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One Night with the Koreans in Hawaii 529

Banishment 532

Korean Relations with Japan 537

Odds and Ends

A Rash Execution 544

Cross Examination 545

Places of Execution 545

A Headless Ghost 545

Editorial Comment 546

Now or Never 547

Obituary Notice 553

News Calendar 554

Korean History 561

[page 529]

One Night with the Koreans in Hawaii.

In San Francisco I heard distressing rumors concerning the Koreans in Hawaii. They were said to be virtually slaves to the planters having bound themselves to work two years without pay to recompense the Company for advancing their passage money and the $50 necessary to enable them to land in “America.” They were said to be very badly treated on the plantations where the food was insufficient and the work very hard, so that many were said to be suffering from sickness. I was urged to stop and investigate conditions so that if these rumors were true something might be done to put a stop to further immigration. It did not seem likely that it would be possible during the short time our boat stopped at Honolulu for me to see any of the Koreans who were represented as scattered among the plantations on different islands and I was meditating upon the advisability of stopping over one boat when I found on board a gentleman who occupies the position of treasurer in one of the sugar companies. He assured me that these rumors were false from beginning to end and urged me to visit one of the plantations and see for myself the conditions of the Korean laborers.

This Mr. Cook gave me a letter to the manager of the Kahuku plantation requesting him to assist me in every way possible so that I might get at the facts. Our boat bot up to the Honolulu pier at 2:30 o’clock and at three Mr. Koons and myself were off for Kahuku the terminus of the narrow guage railroad which follows the seashore for seventy miles. [page 530]

We were very agreeably surprised to find Mr. Brown the manager of the Kahuku plantation aboard the train. We went through 25 miles of sugar cane at a stretch. This represented three plantations, one of which comprises 5,000 acres. The cane grows to be 18 or 20 ft long, and 18 months are necessary for a crop to mature. The soil is examined and fertilizing material suitable to the conditions of the soil is applied, one ton of fertilizer per acre being used for each crop. The plowing is done by steam plows which turn up the ground from a depth of two or three feet. Seven acres is turned over by one plow in a day. We passed one field of 140 acres which had yielded last year 15 tons to the acre which Mr. Brown said was an unusual yield, the average crop being eight or nine tons per acre.

We passed three plantations which had yielded the past year 34,000, 30,000 and 20,000 tons respectively. One pumping plant which we passed pumps 30 million gallons of water per day and raises it 650 feet above sea level. This plant was installed at a cost of $300,000. The necessity of irrigation makes production more expensive in Hawaii than in Cuba. We passed a sugar mill which has a capacity of 125 tons per day. The ordinary life of a sugar mill Mr. Brown told us was 10 years. This mill, above mentioned cost $600,000. The cane is passed through rollers under a pressure of 400 tons and thus 95% of the “sucose” is extracted. We passed some very dry ground covered with “Algaroba” trees. These trees when cut down grow again so as to be ready for cutting in 10 years. The most delicious honey is made from the blossoms, and the long carob pods which grow in great abundance make excellent food for animals. We picked up some of the pods and were surprised to find them quite sweet and palatable. This is the food which the prodigal son is said to have eaten. But I must go on to tell of the Koreans. After supper Mr. Brown ordered a special train to take us to the Korean settlement. The train consisted of an engine and a flat car on which we sat in arm chairs. After a pleasant ride through the cane fields, with the music of the roaring waves dashing against the rocks swelling so loudly as to be heard above the noise of the train, we reached the Korean settlement. Mr. Brown now returned home and sent the train back for [page 531] us. I mention this, as it gave us entire freedom to investigate matters. We found that each Korean family is given a house, or sometimes two families occupy one house having rooms separate. The houses are small and are nicely located on high ground. They are kept white with whitewash and were clean.

Each man is given his fuel and a patch of ground to raise his vegetables; water is also supplied for irrigating their gardens. Medicine and a doctor’s services are also provided by the company. A school is provided for the children where there are any to attend it, and also a room used for school at night and for church on Sunday. The night school is taught by a Korean who knows some English. There was no one sick among the Koreans at Kahuku. They can have work every day in the year, as Mr. Brown said. The sending away of any one who wished to work was unheard of there. Many tons of sugar he said had been lost because of lack of labor to harvest it. The Koreans are giving very good satisfaction and the Company would like to have many more come. There are many Japanese and Chinese working with them on the plantations. Wages are $16 gold per month and although these men had been there but a few months they had money to send home. One man sent $25 (gold) to his wife, and a number sent smaller sums. They are not required to work on Sabbath but can make more money by doing so. I am glad to say that none of the Christians have yielded to this temptation.

Next morning we took the 5:30 train and arrived in Honolulu in time to catch our boat. A gentleman who lives in Honolulu was on board and he told me that the Koreans had had difficulty on some of the plantations abont their food. Rice costs more than they have been accustomed to pay and the same is true of meat so that in some places they had tried to live on flour, but not knowing how to make bread they had a hard time until the company sent a Chinese cook to teach them how to make their bread. Fish is plentiful and vegetables also. From what we saw we were led to believe that the men in charge of the work were treating the Koreans very well, as indeed it is to their interest to do. There are no doubt some instances where the overseers may not be as fine men as the manager at Kahuku and where the conditions may not be as favorable. One thing I neglected to mention was[page 532] that the Koreans are not bound by any contract to work for any Company to repay the money advanced theim. But they are willing to pay and are paying one dollar per month from their wages to recompense the Company for the expense incurred in getting them to Hawaii, the matter being considered as a loan which it is right for them to pay.

S. F. MOORE.

Banishments

(Second Paper).

We were speaking of that form of banishment called Yu, which sends a man 3,000 li from the Capital. The term is seldom less than fifteen years though it is sometimes modified to ten. The island of Quelpart is the principal place to which offenders of this class are sent. Then come Heuk-san Island, Chi Island, Wan Island, all off the Southern coast. In the north there are the two inland towns of Kap-san and Sam-su under Pak-tu Mountain. The town of Puk-ch’ung in the north is also used for this purpose. None of these places is 3,000 li from Seoul and so a man will be sent to one of them and then to another. For instance he will be sent 1,000 li south to an island and then to a town a thousand li to the north of Seoul. This curious custom arises from the fact that Korea is 3,000 li long and the criminal must go the extreme length of the country, which cannot be done by going in a straight line directly from the capital.

Arriving at his destination he is taken over from the constable by the “Keeper of the Banishment House.” and given a room in which to live. He may not leave the immediate vicinity of the village. These houses are sometimes at prefectural towns and sometimes in remote mountain villages. It is to the latter that graver criminals are sent, for there they cannot have access to any of the amenities of social life such as in the former. In his place of banishment he is about like any other citizen of the place and very often he is the best informed and best read of anybody there, and becomes [page 533] an important factor in the social life of the place. There is one disadvantage however under which he must inevitably labor. From the time he starts for his place of banishment until the day of his release he is not allowed to wear the mangun or net head-band which is the distinctive sign and badge of Korean citizenship, sharing with the curious fly-trap hat that distinction. He may not carry a knife nor any kind of cord, even a waist cord; for with either of them he might attempt suicide. Nor can he carry a gold pin in his top knot, for the Koreans implicitly believe that if a man swallows gold it will kill him. They say that the heavy gold pin weighs down the bowels and causes death after frightful agonies. No one commits suicide that way, now that opium is obtainable. Sometimes the banished man is put in durance vile the whole time he is in banishment but usually this is reserved for the severer forms of banishment of which we shall speak presently. If the banished man has money he can use it as he wishes, making himself as comfortable as his wide separation from home permits. His wife and family may come and see him but cannot reside in the town; this however depends largely upon the temper of his keeper aud the amount of money the exiled man can pay for such extra privileges.

It sometimes happens that the criminal makes his escape while on his way to the place of banishment or during the term of his detention, in which case thet keeper will be punished if the missing man is not apprehended, but if caught the fugitive will suffer capital punishment. It seldom happens however that an official will try to escape. The commonest occupation of the banished man is the study of books or practice in penmanship.

The third form of banishment is called Ch’an “Concealment,” mentioned in the former article as “Rat-hole.” This is a common or vulgar term for this form of banishment, “concealment” being the proper translation of the character. This form is somewhat severer than the Yu, in that while the place of banishment may not be so far away the man is treated with greater severity and is subjected to greater indignity than the one condemned to the Yu. The crimes punishable by this penalty were much the same as those punished by the Yu but also it was frequently inflicted on one who had been [page 534] a traitor in a small way or accessory to treason. Thus it was generally a higher class of official who was punished in this way. He was sometimes sent far away and sometimes only a short distance. But he was guarded more sedulously, fed less liberally and treated generally in a severer way. And when he reached his place of detention be could not move beyond the limits of his own compound. But the worst of all was the greater obloquy attached to this form of punishment, in some ways like the difference between the words liar and prevaricator, thief and defaulter, murderer and assassin or bunco-steerer and company-promoter (limiting the latter, of course, to certain cases only). In any one of these cases the second term is intrinsically as bad as the first but undoubtedly anyone would prefer to be called the second rather than the first. So with Yu and Ch’an. There is not much intrinsic difference but the latter hurts the pride much the worse, and pride is one of the main assets of the Korean gentlman’s character.

The fourth form, and the last is called Ch’i (置) “To station,” or in other words to put a man where he will stay put. In other words it is life banishment in theory, though often mitigated to fifteen or twenty years. This is of course a severer punishment than any other and is considered little if any better than death itself. It is indicted upon traitors of a certain class, not those who have conspired against the person of the king but those who have been declared traitors because of their adherence to some policy that has become discredited because of the rise to power of a party opposed to it. It often involves no more guilt than attaches to any man who has principles and sticks to them even when outnumbered. This sort of treason simply means that a man is in the minority. But though his actual crime may be small he is near to death’s door for he is considered a capital criminal. When he is sent to the country he is bound hand and foot and a bag is put over his head and he is carried away on a horse or on a litter. He is treated with the utmost contumely and he is very apt to die of neglect and ill treatment on the way. Arriving at his destination he is imprisoned in a rough building surrounded with a fence or barrier of some kind through a hole in which the man’s miserable food is shoved to him once a day. This horrible place is generally spoken of as wi-ri-kan [page 535] which means pig-sty and doubtless is a fair description. If after banishment the man is found to have committed other offences his suffering is augmented by inflicting what is called Ka-geuk meaning “addition of thorns.” This is veritably a crown of thorns which is placed on the man’s head and pressed down. He is also liable to be placed in a cangue.

