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# Koreans in Manchuria.

Seven or eight years ago a number of Koreans were sent to Japan to study in a Military School in Tokyo. Among the whole number eight graduated with honor m 1903. Four of these had become thoroughly attached to Japan and were looked upon by the Japanese as fellow-countrymen. When the present war broke out the military authorities decided to send these four men to the front to watch the course of events and gain some experience in actual military manoeuvres. When this was announced to the men they said with one accord that they would rather go as actual fighting men than as mere on-lookers. If they were to learn war it must be by actual service. The Japanese were rather pleased at this show of spirit and consented to give the men the rank of captain and actual commands in the army.

When therefore the Japanese armies moved to the front there were four Koreans embarked in the enterprise. Their first experience of actual fighting was before Anju on the occasion of the first fight there. We shall follow the fortunes of only one of these men. He commanded a company of something under one hundred men. The army had landed at Chinnampo before the first of March and it was well into that month before they were ready to drive the Russians from Anju.

When the attack was made upon that town our Korean captain was well to the front with his company. [page 434] They succeeded in getting up close to the wall before any considerable harm was done but there they found that the Russian bullets were singing over their heads while they themselves could not do any execution at all. They were enveloped in a thick cloud of smoke and could see nothing. In this curious situation they remained for half an hour until the gates of the place were forced by other Japanese troops and they all went in together.

After that the army swept on toward the north. Not infrequently Russian stragglers were captured, and at first they were treated very well but later there was a change in their treatment owing to the following circumstance which was witnessed by Korean coolies in Russian employ who afterward told it to the Japanese. The Russians succeeded in capturing a Japanese and the Russian officer in charge ordered him bound. The Japanese objected to this and showed fight. The Russian officer came near to enforce the command when the Japanese seized his hand and bit it severely. Thereupon the Russian had all the Japanese soldier’s teeth extracted and perforated his hand and had him dragged along by a rope through this wound. At last they killed the prisoner, or he expired, and they threw his body by the road-side and covered it roughly. When the Japanese troops came on the Koreans who had witnessed the entertaining scene, pointed to the mound and said a Japanese was buried there. The listeners were incredulous but the story was so plainly told and so circumstantial that the grave was opened and the body was found mutilated as had been described. The dead man was given burial honors and re-interred but the rage of the Japanese at his treatment had a definite effect upon their mode of handling prisoners thereafter, for though no such inhumanity was shown, the prisoners were treated with much less consideration.

 When they reached the Yalu they found that the actual business of war was about to commence. They had to cross that stream by frail pontoon bridges in the face of thoroughly entrenched forces and severe artillery fire. There were three bridges thrown across the stream on that [page 435] eventful day and it was by the most southerly of these that one Korean captain crossed with his company. There was a new moon in the sky and it was just setting as the first troops attempted the crossing. The moon shining in their faces made the shore before them densely black. The Russians however had their backs to the moon and when the right moment arrived they poured in a destructive fire which destroyed the Manchurian end of the bridge and precipitated a large number of Japanese into the stream. The Japanese leaders saw the mistake at once and called a halt until the moon had disappeared and then the advance was resumed. The Korean captain crossed with the rest and went into battle with enthusiasm. He was no exception to the rank and file of Koreans, who have always shown commendable bravery whenever they had confidence in their commanding officers. It is when they feel sure that the man at the head is a coward and is willing to sacrifice them wantonly that soldiers think first of their own safety. He gives no details of the battle except that for four hours and a half they went at it tooth and nail, and were at last rewarded by seeing the Russians in full flight. It was after the main battle was over and the Japanese were pressing on in pursuit that he gives a little incident that throws some light upon the discipline of the Japanese.

The troops were under orders to drink no water from wayside wells or streams, and consequently they suffered severely at times. As the troops were in full pursuit of the Russians many of them found that the water in their canteens was exhausted. With powder blackened faces and lips that were parched with thirst they were pushing on in pursuit. One Korean captain in passing a spot where there was a little pool of filthy water saw one of the soldiers surreptitiously lower his canteen into this water and allow it to fill. The captain waited until the fellow had gone on and resumed his position in the ranks then he called him aside and asked what he had been taking that filthy water for. The poor soldier looked startled at being detected but explained that he was so thirsty that the temptation had been too great [page 436] for him. The captain could have had him disciplined but he did not have the heart to do so under the circumstances, so instead of that he took out of his pocket some disinfecting powders which Japanese officers always carry for this purpose and put one of them into the fellow’s canteen, thus rendering the water presumably innocuous. The gratitude of the soldier was very genuine.

As they were approaching Feng-whang-cheng an interesting episode occurred which came under the notice of the Korean captain. There had been a Chinaman hanging about all one day and he had been rather lavish with his money among the camp-followers until at last a Japanese official’s notice was attracted by something peculiar in the man’s face, some feature that was incongruous, and he forthwith had the fellow seized and brought before him. Instead of attempting to brave it out the Russian spy, for he was just that, exclaimed that all was lost. He explained that he had been at work some time in that district completing an accurate map and that he had risked all in order to gain information as to the numbers and equipment of the Japanese so that his superiors could determine whether to attempt to hold the approaches to Feng-whang-cheng or not. On his person were found maps and notes and a large amount of Japanese paper money. So far as the Korean knows this man was well treated, and held more as a prisoner of war than as a spy and was not executed as the rules of war would allow. Of course he may have been shot later, without the knowledge of the Korean captain. He believes however that the failure to offer any serious resistance in the rough country lying between Feng-whang-cheng and Antung was due in part to the failure of this spy to report to his superior.

The next and final incident related by this participant in the actual fighting took place at the time of the severe fight at Pun-sui-ling where the Russians were strongly intrenched on the hills and the fight raged from seven o’clock in the morning until dark before the Russians were finally dislcxlged. At one point in this severe [page 437] engagement the Korean captain found himself with his small command creeping along at the base of a great precipice. There they had to remain for a time while the artillery opened a way for their further advance. They were completely protected from the fire of the enemy and could sit down for a few moments and rest. The captain looked around upon his men. Their faces were blackened with powder, their lips had cracked with the heat and thirst and they certainly looked as if they had already done a full day’s work. The captain proceeded a few rods to take a look around the projecting rocks but as he put out his hand to steady himself he suddenly drew back for he had almost placed his hand on the head of a wounded Russian who had crawled among the rocks, out of the track of the storm of battle. The poor chap was not yet gone and he raised a hand as if asking for water. The captain could not refuse and gave him the few remaining drops that he carried and also a biscuit or two that were in his pocket.

That night as the exhausted troops climbed the hill just evacuated by the Russians and the order was given to sleep on their arms they simply fell where they were and slept the sleep of utter fatigue. All about them was dark and the captain sunk to the ground and laid his head on what seemed to be a hummock of earth. He was asleep almost before he had reached a recumbent position. When he woke in the early morning he found that he had been using a dead Russian for a pillow.

Before the battle of Liao-yang was ready to be fought all the Koreans were sent back to their own country. They would have been willing to continue but the Japanese said they should remember their duty to their own country and refused to take the responsibility of further exposing them to the chances of war. So they came back to Seoul. There should be good material here for Korean leadership, if the time ever comes when merit alone makes a man eligible to responsible position.

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# Russians in Northeast Korea.

Following upon the interesting account that we gave last month of physical and social conditions in the Northeast province we are able to add the following items, received from most reliable sources. Our informant writes that one of the Christian Koreans in Sung-jin left that place on Sept. 22nd and when he arrived in Wonsan he reported that when he left the northern port there were 2,600 Russian cavalry encamped there in tents They were situated a little to the north of the settlement, directly in front of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission property. At that point there was a large official Korean building but partially constructed. This the Russians finished and used as commissariat headquarters, with a bake-oven for bread; and all rations were issued there. As there was no other water there except that in the well on the mission compound, the Russians used it freely. Of course, all the missionaries had left the place and were in Wonsan and the two mission houses were in charge of native keepers, though the customs officials have general oversight of them. A number of Russians were also encamped on the peninsula which forms the protection for the anchorage harbor and here they had established a bath which is used by all the soldiers in rotation.

All these troops were from westem Russia and only came out across the continent a couple of months ago. They are very well behaved, are not allowed out at night and are kept in good order by military police who see to it that Koreans are not oppressed. The officers have been very kind to the Norwegian gentleman who is in charge of the Customs property and have provided him with many needed supplies which his long isolation had prevented him from obtaining. The officers repeatedly visited the two mission houses and went through them, and they enquired often of the Customs if they might not occupy them. They also bought and paid for vegetables out of the gardens of the missionaries.

