probably largely outnumbered, were severely defeated, leaving sixty heads in the hands of the Koreans. This promised to be the beginning of a series of such little engagements in which the Japanese army would be gradually weakened without being able to draw the Koreans into a large general engagement; the more so because the Japanese were dependent upon forage for their supplies.

But note the sequel. While all Kyŭng-geui was ringing with the praises of the successful general and the people were beginning to see that all was not yet lost, a swift messenger was on his way southward from P’yŭng-yang bearing a sword and a letter ordering the instant execution of the traitor Sin Kak. The alleged reason for this was as follows: When Gen. Kim fled from the defenses of the Han, in order to cover his infamy, he wrote a letter to the king accusing Gen. Sin Kak of having deserted him in his hour of need. Gen. Yu Hong also recognised Gen. Sin as a powerful rival and so added his prayers to those of Gen. Kim that the traitor Sin be killed. The king knew no better than to comply with this request, preferred as it was by two of his leading generals, and the message of death was sent. But before the day was done came the news of the defeat of the Japanese by the forces under this same Sin Kak. The condemned “traitor” had stood up before a Japanese force and had taken sixty beads. The king was filled with remorse and a swift messenger was sent to stay the hand of the executioner. He took the road an hour after the death messenger and arrived at the camp of Gen. Sin [page 517] Kak an hour after that loyal man had bowed his head to the axe of his royal master. Who knows but the feet of the second messenger had been made heavy by the gold of Sin Kak’s rivals? History is silent as to this but the suspicion is inevitable. This wanton act was looked upon by the people with horror and detestation, who saw their first successful champion cut down in the very hour of his success.

But another sword, this time of pure justice, was also prepared for Gen. Yi Kak who had fled from before the Japanese at Tong-nă. He made his appearance at the Im-jin River, doubtless thinking himself safe from criticism, but in this he was mistaken, for as he was the one who first set the example of cowardice, he was arrested and put to death.

And now as the Japanese are revelling in Seoul and the king is resting in P’yŭng-yang and the Korean generals are busy massing troops at the Im-jin to dispute the passage of the Japanese, let us turn southward and witness some of the events that are transpiring there, for we must not think that the provinces of Chŭl-la and Ch’ung-ch’ŭng are at peace all this time.

When the Japanese army separated .soon after leaving Tong-nă one army division under Kuroda swept like a whirlwind westward across the north-western corner of Chŭl-la Province and through the entire length of Ch’ung-chŭng Province on its way to Seoul. Yi Kwang the governor of Chŭl-la got together some 8000 men and hastened north ta Kong-ju the capital of Ch’ung-chŭng Province. Finding there that the king had fled from Seoul, he gave up all hope of effecting anything and, turning about, made for the south again. But on the way he was met by Păk Kwang-ön who upbraided him severely, urging that if the king had fled northward all the more need of keeping on and offering him whatever support was possible. The governor humbly confessed that he had been hasty in his action, and turned about and went back to Kong-ju where he joined the forces of the governors of C’ung-ch’ŭng and Kyŭng-sang Provinces who had arrived at that place. There were also Gen. Yi Ok, the military governor of Ch’ung-ch’ŭng, and Gen. Kwak Yŭng, the military governor of Chŭl-la. Each of the provinces had both a civil and a military governor. These three civil and [page 518] two military governors met, then, in Kong-ju and joined forces. It is commonly reported that they had between them 100,000 men, but probably about half that figure would be nearer the truth. They formed a gallant array with their flaunting banners, and the people of the adjoining districts caught up arms and came and joined what seemed to them an invincible host. A Japanese force was found to be intrenched on Puk-du-mun Mountain and Governor Yi Kwang was for making an immediate attack, but one of his aides said, “We are now so near Seoul there is no use in turning aside to attack so small a force. We had better push on to the defense of the Im-jin River.” Păk Kwang-on who had upbraided the governor for retiring also said, “The road is very narrow which leads up to this position of the Japanese and the woods are very dense. We had better be cautious.” Being opposed thus the second time was more than his temper could endure, so the governor ordered Păk bound and whipped. The latter thinking that it was an imputation on his bravery, after receiving a severe beating, seized his weapons and rushed headlong up the slope and attacked the Japanese. Many followed and the engagement became general. From morning till noon it continued but the Japanese could not be driven out of their strong position in the woods. The Koreans began to lose in the battle and finally the Japanese, creeping down toward the Koreans in the underbrush and grass, suddenly rushed out upon them and cut them down by scores. Păk and several other notable men fell in the fight, but the main body of the Korean troops under Governor Yi Kwang moved on to Kwang-gyo Mountain near the town of Su-wŭn, only eighty li from Seoul. Expecting that the day would be a busy one, Governor Yi had his soldiers fed very early in the morning and when day broke, sure enough, there was the Japanese force ready to engage him, and every few moments one or other of the Japanese braves would rush out from the lines, brandish his weapons and challenge the Koreans to come out and fight. So Gen. Sin Ik of the province of Ch’ung-ch’ŭng advanced with his force and engaged the enemy. In a few moments the superiority of the Japanese arms became evident. The panic-stricken Koreans fled before them like sheep before wolves. After an hour’s time [page 519] this considerable army which was to have succored the king was thoroughly scattered, but it is probable that many of the soldiers figured later in the defense of the Im-jin River.