If the man who has been condemned is in some distant place or is ill or is harmless in any event, the term Yo (了) “Finished’, is applied to him. In other words he is declared to be dead, though still living. This is considered a deep disgrace. It is applied also to a person from the time he is condemned to death until he is executed. If on the other hand he should for any reason be reprieved it is called kang-sang or “born again,” come to life.

In conclusion it should be said that the Yu form of banishment was usually inflicted upon small officials while the higher ones were condemned to the Ch’an. It sometimes happened that two or more men were banished to the same place but two men who were condemned for the same offence, that is, were confederates in crime, were never sent to the same place. It is only in the Yu form that the man is moved from one place to another. Of course the terms of banishment as given above are what we find in the law but it is hardly necessary to say that in actual practice there were many and wide variations, depending upon the caprice of the judge. For instance a man condemned to Yu might be gone a month, or six months, or a year, or fifteen years.

One day King Ta-jong the third king of this dynasty, was holding his little grandson in his lap playing with him. The little fellow in play scratched the king’s face slightly, but enough to bring a little blood. The king laughed and did not blame the little fellow but when an official saw the mark on the king’s face and learned how it was done he, and many other officials, memorialized the throne saying that the crime must be punished. So in spite of the king’s own preferences the small boy was banished, but it simply meant a trip in the country for a month and then a return to the capital. Whatever the boy thought of it the law was vindicated.

The sixteenth ruler of this dynasty was Prince Kwang-ha who was never given posthumous honors. Being banished [page 536] to Kang-wha, he was there put to death. For this reason we often hear of Kang-wha spoken of as Kwang-ha. When Prince Yun-san was dethroned and banished to Kyo-dong in 1506 his wife (some say his son) followed and tried to liberate him by digging a tunnel into his prison house, but was discovered at the last moment and put to death. A celebrated case of banishment was that of the great general Yi Hang-bok who stood by King Sun-jo so loyally throughout the Japanese Invasion of 1592. Prince Kwang-ha, forgetful of this general’s great services, banished him to Puk-ch’ung in the north. One night he had a dream in which he sat with many of his former fellow councillors and discussed the needs of the Government. Upon awaking he informed those about him that, as he had seen the dead in his dreams, he would soon lay down his life. Three days later he expired.

The great Scholar No Su-sin, was once banished. The prefect of the place one day happened to see the food that was being prepared for the banished man and said “Why do you give this man fine white rice? Go to the hills and find the worst rice that is grown and feed that to him.” Again on a certain moonlight night, No Su-sin’s servant was playing to him on a flute. The prefect heard it and said “What, shall a banished man enjoy music? Go and take that flute away from him.” Some months later No-Su-sin was called back to Seoul and given high office again. He sent for the prefect who had presumably gained his lasting hatred, but when the man came before him he praised him and said he had done no more than was his duty in upholding the law of the land; and he secured promotion for him. Cho Heun, also, is held up as a model of rectitude because while serving a term of banishment at a place only ten li from his parents’ home, he would not go even that distance to attend his mother’s funeral because by so doing he would break the law.

The saddest case of banishment was that of the young King Tan-jong who was sent to Yong-wul and was there murdered. In fact Korean history and folklore are full of tales of banishment and the sufferings, adventures, escapes and vicissitudes of banished people.

Since the year 1894 the laws governing banishment have been greatly modified and now only the form called Ju is in [page 537] use, as a rule. At the present time there are probably some sixty or seventy men in banishment, the best known of whom is Kim Yun-sik the former President of the Foreign Office. He went to Quelpart first and then was removed to another island.

Korean Relations with Japan.

In 1651 the Japanese Envoy asked that the Koreans be made to use only the old time cotton goods in bartering with them, but they found that if they were very critical of the quality of the goods it killed trade. So the daimyo of Tsushima sent and said, “Tsushima has no rice except from the island of Kang-ho (江戶) so we would be glad if you would pay half in cotton goods and half in rice.” The Koreans agreed to this and gave the equivalent of 15,000 pieces of cotton in rice at twelve pecks to the piece, and made a written contract for five years which was renewed from time to time. Later the Koreans gave rice instead of 20,000 pieces. In 1810 the ratio of rice to cotton was changed from twelve to ten, indicating a relative rise in the value of rice [and this in turn argues an increase in population—Ed. K.R.]. It was in 1678 that the Koreans made a special boat for carrying this rice to Tsushima. The Koreans found it hard to watch the store of grain that accumulated annually at Fusan so they built a boat to be used as a godown and in it they stored the grain. It was not until 1708 that the government made a definite schedule of the amounts of rice and cotton that each district was to give for the purpose of barter with the Japanese. [It would seem that in time the government made this trading business a direct tax on the people for if each district had to provide its quota it simply meant that the government taxed each district so much and traded with the proceeds一Ed. K. R.].

In 1753 the Japanese were late in putting down the price of the rice and cotton and this continued until 1810 when the government had to make a strict rule that the Japanese should receive nothing until the price had been put down at Fusan.  [page 538]

In 1790 there was trouble over the fact that so much rice was wasted in transport. To cover this shrinkage the government put out 900 bags at interest and the proceeds went to make up the loss.

End of Book I.

Book II.

Various Japanese Envoys to Korea.

Before the days of Prince Kwang-ha, 1609-1623, there were no great special Envoys from Japan, only the annual ones which were really commercial in their nature. But soon after this date special diplomatic envoys came.

ANNOUNCING THE DEATH OF THE SHOGUN.

In 1650 the Shogun (源家光) died and a special envoy brought the news to Korea. His credentials were addressed to the Korean Minister of Ceremonies. The company included the envoy, the captain, the keeper of the gifts, two eunuchs, sixteen attendants and seventeen boatmen. They stayed sixty-one days at Fusan but did not come up to Seoul. This envoy brought a letter for the head of the Ceremonial Department, another for the second in authority, another for the prefect of Tong-na, near Fusan, and the Commissioner at Fusan. To each one of these he brought a list of gifts which included pictures, mother-o’pearl, screens, teacups, wash-bowls, mirrors, figured paper, lacquered boxes and paints. And from each of them he received gifts among which there were ginseng, tiger-skins, leopard skins, silk, grass-cloth, linen, brushes, ink, mats and pens. He carried back answers to each of the letters which he had brought.

ANNOUNCING ACCESSION OF NEW SHOGUN.

In 1652 Wun Ka-gang became the Shogun and an envoy was immediately sent to announce the fact to the Korean Gov- [page 539] ernment. He came with gifts to the various dignitaries and likewise received gifts from them and answers to the letters.

Gradually it became customary to send envoys to Korea announcing any event of importance. For instance the accession of a new daimyo in Tsushima was so announced. An envoy was sent in 1659 to secure a seal for the daimyo of Tsushima. In 1637 one had come asking for a renewal of the trade relations that had been interrupted for a period of some seventeen years. In 1654 the daimyo of Tsushima sent an envoy asking that Korea send an envoy to Japan because the Shogun’s father was dead. In 1755 an envoy came to announce that the Shogun had turned over the government to his son. In 1703 the Shogun forced the resignation of the Daimyo of Tsushima and made him send an envoy to Korea announcing the fact. In 1642 an envoy came from Japan to announce the birth of a son to the Shogun. The same was done in 1763. Later an envoy came to announce the birth of a grandson to the Shogun. In 1789 the daimyo of Tsushima sent an envoy to Korea to say that because of floods and famines it would be impossible to send the regular envoy now but he would send one later. In 1792 the Shogun ordered the daimyo of Tsushima to send to Korea asking whether, if an envoy were to come to cement a treaty of peace and friendship with Korea, he should go from Japan to Tsushima and thence to Korea, The Korean Government answered that this would he breaking long existing custom, for the Japanese envoy always went to Tsushima by way of the island of Kang-ho. The messenger tried every means to make the Koreans change their minds and after importuning for three years succeeded. In 1650 au envoy came from Tsushima bearing congratulations on the accession of Hyo-jong Ta-wang in Korea. This envoy did not come up to Seoul but a royal commissioner went and saw him at Fusan. Upon the death of King In-jo in 1649 an envoy of condolence came to Fusan.

Whenever Koreans were shipwrecked on the coast of Japan they were given food and taken to Chang-geui (Naga- [page 540] saki) and the Shogun was informed. Then they were taken to Tsushima and a special envoy took them to Korea. In such case the Japanese boatmen each received one bag of rice from the Korean authorities.

Other envoys came as follows, in 1658 to announce the death of the daimyo of Tsushima, in 1703 to announce the death of an ex-daimyo of Tsushima, in 1760 to announce the death of the grandfather of the daimyo of Tsushima, in 1684 to announce the death of the heir apparent to the Shogunate. In 1860 the daimyo of Tsushima sent an envoy asking for seals or credentials. The government consented and they were sent in the first year of the present king but the daimyo died before he had an opportunity to use them, so the government sent and got them back.

ENVOY TO SETTLE DISPUTES.

From the year 1650 if any dispute arose between Japan and Korea or their subjects an envoy came from Japan and stayed until an ageement was reached. The length of his stay was indeterminate but it was accompanied by an exchange of presents. In 1640 the daimyo of Tsushima sent saying that trouble had arisen because Japanese had unlawfully gone to Fusan and traded and he asked to be allowed to station a Japanese there to guard the trading post from imposition by such outsiders. In 1684 the king ordered a stone to be erected at Ch’o-ryang, part way down the bay of Fusan and on it was an inscription which forbade the Japanese to go further than that place from the trading station:

SHIPWRECKED JAPANESE.

If a Japanese boat from Tsushima was blown ashore on the coast of Korea the authorities took the men and carried them to Fusan and when they left for home each man received two bags of rice and a suit of clothes. If the wrecked boat was from some other Japanese island the men were housed at the place where they landed and a special messenger went to inquire where they were from. They were then conducted to within six miles of Fusan and were allowed to go in by themselves. [page 541] They were given a little rice and a letter was sent to Tsushima about them.

INSPECTORS AND ACCOUNTANTS.

In 1636 the Tsushima daimyo began the custom of sending twenty-four men to inspect the goods to be sent to Japan and to keep account of them but in 1685 the number was lowered to ten. There were twenty-two Japanese whose duty it was to suppress evils arising at the trading post (probably quarrels between traders Ed. K. R.) They held their position only one year. At the trading post there was a little house called Tong-hyang Monastery where a Japanese priest lived who had charge of the envoys’ letters either from or to Japan. He held his position three years. In 1694 two Japanese interpreters came. They held their positions three years. There was also a Japanese boat called, “The Flying Boat” which acted as a guide to the Japanese boats entering or leaving the harbor.