[page 439] The most interesting information that our correspondent gives is about the roads in the north of which he says: The Russians have made fine roads all through the north as far as Puk-ch’ung. Contrary to the expectations of some, they have not used the interior route north of Kyung-sung by way of Whe-ryung and the Upper Tuman but have made a good road from Kyong-heung directly along the coast. North of Sung-jin where the road traversed a rice plain, and was therefore very wet in rainy weather, they made a new road on a better surveyed route, and south of Sung-jin they have even made the almost impassable “Heaven-toucher” easy of ascent by blasting out a new zig-zag route. They have also done the same at the Tung-geul Pass so that as far as Puk-ch’ung they have a road that is excellent for the transportation of almost any kind of military impedimenta. The sound of the blasting on the “Heaven Touching Pass” was heard ten miles away in Sung-jin. At the time this Korean came south there were at least 1,000 Russians at Puk-ch’ung and advance pickets as far as Ham-gwan Pass seventy li north of Ham-heung. The advance posts of the Japanese were on the south slope of the same pass, and here the two belligerents have been looking at each other for many days without firing a shot.

Since writing the above our correspendent learns that several thousand more Russians arrived at Sung-jin and came south to swell the force at Puk-ch’ung. In spite of the work they have put on the roads the Russians do not seem to have any heavy artillery. Guncarriages drawn by two horses were the heaviest they had at Sung-jin.

On September 13th news reached Wonsan that the Russians had all left Sung-jin and were assembled at Puk-ch’ung.

If we may be allowed to comment upon the above information, it seems very strange that the Russians should go to the extreme pains of blasting out roads over high passes and making them passable for heavy artillery unless they intended to hold them stiffly against all comers, and it looks very much as if [page 440] they would try hard to hold the Japanese in check. If they do not they have built substantial roads for the Japanese to pass over, for they could not destroy these permanent works behind them. War is truly a curious game. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good, for these new roads will remain and be of lasting benefit to Korean travelers.

# The Reform Spelling.

Editor Korea Review. Dear Sir :—

Some rather amazing reflections occur to the mind in considering the movement toward spelling reform which has been agitating the missionaries for the last two years. Is it possible that a considerable proportion of our missionary body, while warmly pressing this proposed reform, have made so little study of the subject, that they have apparently, almost no conception of the sweeping changes involved by such a step? Or is it only an illustration of the well known presence of sheep-nature in man? All we want is a leader, and if someone throws up his hat and shouts, “Come on, boy’s!” up we all get and away we all scamper, helter-skelter, pell-mell, until we land with our leader in the bottom of the ditch. Fortunately, in the present instance, some of us have come to ourselves, albeit on the very brink of the final plunge, and are disposed to draw back and chew the cud of careful consideration for a while before we risk our precious mutton.

What some of us want to get at before we commit ourselves to the proposed reform, is as to what the actual effect will be upon the written language. What, for instance, does such a sentence as the following, in the new spelling, mean? 천문을보다고하는학도를서도갓소

[page 441] Does it mean that the students who wish to see the astronomy are like each other, or, the students who wish to see the Thousand Gates have gone west, or, the studtents who wish to see the Heavenly Gate have gone together, or which of the possible combinations of these seven things does it mean? This no exaggerated instance, but only one of many which might be adduced to show that the new spelling will make it impossible, often within the limits of a considerable sentence, to determine which of several meanings may be the one intended. “But the context!” someone cries, “You can tell from the context!” Perhaps we can, if there is enough of it, but we protest that this is a pitiable condition to which to reduce any written language.

To look at the matter from the standpoint of the Koreans, it is doubtless true, which is often averred by those favoring the reform, that the mass of the Koreans, men, women and children would know or care little about the change if we should make it, and if we were building on illiteracy, or if it could be proved to the satisfaction of a large majority of those best qualified to know, that the advantages to be gained by the proposed reform are greater than any loss that it may entail, then this would be a strong argument. But since neither of these two things are as yet true, the argument seems to me little better than that which influences a Flathead Indian mother when she straps a board across the brow of her child and deforms him for life. He is helpless; he neither knows or cares. Why should she not?

And it is equally true that there are those among the Koreans who do care very greatly, to whom this is a very vital matter. This *unmoon* is their written mother tongue. They learned it years ago when they were little boys, sitting on the floor beside father or mother. They never learned it very well, and are likely to spell it any kind of way. They may affect to despise it, yet they know and love every character. It is connected in their minds with childhood, home, mother and everything which they have a right to hold sacred and dear, and which no men may presume to lightly tamper with or [page 442] take away. And yet what is it that we propose to do? We say to them in effect, ‘‘See here, my good fellow, we’ve been looking over this language of yours, and it seems to us that there is a good deal that’s superfluous about it. There are a number of characters that are not really necessary, and it will be a great deal easier for you and us too, if we just cut them out. It will necessitate dropping out whole sections of your written language, and it may seem awkward at first, but you’ll get used to it in time.”

There are Koreans who resent this. They cannot defend their position very well. They know little of such technical terms as sound values and sight values, of pure phonetics, of silent letters, but they do know that this language is their own, which they have a right to as it is. It is easy for us to cry, “How obstinate! Absurd!” but the fact remains that to such a Korean the attempt on the part of a body of foreigners to reduce his written mother tongue to a dead level of phonetic sameness is not only unnecessary, but unwarrantable and unjustifiable from any standpoint of right and fairness. Some of the Koreans who feel in this way are deeply attached to us as missionaries, but there is no question that to press this proposed reform will endanger their affectionate regard for us, their confidence in our judgment and in our Christian humility. Brethren, there are some things of more importance to us as missionaries than mere ease in spelling.

O. W. W. K.

Editor Korea Review :—

Apropos of your excellent article on Spelling Reform, let me append two scraps of conversation picked up during the fall gatherings in Seoul. Anxious Inquirer. “But don’t you find that books printed in the new spelling are a great deal harder to read?’’

Enthusiastic Advocate of spelling reform. “Yes, I do.”

Anxious Enquirer. “Then why do you want it?”

Enthusiastic Advocate. “Because I think it will be easier for the Korean.”

[page 443] Keulsyei!

Anxious Enquirer again, to another Enthusiastic Advocate. “I’ve been trying to read a tract printed in this reformed spelling, and I can’t make anything out of it.”

Enthusiastic Advocate, cheerfully, “That’s what Dr. Blank says, but if you just read it out loud and listen to it you won’t have a bit of trouble!”

Further comment seems unnecessary.

Yours for slow motion, Axis,

# The Educational Needs of Korea

The work of revolutionizing not only the entire method but the entire subject matter of the education of the young in any country must always be one of enormous difficulty. It would take too much space even to enumerate these obstacles but a statement of a few of them will help to elucidate the question of the educational needs of Korea.

In the first place what was the need of such a revolution? This question can be dismissed with brief mention. Education has always been, in Korea, merely literary and historical and there has been vastly more of the study of China than of Korea. It included no practical grasp of the facts of today’s life, gave no introduction to the secrets of nature, it never looked to the future. It never tended to show that today is the best time, so far as living men are concerned, but the whole tone of it was a lament over the departure of past glories. The Korean youth always walked into the battle of life backwards, waving a tearful adieu to the phantoms of past glories rather than resolutely facing the enemies to his present advancement and hailing the advent of better things than the past had to offer. The same thing is true in China, and we can explain it only on the ground that the whole system of society has tended to belittle the individual and magnify the clan. No Korean can look at a mountain and individualize it. He has [page 444] to think of it as simply a link in the great chain of mountains stretching from “0ld White-head” down through the peninsula. Otherwise he would mentally be commiting sacrilege in breaking the “Dragon’s Back.’’ His desire for offspring is mainly to keep the line of ancestral graves intact, and the death of a daughter, for instance, would be considered a slight calamity compared with the desecration of a great-grand-father’s tomb.

If then, as we believe, education has for its legitimate purpose the developing of the individual mind and heart and the arming of it for a fight with the degenerating influences of a corrupt environment, the only way to make the crusade of education something more than an empty protest is to bring about a *volte-face* in the attitude of society itself; otherwise all our attempts, however strenuous and however well intended, will prove but a “forlom hope” and we shall see only a sporadic and fragmentary result. If this is true the seriousness ot work will be at once apparent. We are open to the charge here of arguing in a circle, for education is the only thing that will bring about such a revolution in popular sentiment, but that change can be accelerated in various ways. One of the most powerful agencies at work in this direction is the work of Christian Missions especially Protestant Missions. Christian evangelization has always claimed general education as her hand maiden and all over the country schools have been and are being opened by Christian Missionaries. But we are dealing now with the general education of the people as a whole, of whatever creed, and while the mission schools are powerful object-lessons they are but one of the several avenues of approach. The newspapers form another important argument in favor of education. They have opened up to the Korean a long vista of new and untried knowledge down which many Koreans are peering and to travel that trying to make up their minds whether it is worth while to travel that way.

When we come right down to facts the Koreans are fairly clear-headed and know what they want. No incentive to education can possibly move them that does [page 445] not offer substantial material advantages. They do not want and we cannot expect them to want education for its own sake. Education, like virtue, is its own reward but there are few people in Korea or anywhere else who do not demand that several other more material rewards should follow the expenditure of time and money in the acquisition of an education. This is only another way of saying that unless a modem education will give a Korean a better salary or a better social position, or both, he will have none of it. This is equally true of ninety-nine out of every hundred men in Europe or America; and it is not to be regretted, for the securing of those advantages cannot rob them of that more subtle and genuine enjoyment that follows upon the enlargement of the intellectual horizon.