At the same time events were happening further south which were far more creditable to the Korean arms and which were the forerunner of the final expulsion of the Japanese from the peninsula.

A fleet of Japanese boats, bringing as is supposed the reserve of 60,000 men, arrived off the island of Ka-dok on the coast of Kyung-sang Province. At that time Admiral Wŭn Kyun had charge of all matters along the coast of that province. When he saw this vast fleet of ships his heart sank and without more ado he prepared to scuttle his ships and flee by land, but fortunately there was good advice at hand, for one of his staff said, “Do not abandon all hope at once but send and ask Yi Sun-sin the Admiral of Chŭl-la to come and aid you.” A swift messenger was sent and the missive was placed in the hands of Admiral Yi. One of his staff said “No, let him guard his own coast and we will look after ours. Why should we go and help him?” But Admiral Yi said, “Is not Kyŭng-sang Province as much the country of our king as Chŭl-la? How can we refuse to go to his aid?” So eighty boats were gotten ready in haste and sailed away to the island of Han-san where the two admirals met and joined forces. The whole fleet sailed out of harbor together and made for the island of Ok-po where the hostile fleet was moored. As soon as the enemy hove in sight Admiral Yi Sun-sin made directly for them and soon was grappling them. The Koreans had the advantage of the wind at their backs for they shot fire arrows among the boats of the Japanese and soon had twenty-six of them in flames. It is said the sea was covered with the wreckage and with struggling human forms. So the remaining ships of the enemy turned about and crowded on all sail in flight, but Admiral Yi gave chase and cut down many more and scattered the rest so that the expedition was an entire failure. This was the first of this great admiral’s successes and it illustrates the fact that the Korean warrior was not a coward when well led. The Japanese armies in Korea were thus cut off from their source of supply and reinforcement and thus a tremendous blow was dealt them. This [page 520] victory may be said to have been the decisive point in the war.

It is probable that the soldiers in the Japanese array had been accustomed to short though sanguinary campaigns and had spent the intervals of leisure at home. But now this vast army was quite cut off from their home and were among strange scenes. It cannot be wondered at therefore that after a time discontent arose in spite of all successes, a discontent which, combined with other causes, finally drove them back to Japan.