(It must he particularly noted that the term used through-out for envoys either from or to Japan is T’ong-sin-sa (通信使) which is used only between equals. The annual envoys to China, on the other hand, were called Sang-bu-sa (上副使) implying the superiority of China, Ed. K. R.)

Volume III.

THE TRADING POST.

Up to the end of the Koryu dynasty, 1392 A. D. Japanese corsairs frequently harried the coast of Korea but after this dynasty was founded guards were placed along the coast and largely prevented this. Japanese settlements were permitted at Fusan, Yum-po (Ul-san) and Che-p’o (Ung-cbun) and if any envoy came the number of boats he could bring was fixed. In the days of King Se-jong, 1419-1457, a Japanese from Tsushima asked that he might be allowed to bring sixty Japanese families and settle them at these three ports. The government consented. In 1511 these Japanese raised a serious insurrection and generals Yu Tam-yun and Whang Hyung went with troops and burned the houses, drove out the Japan- [page 542] ese and put an end to the settlements. In 1573 the Japanese sent and apologized for this insurrection, so the government allowed a trading station to be made at Tu-mo Harbor three li from Fusan and declared that if any Japanese boat came to any other place it would be considered piracy. Korean officials were appointed to oversee the business and to prevent infringement of the regulations. In 1641 the Japanese declared the place was too small and asked that the trading station he moved to Fusan but the government would not consent. In 1674 the Japanese asked that the post he moved to Che-p’o but they were again refused. For thirty years the Japanese kept asking that the trading post be changed and in 1679 permission was given to establish the trading post at Ch’o-ryang ten li from Fusan (The Fusan here referred to seems to be the native town at the upper end of the bay and Ch’oryang was a point some-what more than half way down tbe bay toward the present foreign settlement. Ed. K. R.) and the government appointed five interpreters to reside at the trading post.

A book named the Yong-chu Ch’ong-wha (慵齊叢話) says that King Se-jong sent a fleet of boats and attacked Tsushima but without any special results. The Japanese, however, were afraid and asked that they might have only two or three houses at the three ports. The king consented but an official Hu Cho asserted that “They will soon rebel. They are so fickle that they will turn pirates and Korea will suffer a great calamity.” The other officials laughed at this. But the Japanese kept coming more and more until they were strong enough to raise a serious insurrection. Then all the courtiers had to confess that Hu Cho had been right. A book called the Cheung-pi-rok (懲毖錄) says that in the summer of 1502 all the Japanese at the ports left for Japan and their houses stood empty (this was of course because of the impending invasion of the following Autumn. Ed. K. R.) When the Chinese emperor sent to Korea and blamed the king for harboring Japanese the king replied that eighty-nine years before, in King Se-jong’s time, they had wiped the three settlements off the map. Some say the Japanese had a trading station on Deer Island but no one knows when it began or ended.

[page 543]

DESCRIPTION OF TRADING POST.

The trading-post at Ch’o-ryang was 372 tsubo (6 feet) and four feet long from east to west and 256 tsubo from north to south. In it were two houses, one on the east side and one on the west. They were the houses where the Japanese stopped. The east one had three large maru or open rooms and beside it was a janitor’s house. In all there were forty-eight kan. It had an inner and an outer gate, the inner one being of three kan. It had seventy-five kan of wall. There was a small gate in the wall also. There were two water closets, one inside and one outside. There was also a courthouse where disputes between Koreans and Japanese were adjudicated. It was thirty-two kan and had a gate of one kan and a wall of sixty-eight kan, with a small gate in it. It had two water-closets, one within and one without. The trading house was of forty kan with a one kan gate and one water-closet.

On the west side there was another set of buildings. One had three open maru of twenty kan each and out-houses on either side. The front veranda was four kan long and one kan wide but the Japanese enlarged it at their own expense. The out-houses were fifty-six kan and six feet. There were fifteen small gates and six water-closets. The whole of the buildings were erected by the Korean government. There was also the house of the Japanese monk who took charge of the letters, an interpreter’s house, twelve houses for Japanese officers who had charge of accounts and royal edicts, a doctor’s house, a police house, a house for contraband goods, a “string” house, a wine house, a market house, a carpenter shop, a dispensary, a confectionery, a bakery, a floor mat factory, a store house, a rope-loft, a shrine to the spirits (made by the Japanese).

In front of the trading post was a bund or wharf built up of stone on either side. It was 240 tsubo long and had wooden posts to tie up the boats to. The gateman’s quarters and the gate were twelve kan. There was one general overseer, two interpreters, two gatemen. No one could go in or out without a written pass from the magistrate of Tong-na. There were four kan of stables and a small water-gate of one [page 544] kan at the south-west corner. There was also a north gate of one kan but it was always shut except on feast days. Two Japanese guarded it. Around the whole there was a wall of 1273 tsubo (7638 feet) and six feet high. On it were six sentinels 185 tsubo apart. Each sentinel was responsible for any trouble that occurred on his beat. There were six sentinel boxes of three kan each and in each there was one sergeant and two soldiers. They were all Koreans and kept out any Japanese who had no business there.

Odds and Ends.

A Rash Execution.

Before the founding of the present dynasty YiT’a-jo, who became later its first king, was a very famous general. It was he who first successfully opposed the Japanese freebooters who for centuries had found the Korean coast such a rich field for enterprise. On one of the occasions when he was going south with a fleet to attack the robbers he had to pass between the Island of Kangwha and the mainland. The captain of the boat in which the general sailed was named Son-dol. When they reached a certain spot in the narrow passage Son-dol turned the prow toward shore and it looked as if he were going to pile her up on the beach. General Yi, seeing this and fancying that it meant treachery, whipped out his sword and relieved the captain of his head. But upon investigation he found that the channel here ran very near the eastern bank and that Son-dol had been doing just the right thing. But this afterthought was not of the least use to Son-dol, except posthumously. The general landed and buried the captain with extraordinary honors and thus sent his name down to posterity in a way that must have been very satisfactory to his descendants. So that place is called Son-dol-mok or Son-dol channel and you can see the dangerous reef today over which the tide pours like a cataract and makes the long detour necessary. In Korea fame is fame whether it is obtained by doing some heroic act or by having your top-knot cut off just above your shoulders by mistake. [page 545]

Cross Examination.

Kim Sung-il was a very effective governor of his prefecture and it took a sharp man to deceive him. One day prefects sent him a case that they could not unravel. A certain man held a deed to some property and claimed that the deed was over a century old and undoubtedly valid. The question hung upon the age of that particular manuscript.

“Bring me some water.” said Kim.

It was brought and with it he wet the deed, and then he let it dry. It was almost as stiff as it had. been before wetting.

“Now bring me a piece of old paper.” It was brought and dampened, but when it was dry it was found to be quite limp. Kim eyed the suspected man.

‘‘You see the difference, do you? Old paper loses all its stiffness when wet.” The man immediately confessed the forgery and took his punishment patiently.

Places of Execution.

Up to the year 1894 there were several places of execution in and about Seoul. If a man was condemned to instant execution he was taken to the Keurn-ch’un Bridge, the very ancient bridge just west of the Kyong-bok Palace, and there beheaded. If the case were not quite so pressing he was taken to the Hyejung bridge, the first bridge on the big street, west of Chong-no. The third place was Chong-no or the bridge on “Furniture Street” crossing the main sewer of the city. The next in importance was outside the Little West Gate and last came the execution grounds at the river, called Sanam-tu.

A Headless Ghost

Women are said to be afraid of the well on Furniture Street near the big bridge, because a woman, drawing water there in years gone by, was accosted by a spirit and asked for a drink. The woman dared not refuse but when she gave the water the spirit faded away. As it did so she heard the words, “Alas how can I drink when I have no head?” It was the ghost of a man who had been beheaded.

[page 546]

Editorial Comment.

As the year 1903 draws to a close we naturally glance back across the months to note salient features of the period. What has been doing in Korea in commercial, social, political educational and religious lines?

In spite of the chaotic state of the monetary system there are evidences that trade has been brisk. Real estate values have appreciated and the hum of commercial life has never been louder. Building operations in Seoul have been on a phenomenal scale. Foreign houses and shops have been going up all about us at a rate that soon bids fair to transform the whole southern and western portions of Seoul at no distant date. It has been a rush year for carpenters, masons and lumber men. These large building operations, carried on in spite of soaring prices, argue something. This money is not being thrown away. It shows confidence in the future and a determination to take advantage of manifest opportunities. We doubt if any other city in the far east has made any such proportionate advance during the past year. Perhaps the greatest activity has been shown by the Chinese merchants, if building operations may be taken as an indication. A very large number of Chinese shops, of a substantial character, have been erected. On the part of the Japanese the advance has been less pronounced but none the less real. The most ambitious building erected by the latter is the double representation in miniature of the Nagoya Castle. These were displayed at Osaka during the late exposition and were then taken down and brought to Seoul where they are to be used as a bazar. Outside the South gate there has been a transformation indeed. Hundreds of native houses have been demolished and the whole level of the valley for a space of half a mile long by nearly a quarter of a mile wide has been filled in to the depth of six or eight feet to be used as the terminal station and yards of the Seoul Fusan R. R. It is problematic when we shall hear the sound of a locomotive whistle on the Northwestern line but that the Japanese mean business there can be no doubt at all. The new Severance Memorial Hospital build- [page 547] ing stands out in bold relief and is a handsome structure, representing not the sordid side of life but the philanthropic and it will stand through the centuries as a fitting memorial to the generosity of the donor.

The *Kobe Chronicle* recently attempted to show that our remarks relative to Korean refugees in Japan indicated an attitude hardly up to modern standards. Does that journal agree with us that the present attitude of the Korean government toward Japan is largely due to the very facts stated and if so does it agree that it is a great pity that this should stand in the way of a perfect accord between the two countries? We imagine that it would be rather difficult to disprove the consistently friendly attitude which the Korea Review has always taken toward legitimate Japanese aspirations in Korea. We have always believed and have frequently said that Japan is the best if not the only friend Korea has―meaning the only friend who will ever render her any substantial aid, and though there may have been things to criticize now and again in the working out of Japanese policy regarding Korea there can be no doubt that Japan has always stood solidly for Korean independence and we believe she always will, so far as such independence is compatible with fairly competent government in the peninsula. As to the high-mindedness of Japan in affording asylum to Korean refugees there can be no doubt whatever; but considering all the facts of the case and all the events that have happened during the past two decades the Chronicle may perhaps allow us to wonder mildly that Japan should show such broad-mindedness at such a cost? The comparison between Japanese-Korean and the Irish-American is too far-fetched to be worth comment. Circumstances alter cases, but as two years ago the Chronicle tried to make out that the laws of political economy work precisely the same way under all conditions so now it is assuming that international law is so inelastic as to take no account of peculiar circumstances.