For this reason the action of the Educational Department in Seoul in urging upon the heads of the different offices the employment of the graduates of the various schools of the capital is to be applauded. This is a distinct move in the right direction, and all foreigners in Korea could help in this line by emphasizing the fact that a good education will in itself be a good recommendation for a man to any responsible position. Unfortunately the notion has prevailed to some extent that an educated man, or a partly educated man, should be looked upon with a certain degree of suspicion. It is quite true that a little knowledge has proved a dangerous thing to some Koreans in that it has given them an undue opinion of their own attainments, but we must remember that every people has had to pass through that stage. Japan is only now beginning to emerge from it. But if we do not make allowances for them, if we expect them to enlarge their brains without enlarging their heads a little in the process we shall fail to give them the encouragement which they deserve. The only way to cure a man suffering from the educational swelled head is to adopt the homoeopathic plan and give a lot more of the very thing that caused the swelled head. I wish that about ten millions of this people were suffering from that same complaint. It is probable that about that number are [page 446] priding themselves that they have kept their skirts clear of the whole foreign education business and can placidly sit and drone over the Chinese classics while all the time the bright and energetic Japanese are preparing to absorb all the material benefits of the situation. In the end these self-satisfied intellectual mummies will awake to find themselves in outer darkness, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

A man comes to me and after ascertaining all the accessible facts as to my personal health and other allied subjects he says :

“Please get me a *position*.” I reply in an interested tone “Would’nt you rather have a job?” He inclines his head sideways, looks up to the comer of the room and murmurs anxiously

“Job— job? I do not know that word.” Nor does he.

I ask him what he is most capable of doing and he promptly answers:

“Anything” which means of course “nothing.”

I suggest digging gold out of the mines or cutting sugar-cane in Hawaii. He spreads out deprecating hands and begs me not to joke as it is a serious matter; as indeed it is, much more serious than he imagines.

I suddenly remember (or invent) a position somewhere far down in the country in some obscure provincial capital where even *yangbans* wear straw shoes and *saturi* lies thick upon the local tongue. He assumes a contemplative, judicial attitude, but at last confides to me the fact that his filial obligations will not allow him to leave the paternal roof to accept even so flattering a position as I offer.

I next probe him with a position with one of my friends who has some clerical work to be done and intimate that it is nice light clean work with the pen, from nine o’clock in the morning till about six in the afternoon. He nearly falls off his chair but recovers himself and after a vain attempt to turn the conversation he says that after all his elder brother is pretty sure of a clerkship in one of the government offices as soon as the [page 447] present minister resigns and then of course it will not be necessary to bother about a position. And with this Micawber-like decision he betakes himself away .

There you have the matter in a nutshell. He depended upon his slight friendship with me to secure him a position where he could get a good salary for next to nothing in exchange. It will be a great day in Korea when you can say to such an applicant “what diplomas can you show or what certificates from some reputable school?” and when no man will have the face to apply to you without having such papers to show. It should be the constant practice of every foreigner in Korea to impress upon the Koreans that the cash value of their services will depend very largely upon their education. Not that class-room work will make a man necessarily useful in practical work but because the grit and the perseverance that will carry a man through a course of study and bring him a diploma is in itself *prima facie* evidence that he has at least some of the qualities that will make him successful anywhere. And furthermore it demonstrates that he has broken away from the past and has chosen a path that lies parallel with modern ideas of enlightenment. His attitude is right whatever be his actual attainments.

And yet, while the student should be assured that his education has cash value, he should also be warned that too narrow and technical an education will defeat its own purpose; for though it may, and doubtless will, secure him steady employment it will not give him the breadth of mind that is necessary to enable him to rise to the head of any profession.

One of the great obstacles at the present time is the grievous lack of proper text books; and not this alone but the absence of any genuine literature along modern lines. These things have all to be made. Korea is in much the position that England was when the fashion of writing everything in Latin was just going out but there was as yet little or nothing in English. We smile when anyone suggests that a Korean should try to write a modern novel in his own tongue. It seems [page 448] incongruous and to some extent absurd, but it is not a whit more so than it was for Chaucer to take the giant of prejudice by the beard and defy him. The Koreans are charming story-tellers. Every foreigner in Korea should bend every energy to the task of convincing the Korean that his own vernacular is an immensely better medium of thought than the Chinese to which he has clung so long. There can be no naturalness, no vigor, no snap to Korean literature so long as they cling to the Chinese. One has but to note the clumsy manner in which a conversation is transcribed when put in Chinese characters. The Korean native writing has taken on much of this stilted style, but there is no reason why the Koreans may not break away from it and transcribe a conversation verbatim in quotation marks as we do. But the first need is text books. And in this connection it is encouraging to note that a society has been formed of foreigners and Koreans called the Korean Educational Association, and it has gone to work in the right manner by appointing a large number of committees on nomenclature. Each committee takes certain subjects and engages to make a tentative glossary of technical terms covering these subjects. These will be reported at a general meeting, discussed, revised and adopted as the standard to be used in all scientific works. This is a thorough, conservative and scientific plan and will prevent much confusion and waste of time and energy in the future. We cannot impress too strongly upon the foreign residents in Korea the adoption of the system that will be so evolved even though for a short time it may cause some slight disturbance in their previous methods and may not in every individual case appeal to their judgment, which is already biassed by the use of their own system. This concession should be made in the interest of uniformity is nomenclature. The committees that have been appointed are so representative that there can be no difficulty arivsing from local prejudice. Their conclusions as revised by the society as a whole may be depended upon as being as near an approximation to an ideal standard as can be reasonably desired. Now that there is a prospect of our [page 449] having a competent adviser in the Educational Department in the person of a graduate of Tokyo University it may be definitely expected that the nomenclature adopted by this Educational Association will be used in all Government school books. This will give it a great impetus.

One of the gravest difficulties in the way is the lack of a perfect and universally accepted literary medium. The Korean alphabet is nearly perfect and is capable of expressing thought as well as the English alphabet, but a very large number of the terms that must be used in scientific works are not at present readily recognized by their sounds. The Korean wants to see the ideogram before him, even in cases where it would seem to us that the context would clearly circumscribe tlie meaning and prevent all ambiguity. But we must not fall into the opposite error of fearing that this difficulty is insurmountable, for as a man deprived of sight will soon develop a new and marvelous delicacy of touch, so these people if once weaned away from the Chinese character will grasp the idea of phonetically expressed thought. Nor do I fear that this simile will be successfully exploited by those who would make the Koreans cling to the Chinese, for the day has gone by when anyone can hold that general education is possible under the old system. If there are such we have no common starting point for argument. They would agree with Charles Lamb that the only way to eat roast pork is to bum down your house to get it.

There will always be the cultured few who will want to know the Chinese, just as there are the cultured few in the West who study Greek and Latin. For these few we must provide in our schools, but as for the great mass of the people, the ninety-nine out of every hundred, they must have a purely native literature.

The vital question then arises. How are we to wean the people away from the Chinese to the pure Korean? The Chinese is the medium through which all literary ideas have flowed into this Peninsula. The existing religion of the people, or at least the recognized cult, [page 450] Confuciamism, is embedded in Chinese. The ideograph and its study form the great barrier between the upper and lower classes, a barrier which the upper classes will be loath to see torn down. *There is one and only one way to attack this barrier and that is by giving the common people such a good literature in their own native character that the position will be reversed and it shall came to be acknowledged that genuine education lies with the many rather than with the few.* Pardon the italics but the supreme importance of this point warrants them. Works, written in the Korean can be made as fascinating and as stimulating as those written in Chinese, though in a different way. A wealthy young Arab once heard the diamond described, and his desire to possess one grew upon him so strongly that at last he sold all his land and houses and went in search of such a stone. After wandering all over that portion of the world and spending all his patrimony without securing the coveted object he came back home only to find that the man to whom he had sold his land had found a mine of diamonds in a spring on the place. So with the Koreans, the time will surely come when they will acknowledge that the failure to develop and use their alphabet has cost them — perhaps life itself; for with the enlightenment that must have come from general education they never would have found themselves in their present dilemma.

It cannot be too strongly urged upon all those who are interested in the intellectual growth of the Korean the need of hastening the preparation of good books of all kinds. Of course school text books will come first, but our ideas must not be limited to these. Koreans should be encouraged to write. There should be magazines in Korean to which the best writers should contribute and prizes should be offered for competitive material. They should be encouraged to embark upon the stormy sea of fiction, to make experiments, to explore the unknown continent of literary attainment.

The question, and a very pertinent one, arises as to what center all this should proceed from. Where will be the nucleus of it? Who will attend to its initiation? We cannot look to the Government for it. Nor can we [page 451] look to the Chinese scholars. It must grow up out of the middle classes and spread both down and up. It has been almost exclusively the Protestant missionaries who have interested themselves along this line and the publication of the New Testament in the native character cannot but be regarded as a most significant factor. As things are shaping themselves today it looks as if the movement here outlined would find its nucleus in that strong body of men who form the Christian Church in Korea. From one point of view this will be a misfortune and from another it will be a great benefit. Such a. source will inevitably prejudice some people against it but on the other hand it will as inevitably attract others and bring them in contact with Christianity and only those that are wilfully blind can deny, after honest investigation, that the Protestant Christians of Korea include the brightest, the most progressive and the most loyal people of the land.