Tradition says that about this time Admiral Yi had a dream in which a robed man appeared and cried, “The Japanese are coming.” He arose, assembled his fleet and sailed forth as far as the town of No-ryang where he found a large fleet of the enemy. He used the same tactics as before, burning twelve of them and chasing the rest away. The main reason for his unparalleled successes on the sea was the possession of a peculiar war vessel of his own invention and construction. It was called the Kwi-sŭn or “Tortoise Boat,” from its resemblance to that animal. There is no doubt that the tortoise furnished the model for the boat. Its greatest peculiarity was a curved deck of iron plates like the back of a tortoise, which completely sheltered the fighters and rowers beneath. In front was a hideous crested head, erect, with wide open mouth through which arrows and other missiles could be discharged. There was another opening in the rear and six on either side for the same purpose. On top of the curved deck there was a narrow walk from stem to stern and another across the middle from side to side, but every other part of the back bristled with iron pikes so that an enemy who should endeavor to board her would find himself immediately impaled upon a score of spear-heads. This deck being of iron, rendered the ship impervious to fire arrows and so the occupants could go into action with as much security as one of our modern battle ships could go into engagement with the wooden war vessels of a century ago. In addition to this, she was built for speed and could easily overtake anything afloat. This made her doubly formidable, for even flight could not avail the enemy. She usually did more execution after the flight commenced than before, for she could overtake and ram them one by one, probably better [page 521] than she could handle them when drawn up in line of battle. It is said that the ribs of this remarkable ship lie in the sand today in the village of Ko-sŭng on the coast of Kyŭngsang Province, They are believed to have been seen there by Lieut. Geo. C. Foulk, U. S. N., in 1884. The people of the town have an annual festival, when they launch a fleet of boats and sail about the harbor in honor of the great Yi Sun-sin and his “Tortoise Boat.”

In the engagement last described the Japanese in their flight were so terrified by this craft, which pursued them and sank them one by one, that they stamped their feet and cried out that it was more than of human workmanship. And indeed it was almost more than the human of that century, for it anticipated by nearly three hundred years the iron-clad war ship. In this battle Admiral Yi was wounded in the shoulder but made no sign. He urged on his men to the very last and finally when they drew off, weary of slaughter, he bared his shoulder and ordered the bullet to be cut out.

Having thus brilliantly begun, and perhaps fearing lest, if he should delay, some jealous rival might induce the king to take off his head, he pushed straight on to Tang-hang Harbor where he encountered another fleet, among which was an immense three-decked ship on which sat the admiral of the fleet, clad in silk and wearing a golden head-piece. The intrepid Yi made straight for this craft with his tortoise boat and when near it called to one of his best marksmen to let fly a shaft at the man in silks. The arrow flew straight to its mark and pierced the man’s throat. Seeing the fall of their chief, the whole fleet showed their rudders and made off as fast as they could go, but with the usual result. The next day saw Admiral Yi in Pyŭk-hang Harbor where he lay at anchor while he sent out ships to reconnoitre and find out the position of the enemy. If anything was seen of the foe, guns were to be fired as a signal. Ere long the signal shot was heard far out at sea. The fleet put out in two long divergent lines “like a fish-trap,” as the Koreans say, and soon on the horizon twenty-six hulls appeared rising and sinking on the swell. As they neared they entered the two lines of the Korean fleet and were surrounded. As the [page 522] result of this fight every one of the Japanese boats was burned and two hundred heads were taken as trophies. This remarkable naval campaign closed with the destruction of a few remaining Japanese boats that were overtaken near Yong-deung Harbor.

The reputation of Admiral Yi Sun-sin spread over the whole south and his praises were one very lip. His followers would go anywhere with him and scarcely seemed to know what fear was. Soon the report of these splendid victories came to the ears of the king, and though Admiral Yi was not without detractors at court the king conferred upon him a lofty title.