Now or Never.

We have received a copy of an appeal sent out from the Presbyterian Mission in Korea and many of the readers of [page 548] the Review will be glad to see it. We give the greater part or it below. This is an appeal for more missionaries, based upon the growing needs of the work. The appeal is as follows: “This year the cry for reinforcements has been going up all along the firing line of Missions. Nowhere is the cry louder than in Korea. Korea has but one claim, but that is imperative and unanswerable. Korea’s argument is her present opportunity. The delicate political situation; the beginnings of civilization with its drawbacks, always a bar to Christ; the throngs of new believers half taught as yet and apt to make dangerous mistakes; the multitudes beyond, yielding to the least persuasion; the utterly inadequate force of workers to fill the need; these are facts that stand out. One man now is worth a dozen ten years hence. The hour of Korea’s opportunity is peculiarly now. We can take Korea now for Christ. Perhaps we can’t ten years hence. Is the Church going to let this golden opportunity go by? It is for you to answer. Christ wants you in Korea. Hear the specific calls as they are coming from all over the field.

Seoul says―Loudly as the work here has of late years been appealing to you at home for workers, never has the call been so loud, the harvest so ready, the danger of delay so pressing as now. Seoul has in its assigned field over 3½ millions of people. To work this territory there are but seven clerical men, two medical and five single women. Of these, three are assigned almost entirely to what would be called general mission work rather than local work, giving five clerical men, one medical and five single women for the evangelization of this field. This year we report 64 organized churches, 94 meeting places, 1,512 baptized believers, 1,308 other adherents. Last year with two of our best men at home on furlough, with one fully equipped man and four others averaging 1½ years each on the field there were 117 baptisms. It should have been 1,000 with proper manning. One of the old workers returned from furlough has just come in from his first country trip through a neglected field and reports 80 baptisms in twenty days. Surely the door is open now. Will the Church enter in and possess the land? Now is our opportunity. There are and have been for some years past the most cordial relations between the official class and the mis- [page 549] sionaries. These may not continue long. Certainly the old intimate relations between the missionaries and the palace have not been maintained. Lack of workers to enter the door has been the cause. The door is open now. It may close any day. Day by day we hear from the out-districts of promising groups won over to schism or Rome because of lack of oversight. We can’t care for the field. It is so great. The young Church needs leaders. They must be trained. Who is to train them? Travel all over this district, go where you will, start a Christian service, and you will have crowds who will not only give careful earnest attention but not a few will wait to enquire and it is almost a certainty that wherever there is persistent effort there will be a church. No soil was ever more ready for the seed; God has granted to the Church in America this infant church in Korea. She today, starving, appeals for Bread. It is for the Presbyterian Church to say whether she will turn a deaf ear to this cry and let her offspring starve.

Pyeng Yang’s cry is even more urgent than this. No one aware of the present condition of things in the Mission field of North Korea can fail to know that the hour of Christian opportunity in this country is striking in clear and unmistakable tones. In the territory covered by Pyeng Yang Station alone, during the last year, 872 adults were received in baptism and 1,547 to the catechumenate, and those numbers were only limited by the inability of the missionary force to do more. From every part of our territory comes the cry for help in any form, for visits from the missionary for classes in Bible study, for Christian literature, for Christian education. Elderly women have walked a whole week, from Monday morning until Saturday night, to attend a ten days class for Bible study. In many country groups during the winter months, the Christians meet every night for Bible study, with only portions of Scripture imperfectly translated, all equally ignorant and with no one to lead them. Christian primary schools multiplying everywhere are calling vainly for qualified Christian teachers and numbers of Christian boys and young men, showing the richest promise for the future self government of the Church, throng into Pyeng Yang from year to year begging for a Christian education. [page 550]

And ever sounding day and night is that other cry, un-heard to mortal ear, yet loud to the ear attuned to the Spirit and loud surely to the pitying ear of God, the cry of the unawakened. Hundreds and hundreds of thousands there are, in our territory alone lying in desperate soul extremity, not because they have not heeded, but because they have not heard the Gospel of the grace of God. Or if they have heard at all, it has been at a great distance and dimly.

It is entirely impossible with our present missionary force of eight ordained men, one medical, six missionary wives and three single women to meet the demands of the situation. Work among the unevangelized we cannot even touch, and even in regions nominally under our supervision much that ought to be done is left undone. Groups of believers asking earnestly for spiritual help and instruction are left unvisited perhaps for long months, and when the missionary is at last able to include them in his rounds he finds perhaps that the sickness of long deferred hope has set in, and hearts that were once plastic and warm are now hardend and cold.

Not to-morrow but now is the day of opportunity for Korea. How long this spirit or inquiry, so largely unsatisfied, may continue to exist, or how soon the people may relapse into the old state of heathen apathy, who can say? Given a few more years of utterly inadequate manning of our Mission force, and it may be that here and there, all through this beautiful region, like a mountain-side swept by forest fires, only charred and blackened spaces may remain where was once the promise of green and living growth.

We are asking for consecrated men and women, separated and sent of God, and through whom He will deign to work out His purposes for this people. Come over and help us. The blessing of those who are ready to perish awaits you, and more, much more than that, the unspeakable privilege of enabling our Lord and Saviour, whose visage was marred more than any man’s, to see through your efforts of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

Syen Chun―with the same conditions reports 4,537 enrolled attendants, of which 1,027 are baptized and 1,646 catechumens, 61 meeting places. To visit every group even once a year requires a journey of 3,000 miles on foot or on pack [page 551] pony. Our work has increased 50 % to 70 % each year for several years and the increase seems only an earnest of what is coming. No longer can we give careful oversight to the work. That long ago ceased to be a physicial possiblity. Our whole force is but three clerical men, one medical, and two single women. But for the host of Korean helpers and leaders (mostly with Korean support) we could not at all do the work, and the present work would long since have crumbled away. All we can do now, hard as it seems to say it, is to care for these under-shepherds, the leaders, gather them into classes, teach them as best we can, one, two or at most three weeks each per year.

To the north of us about 200 miles is Kang Kei which is more than ready to be organized as a new Station mostly through the efforts of Koreans who have gone there to live or to preach the Gospel. There are over 150 Christians in and about Kang Kei with about 525 in attendance upon services. This is a greater number than can be claimed by many fully organized Stations and the prospects for growth are exceedingly bright. But we cannot open the Station there simply for lack of men. A visit of a week or ten days once a year is all we can plan to give it. It is needless to say that if the help we are asking for is to do any good, it should come now. What the future has in store for us we don’t know but we do know that we need help at once to care for the work already done, not to mention the crying need in the regions just beyond.

From the South Country this year comes the most insistent appeal that they have ever sent out. Their call is for single women. “A woman for Taiku” heads the list of preferred workers sent home by the Korea Mission. It is not the first but now the third time and with an ever increasing demand. In 1900 though this door for work in our Christian homes stood wide open, the Christian women were few. In answer to the demand in February of 1901 Miss Nourse was sent to us only to be taken away the following Fall. Since then our work among women has doubled every year until every house in this large city (the fourth in the Empire and capital of the province) presents an open door to the woman missionary.

With ever enlarging opportunities not only has no one [page 552] come to supply the need but this year has seen the only two women with any knowledge of the language go home on furlough. With Mrs. Bruen but little over a year on the field, we came to Annual Meeting in confidence that our claims must be met. But again we were doomed to disappointment and our little band has been reduced during the year from seven to four, Dr. Eva Field having been loaned to us for three months. An inland city three days by coolie from the coast, where this little band constitute the only foreign residents aside from one French priest, where no foreigner except the missionaries and one gold prospector has ever been: these facts constitute the social need which, together with the need of the work, compelled the loan of Dr. Field. Every morning she visits the homes of Christians and in the afternoon meets a roomful of women in the new hospital. Also on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons she meets the women for Bible study. This work is interrupted at the time of writing by an 8-day trip to some of the largest groups. Her first night out she and her Bible woman addressed a crowd of several hundred women and had to put out the light to get them to go home. By the time she makes one trip East and one South among the other groups, the women will be gathering for the Winter Class, after which her short three months will be up, and what then? This is the question we put to you—our sisters—in the home land. May God lead some one who reads this brief sketch of our struggle, to come out and fill this long standing and ever increasing need, rendered now so acute by the return on furlough of Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Johnson. Though you come by the next boat you cannot get here too soon to answer our present pressing need. Come over now and help us.

Fusan’s strong plea is also single women. Our eighteen country groups have had no lady worker for over two years and they cry loudly for the peculiar instruction that only a woman can give. The clergymen can reach their lives, it is true. But not as they should be reached. Korean etiquette restricts the sexes in their relation too much. They need a woman who can enter their homes, hearts and thoughts. Though the clergymen can in a small manner touch the lives of professing Christian women, they cannot reach those who [page 553] are on the border line of faith. Women must help women over the first stages of the Christian road.

We have no lady worker for our country groups. We had one until two years ago when the greater needs of other fields drew her away. Our women’s work has trebled since then and the women are more numerous than the men. Our Bible classes for women have to be taught by men—a very serious handicap. There is no one to train the Korean women for anything better, no one to raise up Bible women and Christian female workers. Two or three of our Christian groups are almost without men, and they form a serious problem to the pastor, who cannot properly instruct them. He could do better if there were men present. Such groups need a lady worker badly.

The need of these women is appalling. Had we a single woman at this moment, the tasks which would be hers when she was able to use the language intelligently would be greater than she could bear. We plead for some one to supply the Bread which these children of our Father are crying for. We plead for sorue one to help develop womanhood in the south of Korea.

These are facts, and facts that cry aloud to Him and to you His disciple. Now is the time of our need. Tomorrow may be too late. So many are hungry for the Bread of Life so many are dying without it; if we don’t feed the hungry, speak life to the dying, a few days hence all our speaking may be in vain.

From the Presbyterian Mission in Korea.

Obituary Notice.