Those of us who have come in contact only with the official classes, which are characterized by a certain smug self-satisfaction and want nothing better, can hardly realize how hungry the Koreans are for education. This city simply swarms with young men who would be glad to study if some proper incentive were offered. They are uneasy and dissatisfied and hardly know themselves what it is they want. It will take a short campaign of education to brush away the cobwebs that obstruct their vision and crystalize their ideas of what they really want. This is one of the ways in which the newly opened Young Men’s Christian Association will help. Courses of lectures have been arranged which will at least give a glimpse into some of the fields of knowledge which the Koreans have never cultivated, and will help to stimulate the imagination of the young Korean.

If the question is raised as to what direction the education of Koreans should take we would reply that provision should be made for what is generally denominated a liberal education, that is an intellectual expansion in all directions. But it seems to me that special emphasis should be laid upon those studies that will develop the [page 452] logical faculty. Books on natural science should call special attention to the great laws underlying all science rather than present a vast number of minutiae which in the present state of things would bring into exercise only the already over-developed faculty of mere memory. Books on mathematics should emphasize the appUcation of principles and call out the well-nigh atrophied faculty of original thought, intellectual initiative. It is simply marvelous the readiness with which Koreans will learn to work out the most difficult mathematical problem if you will explain just one example of that same kind to them first. For instance one of my classes learned in half an hour to solve any problem of the following kind though I doubt if they could have originated the solution in ten years: How many measures of oil at eighteen cents a measure must be mixed with thirty-eight measures at twenty-seven cents a measure so that if the mixture be sold at twenty-four cents there will be a gain of one and a half cents on each measure? They had not the remotest idea of how to attack the following problem: At what time after three o’clock will the two hands of a watch be together? But when the principle of the thing was once explained they recognized it immediately. It is not because they have not the mental power to think the thing out for themselves but because the very idea of applying themselves to the independent solution of such a problem seems to them absurd. They seem to think the teacher is as unreasonable to ask them to attack a knotty problem alone, as it would be to ask a blind man to go on the street without his stick. The way I deal with the situation— and I mention it as a mere suggestion — is to introduce slight changes in problems already explained and so lead them to exercise a slight degree of ingenuity, of original thought. In time they will learn to apply general principles to very diverse cases and so an intellectual stimulus will be given. This was fairly well proved in a class in algebra, about one half of which was finally able to take new and untried problems and throw them into the form of an equation and solve them. The Koreans have one excellent intellectual [page 453] quality. They want to know the reason why a thing is done thus or so. It is this thoroughness which enables them do any problem of a specified kind alter the principle has been explained to them. What they do not like is to be asked to feel after the principle themselves. (To be continued.)

# The Foreign Cemetery.

On the 31st of October the annual meeting of the Western Foreign Residents of Seoul, for the purpose of discussing matters connected with the Foreign Cemetery, was held at the Seoul Union. Judging from the number present it was evident that the foreigners of Seoul are not much interested in cemeteries, in spite of the fact that we are all to go to one finally. But, seriously, would it not seem certain that the care of the Foreign Cemetery is a matter to which every foreigner should give at least one hour’s thought a year? We feel sure that the feeling of the community was not reflected in the paucity of members at the meeting and we therefore offer no apology for laying before the public a general statement of the business that was transacted. An attempt is to be made to secure the piece of land which juts into the cemetery compound on the northeast comer and on which there stands a ruined shrine or tablet-house of some kind. This will add greatly to the appearance of the place and will make it possible to construct a better road to the top of the plateau by partly encircling it on the eastern side, instead of going straight up the hill as at present. This land probably could not be purchased, but it is not unlikely that the government might be made to see its way clear to making a free grant of it. At any rate a good committee was appointed to look into the matter.

The next question that engaged the attention of the meeting was that of the road leading from Seoul to the cemetery. It is a fairly good road in parts but it is spoiled by the existence, at two or three points, of short stretches of very bad road. These alone would render it [page 454] impossible to drive a carriage to the cemetery. It was therefore decided to make application to the government to have this road put in good shape and it is hoped that in this we may have the active support of Dr. J. McLeavy Brown whose name is so closely associated with good roads in and about Seoul.

It was announced that a new bier had been constructed and would be permanently housed at the Methodist Church in Chong-dong, opposite the Seoul Union. Arrangements were made to have it always accessible and orders were given for the making of simple and appropriate uniforms for use by the coolies who carry the casket to the cemetery. The former executive committee was continued in office for the ensuing year with the one exception that the name of M. Collin de Plancy was substituted for that of Alex. Kenmure, Esq., who is absent.

But the most important question discussed was the need of a rest-house which would also be used as a mortuary chapel in connection with the cemetery. It is very necessary not only for the convenience but also for the safety of those who attend funerals at the cemetery in bleak and inclement weather that there should be a room where a fire could be built and the ceremony could take place under less dangerous circumstances than at present. After the long cold ride to such a distant point it is positively dangerous to stand on that exposed plateau while the service is being read. This applies especially to ladies, and it becomes the duty of the community to provide some means whereby this danger may be obviated. We must note that this is for the living, not for the dead; and which one of us may not at any time be called upon to attend such a service and expose himself or herself to this positive danger? The obligation weighs with equal pressure upon each one of us, and the attendants upon this meeting were of the unanimous opinion that such a building should be erected. There should be a central room twenty by sixteen feet, with retiring rooms on either side for ladies and gentlemen respectively. A modest substantial brick building of this size might cost from Yen 2,000 to 2,500. It is not improbable that, being built [page 455] for such a purpose, a contractor would engage to put it up for the minimum price consistent with good workmanship. It is at the request of the annual meeting that we bring the matter thus clearly before the public, and it is with the unanimous voice of that representative meeting that we urge the public to take the matter into practical consideration. As it is a matter of such universal interest a subscription paper would be honored by every foreign member of our community and it would take but a few dollars apiece to realize a sum that would carry the work through to a successful issue. Which one of us could not give, for instance, five per cent of one month’s salary for this purpose? This together with about Yen 300 from the balance now in the treasury would be fully enough to carry the thing through, if each foreigner would guarantee that amount; for there are doubtless a goodly number in the outports who would be glad to aid in such a work as this. No one has been authorized to start a subscription paper for this purpose but if it were done we have no doubt the needed sum could be easily raised.

Treasurer’s Report.

Receipts. Expenditure.

Balance in band from previous Caretaker’s wages for 12 years Yen 552.09 months . Yen 66.00 Subscriptions 175.00 New Year’s present to Sale of grave sites 20.00 Caretaker 2.00 Interment fees 10.00 Digging Graves 18.00 Interest on deposit 17.17 Ricksha fares 8.26 Ropes 4.00 Total Yen 774.26 Bier 25.00 Petties 1.35 Deposit in Bank 641.78 Cash in hand 7.87

Total Yen 774.26

Funds in hand at the close of 1904, Yen 649.65. Seoul, October 31st, 1904. R. Brinckmbier,

Hon. Treasurer.

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# Editorial Comment.

It is not greatly to the credit of the American public that the *New York Herald* deems it possible to stir up antipathy against Japan by such arguments as those which have been quoted so widely in Eastern papers. We do not wonder that the Japanese authorities forbear to bring pressure on foreign papers within her domains to stop the publication of such arguments, for they are so palpably absurd or else so palpably untrue that they are quite harmless. While we sympathise with the independent attitude of our Seoul contemporary we fail to see why these arguments are quoted at such length. Is it to show us what the *Herald* thinks, or is it to bring the pressure of those arguments upon us as well? If the former, it is unnecessary, for the whole world knows that the *Herald* has been extremely pro-Russian from the first, and if the latter, we fail to be impressed. The *Herald* is simply taking advantage of the natural reaction which was to have been expected after the truly American enthusiasm with which the first Japanese victories were hailed, a reaction that was perhaps partly caused by the grumblings of a few score disgruntled correspondents who failed to get to the front. But have the principles of this thing changed since then? Are the first words of these correspondents to be called fiction because of a change of mind due to personal disaffection? Not for a moment. The object for which Japan is fighting now is the same as at first. No one has discovered any change in it and the fact that Japan does not carry on this war to suit the foreign press does not impair the laudableness of that object.

In the first place the *Herald* speaks of the “Oriental trick by which the Russian navy was crippled before the declaration of war.” Go back to the English and American papers of last February and count the instances they cite in which the same method has been adopted by European powers, and the authorities they quote to show that Japan was well within her rights.

[page 457] The *Herald* should be challenged to show an oriental precedent for Japan’s action. There is none, Japan learned war from Europe.