In the fifth moon the Japanese resumed active operations in the north and east. A powerful force were sent to the province of Kang-wŭn which was straightway overrun. The governor, Kim Che-gap, hastily collected all the soldiers that could be found, together with arms and ammunition, and went to the almost impregnable fortress of Yŭng-wŭn. The natural defenses of this place were unexcelled by any in Korea. On three sides the approach was almost precipitous and a handful of men could hold an army at bay. Here the governor collected provisions in abundance and dug a well. Stones were piled on the top of the wall to be thrown down upon anyone who should attempt to scale the height. The Japanese recognised the strength of the position and tried to get the governor to surrender without a struggle. A letter was sent up the steep slope and handed over the wall. It said “You are doomed. Even if you hold out for two months you will then be taken. You must come out and surrender at once.” The only answer was the headless trunk of the Japanese messenger, rolled down the precipice before the eyes of the invading army. The next day the assault began. The besiegers swarmed up the sides of the slope, so that, to use the Korean figure, the mountain -side was clothed with them. The garrison though only 5000 strong found no difficulty in driving them back. That night the Koreans, wearied by the labors of the day and deeming it impossible that the Japanese should try to attack at night up those steep slopes, failed to set a guard; and in the early morning, before light, a little band of the enemy worked its way up the face [page 523] of the precipice until they reached the base of the wall. A few stones were displaced until a small aperture was made and the little band effected an entrance. They rushed into the camp with a terrific yell cutting down the half-awakened and wholly terrified garrison. The gates were thrown open and in an hour the victory was complete. Gov. Kim Che-gap refused to do obeisance and was cut down.

And now all eyes were turned toward the Im-jin River where the king and the people fondly hoped to be able to stop the invading host. Troops had been coming continually and massing on the northern bank of the stream at the point where the main road from Seoul to P’yŭng-yang crosses it by ferry. Its great strategic importance was due to the fact that it was the only good place for a large force to cross. The troops massed here were nominally under the command of Gen. Kim Myŭng-wŭn who had so promptly deserted the defenses of the Han, upon the arrival of the Japanese. The Koreans had everything in their favor. The southern bank where the Japanese must embark is a high bluff pierced only by a narrow gully which would allow of only a few hundred approaching the immediate brink of the water at once and consequently the army would have to cross little by little. The opposite bank, on the other hand, is a long flat stretch of sand, an ideal place for drawing up a defensive force, and every boat-load of the enemy would be the mark for a thousand arrows.

The Korean forces were numerous enough, they were brave enough and their leaders were individually capable enough; but note the sequel. All the boats had been brought over to the Korean side and so, when the Japanese arrived on the southern bank and looked down the high bluff upon the assembled hosts of the Koreans and marked the difficulty of embarkation, the swiftness of the current and the utter absence of boats or craft of any kind, they found themselves for the first time completely checked. An hour’s resistance was all they had ever met before, but here was evidently a serious obstacle.