It is with the most poignant regrets that we are obliged to note the death of Mrs. Vinton the wife of Dr. C. C. Vinton of Seoul. Dr. and Mrs. Vinton have lived in Seoul for the past thirteen years, having arrived from America in the [page 554] Spring of 1891. Mrs. Vinton was a native of New York City and it was there that she was married to Dr. Vinton on the eve of their departure for Korea. From that time till her sad death on the fourth of this month she was a prominent member of the small social circle in Seoul. Many are the people who could tell of her unstinted hospitality and her words of encouragement in times of despondency and of sympathy in times of sorrow. Such memories of her form the best monument in her honor. The quiet, forceful, womanly influence which she exerted is measured by the void which her absence makes. The sympathy of the entire community and of hundreds of friends in China, Japan and America is extended to Dr. Vinton and his children. Mrs Vinton leaves six children, three boys and three girls. The Funeral took place on Monday the seventh instant.

News Calendar.

One the 21st of November the Foreign Office received a despatch from the Japanese Minister finding fault with the vacillating policy of the Government and with its constant excuses for not opening Yongampo to foreign trade. The despatch was considered by the Foreign Office to be lacking in courtesy and was returned unanswered although it is well known that the Minister of the Foreign Office wished to open that port. A Russian despatch on the same day was returned unanswered for the same reason. This issue seems to have brought the Korean Government to a definite parting of the ways. She must make some choice.

On the 20th inst. the French Representative presented His Majesty with a decoration from the President of France.

Apparently you only have to mention the name of a Christian gentleman as such to set the Kobe Chronicle to “milling,” as the cow boys say. It read an account of a meeting in Shanghai at which Mr. Philip Gillett of Seoul made a speech. Mr. Gillett was referred to as a man of good physique as well as good principles. The Chronicle wants to know what the connection is. It doubtless has never heard the aphorism “Mens sana in corpore sano.” Of course the Chronicle may say that religion is not Mens sana but mens insana, but as this is a matter of opinion, why not make a clean breast of it and say that every-body is a fool that does not think my way―or else keep still?

[page 555] A scholary gentleman from the country sends the following communcation from the country, relative to the subject of mixed script.

I am much thraxtheis to akouein that in spite of the boule of the ekklesia in mense septembro some andres are still elpizioles that the graphai will be issued in mixed grammata. I am sure if the grammatikoi of Korea need this sustasin grammaton xinikon kai Koreaion to the better understanding of the gaphai, the grammatikoi europaioi ought to have an edition of the grammata published for their particular benefit too, or authropoi will not know that they understand Hellenikon. I elpizn that you will aitein your committee in Londinio to supply taxeos this much needed edition of the graphai. The one is as much needed as the other. If your committee in Londinio understands that, it will arrive at the proper boule.” The above looses much because of our lack of a font of Greek type but we cannot forbear to give in as best we can.

Gen Yi Hak-kyun, the head of the Military School and Gen Cho Tong-yun, chief of the Military Law Bureau have exchanged places.

There have been so many robberies in Seoul of late that twenty revolvers have been placed in the hands of the night patrol of each of the five departments of the city.

Owing to lack of funds in the treasury the November salaries were paid out of the Palace Treasury.

A band of 120 robbers raided the town of Sang-ju in Kyung-sang Province in early November burning thirty-five houses, killing two people and severely wounding two others, burning two horses and two cows, burning 560 bags of rice; dogs, hens and goods of many kinds were all destroyed. It was one of the worst raids yet reported.

Min Yung-ju memorialized the throne saying that Ko Yong-gun the murderer of U Pom-sun in Japan is a great patriot and asking that if possible he be brought back to Korea to receive high honors. Many others have presented memorials of the same tenor.

Sim Sang-hun, Minister of Finance has been removed to the Military bureau and Yi Yong-ie became acting Minister of Finance early in December.

The native papers state that the Russian Minister, about the first of December, stated to the Foreign Office that the Shah of Persia desires to make a treaty of friendship with Korea and suggested that Cho Min-heui the Korean Minister in Washington be commissioned to open negotiations looking toward this end.

Foreign Office informs the Department of Agriculture that a universal exhibition is to be held in Belgium in 1905 and asks whether Korea will send an exhibit.

The native papers contain the curious statement that if the Korean government wishes to secure the release of Ko Yung-gun the assassin of U Pom-sun it will cost $2,000! The Japanese authorities will smile when they hear this report.

Yun Hyo-jung who was secretly in league with Ko Yung-gun for the assassination of U Pom-sun came back to Korea for some reason be- [page 556] fore the deed was done. He himself has been under the ban here but owing to this event he has received a full pardon for past offences.

One hundred new jinrikshas which the government bought for use in the great jubilee have been sold off to high officials for yen thirty-five apiece.

The native papers say that a Russian went on an inspecting tour along the route of the Seoul Fusan Railing but was treated so badly by Japanese workmen along the line that he wired to Seoul demanding protection.

Mr. Martin Egan, agent for the Associated Press in America, visited Seoul recently in the interest of the company, examining the conditions existing here.

The native papers of the 5th inst. state that Gen Yi Hak-kyun, and several other Korean officials were discovered by the police to be gambling. The place was raided, we hear, but the men were not arrested.

Five officials of p’an-su rank memorialized the throne, about the first of December, asking that Ko Yong-gun the assassin of U Pom-sun be brought back to Korea if possible.

Yi Pom-chin Korea Minister in St. Petersburg has written to the Whang-sung Sin-mun, the native daily paper in Seoul, saying that its report of a month ago that he had sent a despatch to the Korean Government urging that Yongampo be not opened to foreign trade was entirely false, that he had sent no such despatch, and that if the government wanted to open that port it had a perfect right to do so.

In Kang-wun province, at the provincial capital a new sect culled the Nam-hak has arisen. It is said to be a mystic cult and is very much like the Tong-hak of unsavory memory.

Over fifty houses were burned at Ch’ang-py’ung in Chul-la Province about the end of November.

The Superintedent of Trade at Kyong-heung informs the government that the people along the Tuman are somewhat excited by seeing Russian troops drilling on the opposite bank of the river.

In south Ch’ung-ch’ung Province according to the native press, the loss of revenue due to failure of crops amounts to 10,081 kyul or & 120,000

Seventy prefects who are still in arrears of taxes $800 or more are to be cashiered.

Robbers burned about forty houses in Chin-jang North Ch’ung-Ch’ung Province early in December but no lives were lost.

Next year the Crown Prince enters the fourth decade of his life and in consequence there will be a great festival in his honor on the first day of the first moon.

Yi Yong-ik was ill about the middle of December and went to the Japanese hospital for treatment. He presented the hospital with Yen 1500.

The Prime Minister who took the Emperor’s portrait to the “Western Palace” in Pyeng-yang returned to Seoul on the 11th inst. having accomplished his mission successfully.

[page 557] The Japanese paper in Chemulpo, the Chosun Sinpo becomes a daily from January 1st. We congratulate our contemporary upon this evidence of growing success.

The salaries of all the soldiers of the Korean army are to be raised one dollar and a half per month, and the salaries of the police are to be raised one dollar per month. This goes into effect the first of the new year.

The Prime Minister on his return for Pyeng Yang announced that on the way the Pyeng Yang soldiers who accompanied him as escort committed many acts of oppression on the country people along the road, and urged that they be sent back to the north but His Majesty replied that they must remain for the present.

The Korean Legation building in Tokyo has lately been repaired throughout.

The following account of the Mokpo riots is sent us by reliable witnesses.

The trouble arose over the appointment of the bosses of the coolies that measure rice in the settlement (십장). The Japanese consul maintained that they must be appointed by him or the municipality and have a licence. The (감니) maintained that as they were Koreans be would appoint them and issue licences. Consequently there were two sets for a while, bringing on frequent conflicts between the Japanese and Korean coolies. Then the Korean coolies struck in a body, boycotting the Japanese settlement. A lot of Japanese went to the Korean Yamen one night about 10 o’clock, each with a club, and severely beat some Chusas. They had expelled every one from the room and had surrounded the Kamni in a very threatening manner (with their clubs) when he was rescued by Mr. Hopkins.

Later the Koreans caught and severely beat one or two of their own countrymen who dared to disregard their boycot. One man would probably have been killed but was rescued by Korean police. The Korean mob then went, and demolished his house and two or three other houses belonging to him or his friends or relatives.

The Japanese mob then beat some Korean policemen. Koreans then tried to block the road leading to the settlement, collecting piles of stones here and there as if for a stone fight. Sunday fifty marines were landed and marched the streets as if to intimidate the Koreans, and then returned. Early yesterday about 8 o’clock we noticed scores of Japanese coolies hurrying past going about a mile from the settlement to where the Korean coolies were massed at a Korean village. They there chased and beat the Koreans in a pretty rough fashion. I went out to see them and found seventeen (16 men, 1 woman) pretty badly beaten up and lying in the neighboring houses, some with bruises on their bodies and some with cuts in their heads and blood all over their clothes. So far as I could see none were dangerously or fatally hurt. This was also Dr. ― opinion who examined most of them. [page 558]

The trouble has been going on for more than a month and I am told trade is completely tied up. Many of the Korean junks, that come by the scores bringing rice, have left for Kunsan and Fusan and even the Korean sampans leave vacated the harbor so that it is difficult for passengers to go to and from the steamers.

Soon after the Kamni was intimidated he left overland for Seoul to push the case in the courts. Affairs were put in the hands of the acting Kamni who resigned by telegraph. The chief of police is sick.

The Superintendent of Trade at Chemulpo reports that a serious robbery of gun-powder and copper money took place on the premises of Meyer and Co. of Chemulpo late in November.

On December first the Danish government through the Russian Minister in Seoul presented to His majesty a decoration of high order.

We are sorry to learn that on Dec. 2nd the house occupied by Mr. Wallace in Chemulpo was destroyed by fire. All the funiture was lost. We understand that it carried a fair insurance, however.

The Chemulpo merchants, on the 7th inst., began the publication of a periodical devoted to the interests of trade in that port.

A general meeting of the Korea branch of the Royal Asiatic Society was held at the Seoul Union on Wednesday the 23rd inst. A paper on the Kwaga or Korean national examinations, was read by Mr. Hulbert. It was followed by interesting remarks by Mr. Jordan, the president of the society; and by others. It was generally agreed that on the whole the suspension of these examinations in 1894 was a mistake and that the evils connected with the system were more than overbalanced by the benefits which it conferred in encouraging education and in forming a potent bond of union between the provinces. The whole social and economical side ot the question was passed over in the reading of the paper because of the necessity of getting it within the hour, but it is expected that if the paper is published these features will be touched upon.

On the 4th of December the Seoul Fusan Railway officials gave a large number of Korean officials an opportunity to see the progress made on the road, by taking thern on an excursion to Suwun.