Take the words straight from the pen of the Herald writer and imagine that we are talking about Russia for a moment. He says “They are insufferably overbearing and insolent. They implicitly believe their army and navy are invincible and give their views publicly in a manner which is galling. Their total disregard of the truth, their apparent inability to conceive that there is anything sacred about a promise or agreement, and the barbarism which is so clearly apparent through their veneer of civilization has invitated and alieniated all who have come in contact with them. We submit that the dictionary does not contain words that more precisely describe the facts as to Russia. And we do not have to rely on the statements of “Army and navy officers from the Philippines” to show it. Which side has been bragging about its army and navy? Which side has broken its promises? Which side has broken the rules of civilized warfare? Why, this very day comes news that a foreign Minister at Peking has had to protest against the use of Manchu clothes by Russian troops.

The *Herald* must be in desperate straits for an argument if it tries to play upon the Southerner’s antipathy to the blacks, in connection with this war. We do not doubt the seriousness of the race problem in the United States but the attempt to prejudice people against Japan by lugging in this wholly unrelated question is about as it would be for an Irish Catholic to refuse to eat oranges because of their color. The Japanese and the negro have nothing in common.

There is an element of wholly unintentional humor in the paragraph in which the *Herald* says that military men have a feeling that there is something uncanny about the Japanese soldier. Nothing could be truer, as the Russians are finding out. The dictionaries define uncanny as meaning *unsafe, strange, weird, ghostly*. Well, the Japanese have proved themselves rather unsafe for certain parties in the East and they have certainly been [page 458] strange compared with the other peoples Russia has run up against in this part of the world. As for the wierdness and the ghostliness of them, they seem to make very substantial spooks.

By the way, what high praise the *Herald* unconciously and wholly unintentionally gives the Japanese when he says that they fear their officers more than any possible enemy. And we suppose the *Herald* would reverse the statement in the case of Russia. If so we find the solution of the whole question of Japan’s superiority right here; but personally we do not think the Russian lacks in bravery. It was not until the battle of the Shaho that the military skill of the Japanese was definitely proved to be superior to that of the Russians, The latter were simply out-classed.

Then the statement that by committing suicide rather than fall into the hands of the enemy they are “not observing the rules that govern the sport” will hardly bear examination. Perhaps the *Herald* does not agree with the Spartan mother who told her son to return from battle with his spear or upon it. Perhaps it would say that the scores of sea-captains that voluntarily go down with their ships each year are not “playing the game.” Such an attitude ought to be branded as utterly un-American and every citizen of the United States should repudiate it.

The Japanese have their faults just as every other people has. It would probably have been better if they had frankly said at the very first that war correspondents would not be allowed at the front. We believe that the Japanese have not lost in the estimation of the general foreign public by refusing to become responsible for the crowd of men whom the various papers wanted to send to the battle field to take snap-shots of the carnage that was inevitable. The public is better off without those pictures. The ethics of such things are essentially the same as those of the Spanish bull-fight, and no useful end could be served by it all. We should take General Sherman’s word for it that in some aspects “War is Hell,” and let it go at that.

[page 459] The latest that comes to hand is the attack of the Baltic Squadron on the English fishermen. We commend this to the *Herald* as a case of “playing the game.”

The readers of the Review will notice how widespread is the disaffection in the country. To us it all looks very puerile for these men who rush to form a society have no such backing as would make their plans in any way successful; but at the same time it is not the part of wisdom to ignore the state of things existing in so many districts.

In the first place these people evidently believe the stability of the Korean Government, as an autonomous and sovereign power, is being undermined, and that there is danger of a serious and permanent impairment of Korean indepeadence. We hardly need say that a perusal of the press of the East shows that these are not the only men who fear this.

In the second place these man evidently believe that the only way to obviate such a national catastrophe is to bring about radical reforms in Korea, Here again they are not alone. This belief of theirs is attested by the cutting of the hair, which, however puerile it may seem to outsiders, is a radical departure from one of the most honored and most distinctive customs of old Korea. The top knot is to the Korean what the toga was to the Roman, what the two swords were to the Japanese Samurai, what the beard was and is to the Jewish rabbi.

Furthermore, the ideas and propsals of these men are despicable only in the lack of power to carry them out. They want to uphold the independence of the country, protect the common people from indirection whether of Korean officials or Japanese subjects, and secure needed reforms in the administration of government. Why these things should seem laudable when proposed by foreign periodicals and nonsensical when proposed by Korean subjects we do not see, for it is very certain that the periodicals have no more power to bring about these desired objects than the members of the Chin-bo Society [page 460] have. We do not commend the methods adopted by this organization as being wise at the present time, but the mere protest may have some effect on the public opinion and lead men to ask the question whether the present condition of affairs is wholly unexceptionable.

Judging from certain quotations from the *Japan Mail* which have come under our notice, it seems that the Editor of that journal has gauged the present status as regards Korea and Japan very accurately. If we interpret him correctly he recognizes two possible courses of action on the part of Japanese authorities. The first is to go one step further than they have gone and declare a protectorate over Korea in imitation of England and Egypt, and the other is to continue the present difficult and perplexing problem until Korea shall prove to the world the necessity of such a protectorate. He takes the reasonable ground that the promises that Japan has made in regard to Korean independence would lay her open to grave criticism if not active protest in case the former plan were adopted. But we think he falls short of stating the whole case for to his second aJtemative should be added the words *or that such a protectorate is unnecessary*.

As between Japan and Great Britain the understanding is clear enough, supposing, as we do of course, that the published terms of the alliance represent “the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.” The question of importance is — who will decide when the time has arrived, when Korea shall be declared incapable of attending to her own affairs? There seems to us to be one deciding factor. If the time arrives when it becomes plain that Korea is determinedly hostile to the *essential interests* of any one of the treaty Powers, among which she is nom inally neutral, that Power will be justified in seeking to rectify the matter, whether the power be Japan or any other. A treaty of peace and friendship will hardly stand the strain of persistent efforts to injure or thwart legitmate interests. We have italicized the words *essential interest*, and upon what these words mean depends the [page 461] right of any Power to have recourse to armed intervention, all peaceful means having failed. By essential interests we mean those whose impairment strikes directly at the safety of the state. If, for instance, Korea should discriminate flagrantly in favor of Russia as against Japan by granting Russia bases of military or naval concentration, Japan would feel herself endangered and would naturally and rightly object, but the refusal of Korea to regulate her Government according to Japanese ideas or to grant concessions of any kind whatsoever or so to adjust her monetary system as to favor Japanese trade does not affect the essential interests of Japan in the sense that it strikes directly at the safety of the state and is therefore no more to be made the excuse for armed intervention than the high import duties into the United States could be made a *casus belli* by any European Power.

Of course the latest agreement between Korea and Japan insures the latter certain special temporary rights in the peninsula and makes it, in a sense, incumbent upon Korea at least to listen courteously to Japanese advice and adopt such of it as may seem mutually beneficial, but it does not give Japan the right to insist upon any privileges not specifically mentioned, much less to use armed force to secure such privileges. It is for this reason that we feel sure that Japan has no intention of declaring a protectorate over Korea, and will have none unless Korea succeeds in alienating the good will of those whose protests would be of some avail.

# Ladies’ Days.

For the convenience of the readers of the *Review* we have secured a list of the days upon which the different ladies in Seoul receive. There may be a few omissions but most of these are because these ladies have no day or else no special day.

Mrs. Avison Fridays, except last of the monthMiss Barrett First and third Wednesdays. Mrs. Beck Monday. [page 462] Mrs. Bostwick Saturday. Mrs. Brinckmeier Thursday. Mrs. Bunker Wednesday. Miss Carroll Tuesday. Mrs. Elliot Wednesday. Mrs. English Tuesday. Mrs. Gillett Tuesday, except last of the month. Miss Guthapfel First and third Wednesdays, Mrs. Hallifax Friday. Miss Harbaugh First and third Wednesday. Mrs. Hodge Friday. Miss Hounshell Tuesday. Mrs. Hulbert Wednesday. Mrs. Joly Friday. Mrs. McLellan Wednesday. Mrs. McGill Monday. Mrs. Mimashi WednesdayMrs. F. S. Miller First and third Wednesdays Mrs, E. H. Miller First and third Wednesdays Mrs. Hugh Miller Monday. Mrs. Morris Wednesday. Mrs. Moose First and third Tuesdays. Mrs, Moose Fridays except last of month. Mrs. Reynolds First and third Wednesdays. Mrs. M. F. Scranton. Mondays, first excepted. Mrs. W. B. Scranton. Mondays, first excepted. Mrs. C. E. Sharp Fridays except last of month. Mrs. Underwood Friday. Mrs. Welbon Tuesday.

# News Calendar.

The native paper of October 15 said that the Governor of Kongju wired that at Kang-gyong-i four or five thousand men gathered and cut their hair. Some of them rode in four-man chairs and some rode horse, and they were on their way to Kong-ju. The Home Departaient re -plied that soldiers would be sent from Seoul to arrest the movement. In Yi-ch’an also several thousand men were rampant, calling them selves the Chin-bo Society and declaring their object to be the upholding [page 463] of the Independence of Korea, the discussion of ways and means to cleanse the government, to guard the peoples lives and property, to diminish the number of soldiers in the army, to aid the Japenese troops in every way.