For ten long days these great armies sat facing each other across the waters of the Im-jin. They were ten days of exultation for the Koreans and every day that passed [page 524] raised the courage, or rather the self-confidence, of the Koreans, who forgot that it was nature and not they who held the foe in check. They did not dream for an instant that the Japanese were about to make them the instruments of their own destruction. When the eleventh morning broke something was seen to be going on among the Japanese, a great running about and the carrying of bundles from place to place. In a short time the reason became apparent. The Japanese had given up further advance and were preparing to retreat toward Seoul. Smoke and flame showed that they were burning their camp and soon the whole force was seen to be on the move back toward the south. To imagine the revulsion of feeling in the minds of the Koreans we should have to realize the deep humiliation to which they had been subjected, the heaps of slain they had seen, the losses in property, in homes, in relatives, in friends which they had sustained at the hands of the ruthless invaders. Instead of being pursued they were to pursue. They would dog the footsteps of the retreating army, cut off the stragglers, worry the life out of the “dwarfs,” as they called the Japanese, and finally give them a farewell kick as they left the port of Fusan on their ignominious homeward flight. Such must have been the common thought and purpose of the Koreans, and the thirst for revenge was simply unbearable. And here again comes to the front the fatal weakness of the Koreans. We have before remarked that the rise of the political parties lay at the bottom of the failure of the Korean arms against the Japanese. It has already been illustrated in the case of Gen. Sin Kak who was executed through jealousy on the very day of his great victory. Here again it is to become apparent. While Gen. Kim Myŭng-sŭn was nominally in charge of the defenses of the Im-jin he was far from being in full command of the troops massed there. A number of other generals were there and each held his own troops in hand and each wished to distinguish himself and so step over the heads of the rest into the good graces of the king. This would mean preferment and wealth. There was absolutely no supreme command, there was no common plan, there was nothing but mutual jealousy and suspicion. A young general. Sin Kil-i, who knew nothing of war, was sure that the [page 525] enemy had decamped, and he wanted to cross immediately in pursuit. But this was so manifestly absurd that even the common soldiers cried out, “You had better examine carefully and see whether the enemy has actually gone.” For answer the young general had a few heads struck off, which shows he was something of a disciplinarian if nothing more. Then Gen. Yu Keuk-yang expostulated with the young man, warning him that it was surely a trick to lure them across, but the young fellow drew his sword and made a lunge at the old general and charged him with cowardice. This no one could endure, so the aged general said, “Coward, am I? Well I speak only for the good of my king; but I will be the first to cross and fall into this trap, and when you see me fall you will know that my advice was sound.” So calling his soldiers he ordered them into the boats and, throwing all caution to the winds and forgetting the best interests of his king for a petty vindication of his own bravery, he dashed across the river and up the heights. The young Sin Kil-i could do no less than follow, and when he had gained the heights beyond he found the words of the aged general true. A short distance away a half dozen naked Japanese were dancing on the border of a wood, but when the Koreans rushed at them a countless multitude of Japanese who had lain concealed in the wood poured out, and in an instant the Koreans were surrounded. The aged general having thus proved his claim to bravery, or rather foolhardiness, sat down and said, “Now has come the time for me to die.” And die he did. It was only of himself that he thought, and it was this all-pervading selfishness, bred of party strife, that neutralised every good quality in the Korean army. It was not because they were not brave nor because luxury had sapped the vitality of the noble classes but it was because no one would work with anyone else. It was because they saw in war nothing but the chance of personal advancement. And so each one deplored the successes and rejoiced in the failures of every other.

When the old general fell, the Koreans found themselves again, as in the battle in which Gen. Sin Yip fell, between the Japanese and the river. Back they rushed only to find that some of the boats had drifted away and others, being overcrowded, had sunk. Hundreds were driven into the [page 526] water while others, preferring a soldier’s death, presented their necks to the swords of the Japanese.

But even yet all was not lost. A little wisdom and care might still have left the day unwon by the Japanese. They had a few boats, to be sure, but not enough to be of any use in the face of the still large Korean force on the opposite bank. But here occurred the greatest mistake of all. The generals on the northern bank, witnessing the terrible slaughter of their confreres, and not stopping to reckon the chances still remaining of successful defense, mounted their horses and gave themselves to flight. This was not only cowardice. It was thoughtlessness, carelessness in large part, and if there had been one man in command of the whole defensive force who could witness the loss of a large fraction of his force without losing his head, the Japanese would still have been as far from the northern bank as ever. The moment the soldiers saw the flight of their generals they raised a derisive shout, “The generals are running away,” and forthwith they followed the example, as they had a perfect right to do.

The Japanese leaders seeing the defenses of the river broken up by their successful strategem, immediately crossed with their entire force which Korean accounts reckon at about a quarter of a million. The Korean accounts tell us but little about the rivalry of the two Japanese leaders, Kato and Konishi, but among the Japanese it was notorious. It was impossible for them to march together for any length of time. It was this rivalry which had made them take different roads to Seoul and it was now necessary for them to part again. This jealousy was another of the potent causes of the final failure of the Japanese. Had these two men worked together they could have marched straight on to the walls of Nanking without meeting an enemy worthy of their steel. As it was they separated and scattered over the country, dissipating their power and thus frustrating the design of Hideyoshi -the conquest of China. They cast lots as to their routes and fortune favored the younger man, Konishi, who drew as his lot the straight path north where glory lay if anywhere. Kato had to be content with a dash into the province of Ham-gyŭng in the northeast. Another general, [page 527] Kuroda, led a force into the western part of Whang-hă Province. All this took place in the fifth moon.