It is said that the order to raise only 30,000 lbs of ginseng for the next crop is causing great suffering among the ginseng farmers, since usually as much as twice that amount is prepared for market.

On the 16th inst. the Russian Minister complained of the Superintendent of trade at Kyong-heung, near the Tuman river and said he must he dismissed. He resigned and Sim Chong-suk was appointed in bis place.

On the 20th inst. Lady Om was raised one degree and received the grade of Kwi-bi or “Particular Consort.”

Yun Chi-ho was appointed Superintendent of trade at Mok-po in place of Kim Sung-gyu who was disliked by the Japanese because of his claim that he had the right to license the bosses of the coolie gang who measure rice in the concession at that port. Mr. Yun’s intimate knowledge of such matters will do much to settle the disputed question.

[page 559] The Superintendent of Trade on the Russian border at Tuman River asks that he be provided with interpreters who can speak Chinese and Russian, as his work is greatly hindered by lack of such help.

The governor of South Ham-gyung Province writes that there are constant border fights between Koreans and mounted Chinese bandits on the northern border near Samsu.

Gold coins are being steadily made at the Imperial mint, and $1,200,000 worth will be turned out. Also $1,500,000 worth of silver half dollars have already been minted.

The acting superintendent of trade at Mok-po, pending the arrival of Mr. Yun Chi-ho, reports that four of the men injured in the recent riot are likely to die.

A man named Yi Ch’ang-yul, in prison for the past seven years because of supposed connection with the death of the late queen, died in prison a few days ago because of cold and exposure.

Agents of the Russian Timber Company have gone up the Yalu as far as Samsu marking out the timber land that they are going to exploit.

A band of robbers entered the house of a retired official of rank in Ch’ung-ju, killed his son and looted the place.

The ‘‘boys” engaged in the different government offices receive $6 a month in Korean money. They have now combined and declare they cannot live on this amount as it is only enough to buy a single load of fuel to say nothing of rice.

The mayor of Seoul has parsed a decree that all jinrikshas must be provided with lamps at night.

Japanese living O-chung island off Chulla Province have established a office of their own at that place

On the evening of the 15th, Japanese merchants in Seoul had a meeting at which were discussed ways and means of overcoming the obstacles to trade here. The results of their conference were sent in the form of a letter to the Prime Minister in Tokyo.

The native papers state that yen 8,600 have been demanded form the Korean government as indemnity for the injury done to the Electric Company because of the trouble last Summer when the government failed to protect the line.

The house of the former Home Minister Yi Keun-ha was raided by robbers a few nights ago. They were armed with swords and firearms. A large amount of goods were secured including money, jewelry and other costly articles.

On the 19th inst. the French Representative repeated the request for a gold mining concession in Ch’ang-song.

The prefect of Yong-ch’un in which Yongampo is situated informs the government that several hundred Chinese have been brought into that port and they bring with them a great deal of opium. This is likely to introduce the pcrncious drug. He asks that the port be opened at once to foreign trade and that these opium-eaters be dealt with.

Yi Chi-yong has been appointed Foreign Minister in the place of the Acting Minister Yi Ha-yung. [page 560]

**Table of Meteorological Observations,**

**Seoul, Korea, November, 1903.**

**V. Pokrovsky, M. Observer.**



[page 561]

Korean History.

This conspiracy was headed by the son of the executed Kim Il-gyung, by Mok Si-ryung the brother of Mok Ho-ryung and by the sons and other near relatives of the killed and banished leaders of the Soron party. A large force was collected in Kyung-sang Province and Yi In-jwa and Chong Heui-ryang were put in command. The conspiracy honeycombed the whole country, for we are told that in P’yung-an Province Yi Sa-sung took charge of an insurrectionary force, while at the capital Kim Chung-geui and Nam T’a-jung worked in its interests. It was agreed that on the twentieth of the third moon Seoul should be entered and that Prince Mil-wha be put on the throne. But there was a weak point in this as in all such ventures. One of the leaders in the south, An Pak, had a friend living at Yong-ju, in the direct line of the approach to Seoul and he warned him to move, as something was about to happen. The friend coaxed him into telling him the whole affair, and then brought the story straight to Seoul. This informer was Choe Kyosu. Immediately the king sent out a heavy guard to the river and also manned the wall of the capital. Troops were thrown into Yang-sung, Chin-wi, Su-wun, Yong-in, Chuk-san and Ch’un-ch’an, and were told to seize anyone who made the least disturbance. The brother of An Pak being caught, he gave the details of the position of the rebel troops and other important particulars. The king appointed O Myung-hang of the Soron party as general-in-chief of an expedition against the seditious people of the south. He took with him 2,000 soldiers, but gathered more as he proceeded south. Strong bodies of troops were also sent north along the Peking road and to Puk-pawi outside the East Gate, to guard the appoaches to the city. In the south loyal troops were in force at Mun-gyung Fortress near Cho-ryung Pass and the governor of Whang-ha Province also took soldiers and stationed himself at Whang-ju, near P’yung-yang.

In the south, the great rebel leader, Yi In-jwa, with banners flying, led his powerful army northward to the town of [page 562] Chung-ju. Here was stored a large amount of government provisions and arms. It was taken not by storm but by strategem. Arms were sent into the city on litters covered with vegetables and other things and soldiers went in, disguised as coolies. Once inside, they soon put the small garrison out of the way and killed the commandant. Yi then resumed the march on Seoul, appointing prefects in the districts through which he passed and assuming the title “Great General-in-Chief.” The claim was that the uprising was in behalf of the dead king. All the soldiers were in mourning for him and they carried in their ranks a shrine to his memory, before which they offered sacrifices.

The road from the south coming up to Seoul divides at Mok-ch’un, one branch proceeding by way of Chik-san and the other by An-sung, but they unite again at Su-wun. The rebels arrived at Mok-ch’un just as the royal troops arrived at Su-wun. It was of prime importance to the rebels to know by which road the royal army under O Myung-hang were coming. Whichever way they came the rebels must take the other road and so evade an action. Gen. O was astute enough to surmise this but he did not propose to let the rebels steal a march on him in this way; so he sent forward a small part of his force toward Chik-san, but with the main body of his troops he took the road by way of An-sung. His calculations were correct, and when he neared An-sung he found that the enemy were encamped there in fancied security. Taking a picked band of 700 men Gen. O made a detour and came around the hill on whose slope the rebels were encamped. In the night he made a wild charge down from its summit into the camp. The effect was instantaneous. A moment later the whole rebel force was in full flight, racing for their lives, while the pursuers cut them down at pleasure. Yi In-jwa was captured and brought to Seoul. Meanwhile Pak P’il-pon the prefect of Son-san opposed the remaining rebels in Kyang-sang Province, capturing and killing a great number of them, especially the leaders Ung Po and Heui Ryang, whose heads he sent to Seoul in a box.

When Gen O Myung-hang returned in triumph to Seoul, the king went out to meet him, and after the traitors’ heads had been impaled on high, they all adjourned to the palace [page 563] where a great feast was spread, at which the king gave Gen. O a sounding title and to Ch’oe Kyo-su, who betrayed the plot he gave the house near the present English Church, which has in connection with it a memorial shrine. The king had a book printed giving in details the evil deeds of the Soron party. Since that time there have been no great party struggles. Sacrifices were offered for all who had been killed by the rebels. The king showed his clemency by liberating the five-year-old son of one of the traitors. He had been imprisoned according to the law of the country, to be kept until his fifteenth year, and then he would be led out to execution.

Hand in hand with the king’s prejudice against the use of wine went a similar prejudice against mining, so that not only did he peremptorily forbid the mining of silver at Anbyun but hearing that copper was being mined near the same place he sent and put a stop to it.

In 1727 the heir apparent died and was given the posthumous title of Hyo-jang Se-ja. Two years later another incipient rebellion broke out in the south having as its object the placing of Ha Keui, a relative of the king, on the throne. It is said that with him died several hundred more of the doomed Soron party.

The next thirty-two years were crowded full of reforms and their mere enumeration throws much light on the social and economic conditions of the time.

A map was made of the northern boundary and a fortress was built at Un-du; the law was promulgated that the grandson of a slave woman should be free; on account of drought the king ordered the making of numerous reservoirs in which to store water for irrigation, and a commission was appointed with headquarters at Seoul, under whose supervision these reservoirs were built; the king had a new model of the solar system made, to replace the one destroyed by the Japanese during the invasion; at last China amended that clause in her history which stated that Kwang-ha was a good man and that In-jong Ta-wang had usurped the throne, and the king presented one of the corrected copies at the ancestral temple; the cruel form of torture, which consisted in tying the ankles together and then twisting a stout stick between the bones, was done away; a granary was built on the eastern [page 564] coast, to be stocked with grain each year by the people of Kyung-sang Province, for use in case of famine in the northern province of Ham-gyung; the king claimed that the scarcity of rice was due to the fact that so much of it was used in the making of wine and again threatened to kill anyone who should make, sell or use that beverage; in fact he placed detectives all about Seoul, along the main roads, whose business it was to smell of the breath of everyone whose face or gait indicated indulgence in the flowing bowl!

A boatload of men belonging to the overthrown Ming dynasty appeared on the southern coast and asked aid in an attempt to wrest again the scepter from the Manchus, but they were politely refused; the king abolished that form of punishment which consisted in applying red hot irons to the limbs; he built the Chung-sung, or inner wall at P’yung yang in order to cut off the view of a kyu-bong or “spying peak;” which in Korea is supposed to bring bad luck. Any place from which may be seen the top of a mountain peak just peeping above the summit of a nearer mountain is considered unfit for a burial or building site.

About the year 1733 famines were so frequent that the king appointed a bureau of agriculture and appointed inspectors for each of the provinces to help in securing good irrigation; a man named Yi Keui-ha invented a war chariot with swords or spears extending out from the hubs of the wheels on either side. He was rewarded with a generalship. The king established a special detective force differing from the ordinary detective force in being more secret in its operations and in holding greater powers. The rules for its guidance were as follows, and they throw light upon existing conditions.

(1) After careful investigation they may close up any prefectural office and send the prefect to Seoul for trial.

(2) This does not apply to prefectures where animals are being reared for use in ancestral sacrifices.

(3) In order to maintain their incognito they shall not demand food for nothing at the country inns but shall pay the regular prices.

(4) For the same reason they shall not stop long in the same place.

(5) They must look sharply after the district constables [page 565] and thief-catchers and see that they are diligent and effective.