The prefect of Kim-song seems to have more of the genuine stuff in him than most prefects for instead of merely asking what he must do to combat the thousands of Chin-bo men who have gathered there he announced that he has arrested twelve of their leaders and incarcerated them.

The governor of South Ham-gyung announced the distressing fact that on September 26th there was a heavy frost which did enormous harm to the crops all through that section.

In Yi-Ch’on three tonghak leaders were arrested about the middle of October and were locked up. The rest of the tonghaks dispersed. But soon after hundreds of Chin-bo men gathered and refused to disperse.

In Kwak-san some Korean coolies were trying to carry some heavy drainage tile across a river in a boat for use on the Seoul Wiju Railway, but the boat capsized and two of the coolies were drowned.

On the seventeenth of October the Governors of the various provinces telegraphed to Seoul that large numbers of the people had gathered in a seditious manner aud had decided to cut off their hair, without receiving orders from the central Government and the Governors say that if they do not desist and disperse when ordered to do so it will be necessary to send soldiers to handle them.

On the 15th of October at noon a telegram came from the Governor of Kongju saying that the Chin-bo people had put up placards stating that they were for freedom and that they were going to oppose the selling off of the land to foreigners. At two o’clock the same day news came from Im-p’i that a crowd of these men had gone to Kang-gyung-i and that the agitation was rapidly spreading. Also from No-song came news that hundreds had gathered there and were making speeches saying that it was untrue that they were against the Government and that they ought not to be called bad men since their object was to help the country.

In Ka-ch’on in the North several hundred tonghak arose and gathered at the prefectural town and began making speeches, the tenor of them being to the effect that they were going to protect the foreign missionaries and that they were going to guard every village against unwarranted acts of foreign soldiers who are prone to commit excesses. They declared that if any prefect or Governor should try to make them disperse they would tell them that they had congregated in the interests of the Government. They further decided to use lanterns instead of flags as the Society’s emblem, because in foreign countrys flags were not used for such a purpose.

Marshall Hasegawa left Seoul for Wonsan on the ninteenth of October.

[page 464] On Oct. 5th the Governor of South Ham-Kyung Province announced that 1,200 Russians were at Puk-ch’ung with 1,500 horses.

The Superintendent of Trade at Masanpo claims that the Japanese on the island of Ko-je have put up notices in various places forbidding certain things and that when the ignorant people fail to follow these directions they are executed whether their offense be a grave one or a light one

It is said that a man of Kang-won Province came up to Seoul and brought some dynamite cartridges for catching foxes but the Japanese took them away from him. The *modus operandi* is as follows. They smear the cartridge with grease and put it where they think foxes pass and when the animal bites the cartridge he just naturally goes off his head.

The Japanese authorities have demanded an indenmity for the lives of the Japanese killed in the riot at Si-heung last month.

The prefect of Ham-heung announced on the eleventh inst. that about 1,000 men gathered at Yong-heung and had a big meeting. They had books in which the writing was much like that of the tonghaks of 1894. So 110 of them were seized and locked up and the rest dispersed, but they will probably meet again.

The Governor of Chunju announced that several thousand tonghak had gathered in Ham-yul and had cut their hair and he asks what he shall do to stop it. The Governor of South Kyung-sang also states that the *tonghak* thereabouts were changing their name to *chin-bo* and that there were hundreds of them even in the provincial capital, and that even when ordered to go they went only ten li and met again. Soldiers and police were sent to disperse them.

On the 13th of October Marshall Hasegawa arrived in Seoul. He was driven from the station in a fourwheeled carriage drawn by a spirited horse. The road had been specially prepared and the entrance into the city was made in style. He proceeded straight to the Ta-gwanjung.

The seems to have been a specially stubborn lot of Chin-bo people in T’a-chun in the north.. The native account of the trouble there is as follows. A crowd of these people assembled and held a meeting in the room over the town gate, as many as could crowd in. The Japanese gendarmes warned them to go home and attend to their legitimate business but they refused and began throwing stones. The Japanese and the Korean police at last fired over the heads of the crowd but without hurting anyone. Some dispersed but many stood their ground and said they would die rather than obey. Those were arrested and locked up. That night an immense crowd gathered and threatened to burn the town and kill the Japanese and the Korean police. The Koreans flourished a great flag and yelled at the top of their voices. Then the Japanese fired in earnest and four Koreans were killed and six fell into the water and drowned and one other was wounded. The people said that if it had not been for the Japanese they would have suffered severely .

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# Korean History.

Thus it will be seen that in spite of all domestic political complications and discouragements the country was making definite advance along some lines. The leaven had begun to work and no conservatism on the part of the public leaders could stop the ferment.

Chapter XXIV.

Russian tactics . . . . murder of An Kyung-su . . . . the Boxer troubles. . . . evidences of advancement . . . . the career of Kim Yong-jin . . . . the rise of Yi Yong-ik. . . . his methods of collecting money. . . . sale of Roze Island to Japanese . . . . attempt to remove J. McLeavy Brown . . . . . establishment of Greek Church Mission . . . . French interests in Korea growing . . . . the French Loan . . . . Yi Yong-ik makes a nickel currency. . . . the famine of 1901 . . . . the import of Annam rice. . . .tension between Russia and Japan increasing . . . . material advances of 1901 . . . . deterioration . . . . Buddhism on the increase . . . . the centralization of all power . . . . the use of special tax commissioners . . . the Russo-Korean agreement about Masanpo . . . . useless employees.

The return to Seoul of M. Pavlow on Jan. 15, 1900, marked the definite beginning of that train of events which led up to the declaration of war by the Japanese in 1904, The Russians had been induced, two years previously, to remove the heavy pressure which they had brought to bear upon the government, but it was only a change of method. They were now to adopt a policy of pure intrigue and by holding in power Koreans who were hostile to the Japanese to harrass and injure Japanese interests in every way possible.

At this same time we see a clear indication of the trend of events in the return to Korea of An Kyung-su and Kwan Yong-jin, two of the best men that late years had developed in Korea. They had been charged with connection with the plot to compass the abdication of His Majesty, and had taken [page 466] refuge in Japan. Now on the promise of the government that they should have a perfectly fair trial and on the guarantee of protection by the Japanese they returned boldly to Korea and presented themselves for trial. They were strong men and they had to be reckoned with. They strongly favored Japanese influence and the reforms that that influence was supposed to embody. In fact they were thoroughly in sympathy with the best motives of the defunct Independence Club. An Kyung-su returned on January fifteenth and was held in detention until May sixteenth when Kwan Yong-jin returned. They were to stand a fair trial, but on the night of the twenty-seventh of May they were both strangled secretly in the prison. No more dastardly crime ever stained the annals of this or any other government. Induced to return on the promise of a fair trial they were trapped and murdered. The reactionists looked upon this as a signal victory, and indeed it was such, for it indicated clearly that a man was not safe even when he had the guarantee of the Japanese authorities. Nor would it be difficult to indicate the source from which the government obtained the courage thus to flout the Japanese.

As the summer came on, all interest in things Korean was held in suspension while the great uprising in China swelled to such monstrous proportions and the investment of Peking and the siege of the foreign legations there left the world no time to care for or think of other things. There were fears that the boxer movement would be contagious and that it would spread to Korea. Indeed it was reported in the middle of July that the infection had reached northern Korea; but fortunately this proved false.

In spite of the reactionary policy of ihe government progress continued to be made on certain lines, just as the momentum of a railway train cannot be checked the moment the brakes are applied. A distinguished French legalist was employed as adviser to the Law Department; mining concessions were granted to British, French and Japanese syndicates; the Government Middle School was established; the Seoul-Chemulpo Railway was formally opened; A French teacher was engaged to open a School of Mines; a representative was sent to the great Paris Exposition.

[page 467] This year 1900 was the heyday of another parvenu in the person of Kim Yung-jun. He was a man without any backing except his own colossal effrontery. He had acquired influence by his ability to get together considerable sums of money irrespective of the methods employed. Scores of wealthy men were haled to prison on one pretext or another and were released only upon the payment of a heavy sum. He was a man of considerable force of character but like so many adventurers in Korea he was lured by his successes into a false feeling of security and he forgot that the history of this country is full of just such cases and that they inevitably end in violent death. Even the fate of Kim Hong-nyuk did not deter him, though his case was almost the counterpart of that victim of his own overweening ambitions. Against Kim Yung-jun was ranged the whole nobility of the country who waited with what patience they could until his power to extort money began to wane, and then fell upon him like wolves upon a belated traveler at night. But it was not until the opening of the new year 1901 that he was deposed, tried and killed in a most horrible manner. After excruciating tortures he was at last strangled to death.