The king was resting secure in P’yŭng-yang, trusting in the defense of the Im-jin River, when a messenger rushed in breathless, announcing that the Im-jin had been deserted and that the invaders were coming north by leaps and bounds. The town was thrown into a panic of fright and, as the Koreans truly put it, “No man had any color in his face.” Gen , Yi II came hurrying in from the seat of war disguised as a coolie and wearing rough straw shoes. The king put him in command of the forces guarding the fords of the Ta-dong River which flows by the walls of P’yŭng-yang.

We must note in passing a trifling success on the part of Captain Wŭn-ho who had been in charge of the ferry across the Han at Yo-ju. He had been called away into Kang-wŭn Province but returned just in time to form an ambush at Yoju and spring out upon a company of Japanese whom he routed, securing some fifty heads. The Koreans say that from that time the Japanese avoided the Yo-ju ferry.

Chapter VIII.

A great council... the king decides to move to Ham-heung. . . .the news in China ...the king finds difficulty in leaving P’yŭng-yang ... a parley in the channel of the Ta-dong... the king leaves the city ... .the Koreans reveal the position of the ford. . . .the Japanese enter P’yŭng-yang. . . .the Crown Prince goes to Kang-wŭn Province ... the king pushes north... Koreans in despair... the indefatigable Yu Sung-nyong. . . .Song Ta-ŭp brings the queen to the king. . . . Kato pushes into Hani-gyŭng Province... fight at the granaries... Korean reverses . . .a Korean betrays the two Princes. . . .a traitor punished . . .brave defenders of Yŭn-an... the king goes to Eui-ju . . . .conclave in the south... “General of the Red Robe”... his prowess. ..he retires ...disaster at Köm-san. .. .a long chase. .. . Japanese defeated at Keum-nyŭng.

On the second day of the sixth moon the king called a great council to discuss the advisability of his staying longer in P’yŭng-yang or of moving further north. One said, “If someone is left to guard this city it will be well for the king [page 528] to move north,” but another said, “Pyŭng-yang is a natural fortress. We have 10,000 soldiers and plenty of provisions. If the king goes a step from here it will mean the destruction of the dynasty.” Another voice urged a different course; “We have now lost half the kingdom. Only this province and that of Ham-gyŭng remain to us. In the latter there are soldiers and provisions in abundance and the king had better find there a retreat.” All applauded this advice excepting Yun Tu-su who said, “No, this will not do. The Japanese will surely visit that province too. Ham-heung is not nearly so easy of defense as P’yŭng-yang. If the king is to leave this place there are just three courses open to him. First, he can retire to Yung-byŭn in this province and call about him the border guard. If he cannot hold that place he can go to Eui-ju on the border and ask speedy help from China. If necessary he can go up the Yalu to Kang-gye, still on Korean soil. And if worse comes to worst he can cross into Chinese territory and find asylum at Kwan-jun-bo although it is sure that he could hold out for a few months at Kanggye before this would be necessary. I know all about Hamheung. Its walls are of great extent but they are not high and it is open to attack from every side. Besides if he retreats northward from that place he will find nothing but savage tribes. Here he must stay.” But all cried out as with one voice that the king must go to Ham-heung. Gen. Yi Hang-bok insisted upon the necessity of going north to the Yalu and imploring aid from China even if it became necessary for the king to find asylum on Chinese soil. But in spite of all this advice the king on the sixth of the month sent the queen on toward Ham-heung and gave orders to Yun To-su to hold P’yŭng-yang against the Japanese. His Majesty came out and seated himself in the Ta-dong summerhouse and addressed the people saying, “I am about to start for Ham-heung but I shall leave the Crown Prince here and you must all aid him loyally.” At this the people raised a great outcry. It looked as if they would all follow the king from the city. They did not want the Prince to stay, they wanted the king.

By this time the rumors of these things had gone ahead into Liao-tung. .