(6) They must put a stop to the pernicious custom of prefects’ servants taking money in advance from farmers as a bribe to remit in part future government dues.

(7) They shall prevent the sending in of incorrect estimates of the area of taxable land.

(8) They shall see to it that prefects do not receive extra interest on government seed loaned to the people and payable in the autumn after the crop is harvested.

(9) They shall prevent prefects appropriating ginseng which they confiscate from illegal sellers.

(10) They shall prevent the king’s relatives and friends seizing people’s land.

(11) They shall stop the evil custom of prefects withholding the certificate of release from pardoned exiles until they have paid a certain sum of money.

(12) They shall prevent the enlistment of too many men, who thereby claim their living from the government granaries.

(13) They shall see to it that the prefects do not keep the good cloth paid by the people for soldiers clothes, and hand over to the soldiers a poorer quality.

(14) They shall prevent creditors compounding interest in a debtor fails to pay on time.

(15) They shall stop the making of poor gun-powder and of muskets with too small a bore.

(16) They shall enforce the law that the grandson of a slave is free.

(17) They shall see to it that the prefects in P’yung-an Province do not receive revenue above the legal amount.

Each of these specifications might be made the heading of a long chapter in Korean history. We have here in epitome the causes of Korea’s condition to-day.

The governor of Kang-wun Province stated that on account of the frequent famines he could not send three men annually as heretofore to the island of Ul-lenng (Dagelet), but the king replied that as the Japanese had asked for that island, it would be necessary to make the annual inspection as heretofore.

In the year 1734 the king made his second son heir to the throne; he did away with the punishment of men who sold [page 566] goods in competition with the guilds or monopolies established at Chong-no, the center of the capital. There had been so many royal deaths that the people had become accustomed to the use of white clothes, and had forgotten all other custom. But the king now declared that white was the worst of colors because it soiled so easily, and he ordered the use of blue, red or black, but giving the preference to the first as being the color that corresponds with east. In the early years of the dynasty King Se-jong had made a gauge of the size of whipping rods. It was shaped like a gun barrel, and no one was to be whipped with a rod that could not be put into this gauge like a ramrod. The king revived this law and had many gauges made and sent all about the country to the different prefectures. He also forbade anyone but a properly authorised official to administer a whipping, and he abrogated the law by which thieves were branded by being struck in the forehead and on each cheek with a great bunch of needles after which ink was rubbed into the wounds. He next did away with the clumsy three-decked war-vessels which were slow and unseaworthy and in place of them substituted what he called the ‘‘Sea Falcon Boat” which had sails extending from the sides like wings and which combined both speed and safety. These he stationed all along the coast.

While on a trip to Song-do the king paid a compliment to the people of Pu-jo-ga, the ward in that city where dwell the descendants of the men of the former dynasty, who do not acknowledge the present dynasty, and thus show their loyalty to their ancient master. At the same time he, for the first time, inclosed in a fence the celebrated Son-juk Bridge, where still shows the blood of the murdered statesman Chong Mong-ju.

Since the days of King Se-jong, who determined the length of the Korean yard-stick, that useful instrument had shrunken in some measure and its length differed in different localities. So now again the king gave strict orders about it and required all yard-sticks to be made to conform to a pattern which he gave. Previous to the days of King Myung-jong men of the literary degrees dressed in red, but white had gradually taken its place; and now the king ordered them to go back to the good old custom. The official grade called [page 567] *Halyim* became such an object of strife among the officials that the king was constrained to abolish it, though it has since been revived. Two of the emperors of the Sung dynasty in China have their graves on Korean soil in the vicinity of Kapsan. The duty of keeping these graves in order was now placed in the hands of the governor of Ham-gyung Province. The king anticipated the death of all party strife by setting up a monument at the Song-gyun-gwan in memory thereof and he ordered the people of different parties to intermarry and become good friends. During the Manchu and Japanese invasions all the musical instruments had been either destroyed or stolen, and as yet they had not been wholly replaced, but now there were found in a well at the palace a set of twenty-four metal pendants, which, when struck with a hammer, gave four various musical notes. The inscriptions on them indicated that they had come down from the time of King Sejong. This aroused the king’s interest and he set skillful men at work making various instruments, notably a small chime of bells to be used at the royal ancestral worship.

CHAPTER XII.

Gates roofed . . . . superstition, sorcery interdicted . . . . a plebiscite . . . . wine-bibber executed . . . . a female Buddha . . . . growth of Roman Catholicism . . . . sanitation. . . a senile king . . . . suspicions against the Crown Prince . . . . plot against him . . . . an ambitious woman . . . . the prince’s, trial . . . . a painful scene . . . . the prince killed . . . . law against wine relaxed . . . . sacrifice . . . . census . . . . various changes . . . . party schism . . . . emancipation proclaniation . . . . a dangerous uncle . . . . a new king . . . . literary works . . . . justice . . . . study of Christianity . . . . various innovations . . . . rumors of war . . . . “birthplace” of Roman Catholicism in Korea . . . . opposition . . . . terrible scourge of cholera. . . . conspiracy . . . . women’s coiffure . . . . Roman Catholic persecution . . . . Roman Catholic books declared seditious . . . . prosperity and adversity . . . . a Chinese priest enters Korea . . . . types made . . . . literary works . suggestion as to coinage . . . . Chinese priest asks that a Portugese embassy be sent to Korea “the king not violently opposed to Christianity.

In the year 1743 the king put roofs upon the West and North-east Gates. Before that time they had been simply [page 568] arches. He set on foot an agitation against the use of silk, and ordered that no more banners be made of that material. He utterly did away with the last remnant of the Soron party by an edict in which he stated that all who would go by that name were traitors. There was a popular superstition that the third and sixth on the list of successful candidates at the government examinations would soon die; so the examiners were careful to substitute other names, in case a friend or relative found himself in this awkward predicament. The king happened to see this done once and upon inquiry found that the names of two Song-do men were being substituted in place of those of some friends of the examiners. In anger he ordered the names to be all mixed up again, and that each man be made to run his chance of sudden death. One of his most salutary reforms was the doing away with the mudang or sorceress class, who did and still do so much to corrupt the morals and degrade the manners of the Korean people. This period beheld the invention of the one-wheeled chair, but its use was always confined to the third official grade. A step backward was taken when it was decreed that no one above the ninth official grade could be beaten as punishment for crime. It tended to build up another barrier between the upper and lower classes. And yet it was not an unmixed evil, for a public beating must inevitably lower the dignity of the office that the culprit holds. There was such universal complaint against both the land and the poll taxes that the king put it to vote at a plebiscite called in Seoul in 1750, and the people voted unanimously for a House tax instead, and the king complied. The next year a grandson was born to him, who was destined to be his successor. He found it necessary to police the four mountains about Seoul to prevent the trees all being cut down. He built for the first time a fortification at the Im-jin River. In 1751 famines in different localities drove crowds of people to Seoul and the government was obliged to feed them; then the king’s mother died; then the queen died. The king said there must be some extraordinary cause for all these calamities. He believed it was because wine was being secretly used in the palace. It was denied, but he was incredulous and ordered that even in the ancestral sacrifices the use of wine be [page 569] dispensed with and that water be used instead. The provincial general of Ham-gyung Province was convicted of having used wine and the king went outside the South Gate to see him executed. The culprit’s head was set on a pole in view of the populace. Following up the good work of doing away with sorcery, the king banished from Seoul all the blind exorcists.

The year 1753 was marked by two events of importance. A woman created a great disturbance in Whang-ha Province by claiming to be a Buddha and inciting the women everywhere to burn up the ancestral shrines. The trouble ended only when the king sent a special officer to seize and execute her.

We are told that by this time the secret study of the tenets of Roman Catholicism had resulted in its wide diffusion in the provinces of Whang-ha and Kang-wun. There was uneasiness at court on account of the rumor that the people were throwing away their ancestral tablets, and the king ordered the governors of those provinces to put down the growing sect. This was more easily ordered than done, and as no deaths followed it is probable that the governors did little beside threaten and denounce. Two years later a work of importance was completed. The great sewer of the city was quite inadequate to carry away the sewage of the city and every time a heavy rain fell the sewer overflowed and the street from the great bell to the East Gate became a torrent. The king gave two million cash out of his private purse and the sewer was properly cleaned out. He also appointed a commission on sewerage and ordered that there be a systematic cleaning out every three years.

We have now arrived at the thirty-eighth year of the reign, corresponding to the year 1761 A. D. Up to that time the reign had been a brilliant one, not because of military successes but because of social, economic and other reforms. So far, it stands side by side with the reign of Suk-jong Ta-wang, who with the aid of the illustrious Song Si-ryul, effected such far-reaching reforms. We have yet seen but few signs of that growing senility which forms such a marked characteristic of the remainder of this reign. The king was now over seventy years old and he had lost that vigor of mind [page 570] which characterized the earlier years of his reign. But he still possessed all that imperiousness of will which likewise characterized him. Good judgment and will power should decline together or else the results may be disastrous, as is illustrated in the remaining years of his reign.

We will remember that his first son had died and his second son had been made heir to the throne. He in turn had a son who was now eight years old. The evils which we are about to relate grew out of the fact that the heir was not as strongly attached to the Noron party as its adherents desired and they feared that his accession might result in a resuscitation of the defunct Soron party. The truth is the son carried out in fact what his father commanded but did not live up to —namely the obliteration of all party lines. The old man, while always preaching the breaking tip of party clanishness, remained a good Noron to the end of his days and the Norons had all the good things in his gift. The king perhaps thought that party lines had been lost sight of, but it was only the overwhelming ascendency of the Noron pary, which made comparison absurd. Instead of destroying party lines he did the very opposite in putting all the power into the hands of a single party. This suspicion against the Crown Prince on the part of the party in power was the main cause of the disturbance which followed, but its immediate cause was the ambition of a woman, a not unusual stumbling-block in the path of empire. This woman was the sister of the Crown Prince who desired that her husband be made king. Her name was Princess Wha-whan Ong-ju. One of the palace women also hated the Crown Prince. All these people desired his removal from the field of action and all had different reasons. The Noron party wanted to save themselves; the Princess wanted to become queen, and the palace woman wanted revenge; why, we are not told.