But even as this act was perpetrated and the fate of all such adventurers was again illustrated, another man of the same ilk was pressing to the fore. This was Yi Yong-ik,who had once been the major domo of one of the high officials and in that capacity had learned how to do all sorts of interesting, if unscrupulous, things. He was prominent in a felonious attempt to cheat the ginseng farmers of Song-do out of thousands, back in the eighties. He was an ignorant boor and even when rolling in oppulence failed to make himself presentable in dress or manner. He was praised by some for his scorn of luxury and because he made no attempt to hoard the money that he bled from the veins of the people. The reason he did not hoard it was the same that makes the farmer sow his seed, that he may reap a hundred-fold. Yi Yong-ik sowed his golden seed in fertile soil and it yielded him a thousandfold,

One of his favorite methods of obtaining money for his patron was to cause the arrest of shoals of former prefects who for one cause or another had failed to turn into the public [page 468] treasury the complete amount nominally levied upon their respective districts. These arrears went back several years and many of them were for cause. Either famine or flood or some other calamity had made it impossible for the people to pay the enthre amount of their taxes. There were many cases, without doubt, in which it was right to demand the money from tke ex-prefects, for they had “eaten” it themselves; but there were also many cases in which it was a genuine hardship. Literally hundreds of men were haled before a court and made to pay over large sums of money, in default of which their property was seized as well as that of their relatives. In exact proportion as the huge sums thus extorted paved his way to favor in high places, in that same proportion it drove the people to desperation. The taking off of Kim Yung-jun, so far from warning this man, only opened a larger door for the exercise of his peculiar abilities, and it may be said that tbe official career of Yi Yong-ik began with the opening of 1901.

In March a Japanese resident of Chemulpo claimed to have purchased the whole of Roze Island in the harbor of Chemulpo. The matter made a great stiir, for it was plain that someone had assumed the responsibility of selling the island to the Japanese. This was the signal for a sweeping investigation which was so manipulated by powerful parties that the real perpetrators of the outrage were desmissed as guiltless, but a side-issue which arose in regard to certain threatening letters that were sent to the foreign legations was made a peg upon which to hang the seizure, trial and execution of Kim Yong-jun as before mentioned. Min Yongju was the man who sold the island to the Japanese and he finally had to put down Y35,00 and buy it back,

Russia made steady advances toward her ultimate goal during the year 1901. In the Spring some buildings in connection with the palace were to be erected and the Chief Commissioner of Customs, J. McLeavy Brown, C. M. G was ordered to vacate his house on the customs compound at short notice. Soldiers even forced their way into his house. This affront was a serious one and one that the Koreans would never have dared to give had they not felt that they had behind them a power that would see them through. [page 469] The British authorities soon convinced the government that such tactics could be easily met and it had to retreat with some loss of dignity.

The Russian Church established itself in Seoul at this time and took active steps to start a propaganda in Korea. Considerable disturbance was caused in the Southern provinces by Koreans who had become Russian subjects pretending to be agents of the Russian church and collecting from the people large sums of money by intimidation. For many months the Russians tried to induce the Koreans to | allow the Korean telegraph lines in the North-east to be connected with the Russian line from Vladivostock. Why this should not be done we cannot see but evidently the Koreans considered it a national danger and, try as they might, the Russians never really succeeded in making the connection.

The Russians and French were naturally working together in the peninsula and when Russia adopted the principle of withdrawing her military instructors from Korea she so manipulated the wires that the government threw many positions into the hands of the French. For the next three years the French population of Seoul increased manyfold. Many of the French gentlemen employed by the government were thoroughly competent and rendered good service but their presence tended to add to the tension be tween Japan and Russia, for it was quite plain that all their influence would be thrown in the scale on Russia’s side. The attempt to loan the Korean Government ¥5,000,000 was pushed with desperate vigor for many months by the French, but divided counsels prevented the final consummation of the loan and the French thus failed to secure the strong leverage which a heavy loan always gives to the creditor. Yi Yongik who had become more or less of a Russian tool was pointedly accused by the Japanese of being in favor of the French loan but he vigorously denied it. It is generally admitted that Yi Yong-ik was something of a mystery even to his most intimate acquaintances and just how far he really favored the Russian side will never be known, but it is certian that he assumed a more and more hostile attitude toward the Japanese as the months went by, an attitude which brought him into violent conflict with them, as we shall see.

[page 470] Yi Yong-ik posed as a master in finance, whatever else he may or may not have been, and in 1901 he began the minting of the Korean nickel piece. No greater monetary disaster ever overtook this country. Even the desperate measures taken by the Regent thirty years before had not shaken the monetary system as this did. The Regent introduced the wretched five-cash piece which did enormous harm but that fivecash piece was of too small face value to be worth counterfeiting. The nickel was the ideal coin to tempt the counterfeiter, for its intrinsic value was not so great as to require the employment of a large amount of capital and yet its face value was sufficient to pay for the labor and time expended. The effects of this departure will be noted in their place.

In the summer of 1901 Yi Yong-ik performed one act that, in the eyes of the people, covered a multitude of other sins. It was a year of great scarcity. The Korean farmers raised barely enough grain for domestic consumption and in order to prevent this grain from being taken out of the country the government proclaimed an embargo on its export. In spite of the fact that Japan was enjoying an unusually good crop and did not really need the Korean product, the Japanese authorities, in the interest of the Japanese exporters in Korea, brought pressure to bear upon the Korean government to raise the embargo, utterly regardless of the interests of the Korean people. As it turned out however, the enhanced price in Korea due to the famine and the cutting of a full crop in Japan prevented the export of rice. But Yi Yong-ik saw that there would inevitably be a shortage in Seoul and with much forethought he sent and imported a large amount of Annam rice and put it on the market at a price so reasonable that the people were highly gratified. From that time on whenever the mistakes of Yi Yong-ik were cited there was always someone to offer the extenuation of that Annam rice. It was a most clever and successful appeal to popular favor.

All through this year 1901 were heard the distant rumblings of that storm that was to break three years later. Every movement of the Russians by land or sea was watched with a fascinated attention and every proposition of the Japan, ese was closely scrutinized. As a fact the war was already in [page 471] existence, only it had not been declared. Even then Japan, ese agents were swarming all over Manchuria gaining exact information of its geography and products and Japan was| hastening the preparation of her navy for the struggle that she felt to be inevitable.

As the year 1901 came to a close the tension was beginning to be felt. People were asking how much longer Japan would acquiesce in the insolent encroachments of Russia. But the time was not yet. As for material advances the year had seen not a few. Seoul had been supplied with electric light. The Seoul-Fusan Railway had been begun. Plans for the Seoul-Wiju Railway had been drawn up. Mokpo had been supplied with a splendid sea-wall. Building had gone on apace in the capital and even a scheme for a system of waterworks for the city had been worked out and had received the sanction of the government. Education had gone from bad to worse and at one time when retrenchment seemed necessary it was even suggested to close some of the schools, but better counsels prevailed and this form of suicide was rejected.

 With the opening of the year 1902 there were several indications that the general morale of the government was deteriorating The first was a very determined attempt to revive the Buddhist cult. The Emperor consented to the establishment of a great central monastery for the whole country in the vicinity of Seoul, and in it was installed a Buddhist High Priest in Chief who was to control the whole Buddhist Church in the land. It was a ludicrous attempt, for Buddhism in Korea is dead so far as any genuine influence is concerned. Mixed with the native spirit-worship it has its millions of devotees, but so far as becoming a fashionable cult is concerned nothing is more unlikely. But it has been the case for over a thousand years that when things have gone badly in the government there has been a harking back to the old Buddhist mummery, to fortune-tellers, geomancers and the like, and the only significance of this attempt was to prove that there was something “rotten in Denmark.”

Another evidence was the constant and successful attempt to centralize the power of the Government in the hands, of the Emperor. The overthrow of the Independence Party, [page 472] whose main tenet was curtailment of the Imperial prerogative, gave a new impulse to the enlargement of that prerogative so that in the year 1901 we find almost all the government business transacted in the Palace itself. The various ministers of state could do nothing on their own initiative. Everything was centered in the throne and in two or three favorites who stood near the throne. Of these Yi Yong-ik was the most prominent.

A third evidence of deterioration was the methods adopted to fill the coffers of the Household treasury. The previous year had been a bad one. Out of a possible twelve million dollars of revenue only seven million could be collected. There was great distress all over the country and the pinch was felt in the palace. Special inspectors and agents were therefore sent to the country armed with authority from the Emperor to collect money for the Household treasury. These men adopted any and every means to accomplish their work and this added very materially to the discontent of the people. The prefects were very loath to forego a fraction of the taxation, because they saw how previous prefects were being mulcted because of failure to collect the full amount, and so between the prefect and the special agents the people seemed to be promised a rather bad time. In fact it caused such an outcry on every side that the government at last reluctantly recalled the special agents.

Early in the year the fact was made public that Korea had entered into an agreement with Russia whereby it was guaranteed that no land at Masanpo or on the island of Ko-je at its entrance should ever be sold or permanently leased to any foreign Power. Russia had already secured a coaling station there and it was generally understood, the world over, that Russia had special interest in that remarkably fine harbor. Avowedly this was merely for pacific purposes, but the pains which Russia took to make a secret agreement with Korea, debarring other Powers from privileges similar to those which she had acquired, naturally aroused the suspicions of the Japanese and of the Koreans themselves, those of them that had not been in the secret; and this step, inimical to Japan as it undoubtedly was, probably helped to hasten the [page 473] final catastrophe. Meanwhile Russian subjects were taking advantage of the influential position of their Government in Seoul and through ministeral influence some glass-makers, iron-workers and weavers were employed by the Government without the smallest probability of their ever doing anything in any of these lines.. In fact at about this time the Government was induced to take on quite a large number of Russians and Russian sympathisers who never were able to render any service whatever in lieu of their pay. In many cases the most cursory investigation would have shown that such would inevitably be the result. It is difficult to evade the conclusion that the Government was deliberately exploited.