It did not take long to find a way. Hong Kye-heui, Hong Pong-han and Kim Sang-no, three choice spirits came together and began laying plans for the overthrow of the Crown Prince. They first instructed the soldiers about the person of the Prince to steal women or goods and, when questioned about it, claim that it was at the order of the Prince. One day when the king was taking a walk behind the palace he came across [page 571] a shallow excavation in the earth, covered with thatch. Looking in, he found it filled with mourners’ clothes and other objects of mourning. Inquiring what it meant, he was told that the Crown Prince was impatient to have him die and that he had prepared the mourners garments in advance. This aroused the anger of the king. He never stopped to think that it might be a trick against the Prince. Every thing lent color to the suspicion. Again, one day, the king found the palace woman, above mentioned, weeping bitterly. She said it was because the Crown Prince had offered her indignity. So by degrees plotters, bringing apparent evidence from several sides, which could not but seem conclusive, gradually estranged the king from his son and at last caused the removal of the latter to another palace, the one called the “Old Palace.” These things preyed upon the mind of the Crown Prince and made him ill, but to add to this, it is said they administered drugs to him which tended to imbalance his mind and make him violent toward those about him. Then the Princess his sister arranged a trip to Pyung-yang for: his health. It was intended that while he was there he should be charged with plotting to bring a force to overthrow the king and usurp the government. On his return, as he was approaching the city near night, an official came in to the king and announced that the Crown Prince was outside the gate and intended to come in that night and seize the scepter. This threw the king into a frenzy of rage. He immediately had all the gates put under double guard and sent out demanding the reason of the Prince’s treasonable actions. The latter denied all treasonable intentions, but it was too late. The old man was unable to reason calmly about the matter. On the fifteenth day of the fifth moon the king went down to the “Old Palace” to sit in judgment on his son. It was an exceedingly hot day. When the Crown Prince came in and bowed before his father, the latter said ‘‘Do you realize how you have sinned?” The Prince replied that he was not conscious of having sinned against his father in any way whatever. As the king, had already decided in his mind that the Prince was guilty, this denial made him simply furious. He screamed ‘‘If you do not die it will mean the destruction of the dynasty, So die.” He then ordered all the assembled [page 572] courtiers to bare their swords but they hesitated, for they knew the Prince was innocent; but when the king leaped up and drew his sword they had to do likewise. The Prince calmly said “I am no criminal, but if I am to die it ought not to be before the eyes of my father. Let me return to my apartments and then do with me as you will.” The king was too far gone with rage and excitement to care for the dignity of his high station or to care for appearances. “No,” he screamed, “It must be here before my eyes.” Thereupon the Prince undid the girdle about his waist and proceeded to strangle himself. The whole court were horrified, excepting the king, who could no longer be called sane. They rushed forward, undid the cord and dashed water in his face to bring him back to consciousness, in spite of the king’s loudly vociferated commands to the contrary. They joined with one voice in asking the king’s clemency, but they might as well have asked a maniac. He threatened to kill them too if they persisted in thwarting him. He then ordered a heavy plank box to be brought in and the Prince was commanded to get into it. But at the moment he was trying to beat his brains out against a stone and did not hear the commands One of the officials ran to him and spread out his hands on the stone and received the blows that were intended to end the life of the unhappy Prince. Being dissuaded from this, the Prince arose and went to his father and said “I am your only son, father, and though I may have sinned, overlook it and forgive me. You are not like my father now. You will recover from this passion and lament it.” This enraged the king to such an extent that he could hardly articulate as he ordered the Prince to get into the box. At this moment they brought up the little grandson to plead for his father’s life, but the king raised his foot and gave the child a kick that sent it reeling back into the arms of those who had brought it. It was evident that there was nothing to be done; so the Prince proceeded to climb into the box. It was now dark and when the cover was nailed on it was not noticed that there was a large knot-hole in one side of the box. One of the officials came and spoke to the Prince through this hole. He was overcome by the heat and asked for water and a fan, which were passed in to him. One of those who were interested in the [page 573] Prince’s death told the king what was going on, and he hurried out and ordered a heavy plank nailed over the hole, and banished the man who had helped the Prince. The assembly broke up, but the Prince was left in this narrow prison day after day to starve. Each day one of the palace servants gave the box a heavy blow with a stone. At first it elicited an angry protest from the Prince but the fourth day he only said “I am very dizzy. Please leave me in peace.” On the seventh day there was no response, and the servant bored a hole and put in his hand and felt the cold body of the dead Prince. The body was wrapped in grave-clothes and taken away for burial. He received the posthumous name of Sa-do. It is a singular fact that from that day to his end, some fifteen years later, the king never expressed sorrow for this act of cruelty. It is also significant that the Princess never tried to carry out her plan of having her husband become king. The horror of this scene seems to have turned her mind away from its purpose. At any rate she drops from the page of history without being given an opportunity to atone even in part for the terrible crime for which she was largely to blame. The king still looked upon his grandson as the heir to the throne, but he made him disown his dead father and take his uncle as father. He likewise made the boy solemnly promise never to change his mind in this. We see from this that the king continued to the very end to think that the Prince was guilty and his deed justifiable.

The year 1764 found an octogenarian on the throne. From this time on, the king was exceedingly feeble, but he clung to life with a tenacity that was amazing, and was destined to encumber the throne for a full decade still. His increasing weakness made it necessary for his physicians to prescribe a little wine. He acquiesced, and from this time the laws against the use of wine were relaxed somewhat. Its use was soon resumed in connection with the ancestral worship, but only at the importunity of the princess.

These declining years are by no means barren of interesting events. The annual sacrifice in behalf of the country had always been made at Pi-buk Mountain in Ham-gyung Province, but it was told the king that as Pak-tu Mountain stood at the head of the country and dominated the whole, as it [page 574] were, the sacrifice should be made on or near that mountain. So it was decreed that from that time on the sacrifice should be performed at In-ch’on Mang-duk-p’yung, eight li beyond Kap-san and in full view of the great Pak tu-san or “Mountain of the White Head.” And it was further decreed that those who took part in the service should be secluded for four days before the event, should bathe often and put on clean clothes and forego all commerce with women.

In 1767 the king ordered a full census of the country. It was found to contain 1,679,865 houses, containing 7,006,248 people. In other words there had been an increase of over 800,000 since the year 1657. He also ordered the making of a new rain gauge. The first one is said to have been made by King Sejong. He did away with the punishment that consists in beating the tops of the feet until, frequently, the toes drop off. On account of the danger of shipwreck in rounding the corner of Whang-ha Province the king ordered the discontinuance of annual naval tactics at Chang-nyun, excepting for the boats regularly stationed there. He built a palace in Chun-ju in Chul-la Province and had sacrifices offered there, for although Ham-gyung Province is said to be the birthplace of the line, the family really originated in the south. The king also revived the ancient custom of having a bell hang in the palace gateway, to be struck by anyone who had a grievance to lay before the king.

A split occurred in the Noron party in the year 1771.The two factions were called respectively the Si and the Pyuk. The former held that the father of the Crown Prince was an in recent man and .bad been unjustly punished, while the latter held the reverse. It is evident that those who claimed he was innocent were making a bid for favor with the prospective king.

At the time of which we write the great sewer of the city had a line of ancient willows extending the whole length. This was found to be a disadvantage and they were hewn down and the sewer was walled in as we see it today. Two more factions arose about this time. They were called the Nak and the Ho. Their differences were caused by conflicting theories as to the interpretation of the Confucian classics. [page 575]

The greatest act of this king, and the one that casts the greatest luster on his memory, was reserved for the twilight of his reign. What led to it we are not told, but in the eighty-ninth year of his life, by a single stroke of the brush, he emancipated all the serfs in Korea. Up to this time all the common people had been serfs of *yang-bans* or noble class. In every district and in every ward each man of the common people owed allegiance to some local gentleman. It took the form usually of a tax or tribute in kind and was very loose in its application; but on occasion the master could call upon all these people for service and he could even sell them he so desired. This is the reason why it is exceedingly rare that a family removes permanently from any locality, at least nominally. A man may go from place to place, or may live permanently at the capital, but when asked where he lives he will invariably name the exact spot where he originated and where the seat of his family is still supposed to be. When the common people were serfs they could not move at will and the custom became so ingrained in them that to this day its effects are plainly seen. This aged king put forth his hand and decreed that this serfdom should cease once for all. It was different from slavery. That institution still continued and has continued to the present day. This serfdom included all the people who did not belong to the so-called yang-ban class. It is quite plain that the line of demarcation between the common people and the nobility was very much more clearly defined than at the present day. We find no indication that the order was resisted in any part of the country. It is probable that the serfdom had gradually become largely nominal and the people only gradually came to realize what the edict really meant. Even to this day the spirit of serfdom is a marked characteristic of the people.

His ninetieth year beheld the complete mental and physical collapse of the king; He could not attend to the ancestral sacrifices; his mind continually wandered from the subject in hand. He would order a meeting of his councillors and then forget that he had ordered it, or forget what he had ordered it for.

Hong in-han hated the young Crown Prince. It had [page 576] long been his ambition to see on the throne the son of the princess who had given up the project of becoming queen. He worked with all his might to have the fatal day put off, when the royal seals should be put in the hands of the prince. He was all the more dangerous as he was the prince’s uncle, and therefore more difficult to handle.

When the aged king insisted upon giving up, this man said, “Not yet, you have many years more to reign, and he succeeded in delaying the matter, hoping that something might intervene to prevent the consummation that he dreaded. At one time when the king called a clerk to record his decree that the Crown Prince, from that day, should assume the reins of power, Hong violently pushed the clerk away and prevented it. The officials were all in a state of trepidation over these high-handed proceedings, fearing that they might become compromised, but help was at hand, Su Myung-sun memorialized the king and set forth this Hong in such a light that the king with a last effort asserted himself and the young prince became king. A near friend of Hong was banished as a hint that Hong himself might expect punishment if he persisted in making trouble. Early the next year more of Hong’s friends were banished. The aged king took the newly appointed King to the shrine of his foster father and made him swear that he would ever consider himself the son of that man rather than of his real father. The young man asked that the record of his father’s death be expunged from the official records and so they were taken outside the Northwest Gate and washed in the stream.

In the third moon of 1776 the old man died. The new king is known by his posthumous title of Chong-jong Ta-wang. He immediately raised his adopted father to the rank of Chin-jong T’a-wang and gave his real father the title Chang-hon Se-ja.

The reign just ended had been rich in literary products. The names of some of the books published are: “How to deal with the native fever,” “The evil deeds of the Soron party,” “Conduct and Morals,” “Fortifications and Military Tactics.” “A Catechism of Morals,” “A reprint of the Confucian work So-hak-ji.” “An Abstract, in 100 volumes, of five important historical and geographical works.” This last was called the *Mun-hon Pi-go*.