It was in the spring of this year that the project began to be seriously discussed in Japan of colonizing portions of Korea with Japanese, and a society or company was formed in Tokyo with this as its avowed purpose. This naturally evoked a good deal of feeling in Korea where the Japanese were not at the time enjoying any considerable influence at court. The fact then came out for the first time, and has been further emphasized since, that the Korean, whatever he may feel for his Government, is passionately attached to the soil.

But at this time another and a far greater surprise was in store for the world. It was the announcement of a defensive alliance between Japan and Great Britain. By the terms of this agreement Japan and Great Britain guaranteed to insure the independence of Korea and the integrity of the Chinese Empire. The tremendous influence of this historic document was felt at once in every capital of Europe and in every capital, port and village of the Far East. It stung the lethargic to life and it caused the rashly enthusiastic to stop and think. There can be no manner of doubt that this alliance was one of the necessary steps in preparing for the war which Japan already foresaw on the horizon. It indicated clearly to Russia that her continued occupation of Manchuria and her continued encroachments upon Korea would be called in question at some not distant day. But she was blind to the warning. This convention bound Great Britain to aid Japan in defensive operations and to work with her to the preservation of [page 474] Korean independence and the integrity of China. It will be seen, therefore, that Japan gave up once and for all any thought that she might previously have had of impairing the independence of this country and any move in that direction would absolve Great Britain from all obligations due to the signing of the agreement.

The year had but just begun when the operations of counterfeiters of nickel coins became so flagrant as to demand the attention of all who were interested in trade in the peninsula. Japan had most at stake and Russia had least, and this explains why the Russian authorities applauded the work of Yi Yong-ik and encouraged him to continue and increase the issue of such coinage. In March matters had come to such a pass that the foreign representatives, irrespective of partisan lines, met and discussed ways and means for overcoming the difficulty. After careful deliberation they framed a set of recommendations which were sent to the Government. These urged the discontinuance of this nickel coinage, the withdrawal from circulation of spurious coins and stringent laws against counterfeiting. But this was of little or no avail. The Government was making a five cent coin at a cost of less than two cents and consequently the counterfeiters with good tools could make as good a coin as the Government and still realize enormously on the operation. It was impossible to detect the counterfeited coins, in many cases, and so there was no possibility of withdrawing them from circulation. The heavy drop in exchange was not due so much to the counterfeiting as to the fact that the intrinsic value of the coin was nothing like as much as the face value, and by an immutable law of finance as well as of human nature it fell to a ruinous discount. But even this would not have worked havoc with trade if, having fallen, the discredited coinage would stay fallen, but it it had the curious trick of rising and falling with such sudden fluctuations that business became a mere gamble, and the heavy interests of Japanese and Chinese merchants were nearly at a standstill.

[page 475] Chapter XXV.

Tae Japanese Bank issues notes . . . . Independence Club scare . . . lighthouses . . . . Opening of work on Seoul-Wiju R.R . . . . combination against Yi Yong-ik . . . . he is accused and degraded . . . . rescued by Russian guard . . . . protest of the Japanese against his return . . . . Yi Keun-t’ak . . . . Russian complacency . . . . Russian policy in the Far East . . . . contrast between Russians and Japan’s aims.

At this point the First Bank of Japan, called the Dai Ichi Ginko, brought up a scheme for putting out an issue of special bank notes that would not circulate outside of Korea. Korea was importing much more than she exported and the balance of trade being against her it was impossible to keep Japanese paper in the country in sufficient quantities to carry on ordinary local trade. For this reason the bank received the sanction of the Korean Government to put out this issue of bank paper which could not be sent abroad but would be extremely useful as a local currency. This was done and it was found to work admirably. The Koreans had confidence in this money and it circulated freely. It had two advantages not enjoyed by any form of Korean currency, namely, it was a stable currency and suffered no fluctuations and it was in large enough denominations to make it possible to transfer a thousand dollars from one man’s pocket to that of another without employing a string of pack-ponies to carry the stuff.

But we must retrace our steps and note some other events of interest that happened in the spring months. One of these was the scare in government circles over the reported revival of the Independence Club under the encouragement of a so-called Korean Party in Tokyo, to which it was believed some Korean political refugees belonged. A great stir was made in Seoul and several men were arrested, but there was no evidence that would pay sifting, and though it was evident that the government would have been glad to find a true bill against some of the men who were arrested it was forced by lack of evidence to let them go. The incident was of importance only as showing the extreme sensitiveness of the government on the point, and its determination, [page 476] now that the Independence Party was down, to keep it down.

The one important material improvement of the year was the adoption of a plan for the building of some thirty light-houses on the coast of Korea. Ever since the opening up of foreign trade the lack of proper lights especially on the western coast had been a matter of growing concern to shipping companies. This concern was warranted by the dangerous nature of the coast where high tides, a perfect network of islands and oft-prevailing fogs made navigation a most difficult and dangerous matter. The fact that lighthouses ought to have been built ten years ago does not detract from the merit of those who at last took the matter in hand and pushed it to an issue

The month of May witnessed a spectacular event in the ceremony of the formal opening of work on the Seoul-Wiju Railway. The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. Neither French nor Russian money was forthcoming to push the work, and so the Korean government was invited to finance the scheme. Yi Yong-ik was made president of the company and if there had been a few thousand more exprefects to mulct he might have raised enough money to carry the road a few miles; but it is much to be feared that his financial ability, so tenderly touched upon by the Japanese Minister in his speech on that “auspicious occasion,” was scarcely sufficient for the work, and the plan was not completed. There is much reason to believe that this whole operation was mainly a scheme on the part of the Russians to preempt the ground in order to keep the Japanese out.

As the year wore toward its close the usurpation of numerous offices by Yi Yong-ik and his assumption of complete control in the palace bore its legitimate fruit in the intense hatred of four-fifths of the entire official class. He was looked upon as but one more victim destined to the same fate which had overtaken Kim Hong-nyuk and Kim Yungjun. But in his case the difficulties were much greater. Yi Yong-ik had put away in some safe place an enormous amount of Government money and he held it as a hostage for his personal safety. Until that money was safely in the [page 477] Imperial treasury even the revenge would not be sweet enough to make it worth the loss. Not only so but the whole finances of the Household were in his hands and his sudden taking off would leave the accounts in such shape that no one could make them out and enormous sums due the department would be lost. Yi Yong-ik had fixed himself so that his life was better worth than his death however much that might be desired. But the officiary at large cared little for this. There was no doubt that the one person who should accomplish the overthrow of the favorite and thus bring embarrassment to the Imperial purse would suffer for it, but Korean intrigue was quite capable of coping with a little difficulty like this. The result must be brought about by a combination so strong and so unanimous that no one would ever know who the prime mover was. This at least is a plausible theory and the only one that adequately explains how and why the scheme miscarried. The whole course of the intrigue is so characteristically Korean and includes so many elements of genuine humor, in spite of its object, that we will narrate it briefly. It must of course be understood that the officials were keenly on the lookout for an opportnnity to get the hated favorite on the hip and in such a manner that even his financial value to the Emperor would not avail him.

One day, while in conversation with Lady Om, the Emperor’s favorite concubine who has been mistress of the palace since the death of the Queen, Yi Yong-ik compared her to Yang Kwi-bi a concubine of the last Emperor of the Tang dynasty in China. He intended this as a compliment but as his education is very limited he was not aware that he could have said nothing more insulting; for Kwi-bi by her meretricious arts is believed to have brought about the destruction of the Tang dynasty. At the time Lady Om herself was unaware that anything derogatory had been said and she received the supposed compliment with complacency; but her nephew who was present, not understanding the reference, went and asked someone else about it and learned the truth of the matter. He doubtless knew that Yi Yongik was not aware of his *gaucherie* and so held his peace for a time, but in some way the Prime Minister and the Foreign [page 478] Minister heard a rumor that something insulting had been said. They called up the nephew of Lady Om and from him learned the damning facts. They also knew well enough that no insult had been intended but here was a “case” to be worked to its fullest capacity. The most sanguine could not hope that the hated favorite would give them a better hold upon him than this : for the position of Lady Om was a very delicate one and there had been a dispute on for years between the Emperor’s counsellors as to the advisability of raising her to the position of Empress. A word against her was a most serious matter.

Everything was now ready for the grand coup and on the 27th of Novenber fourteen of the highest officials memorialized the throne declaring that Yi Yong-ik was a traitor and must be condemned and executed at once. His Majesty suggested a little delay but on the evening of the same day the same men presented a second memorial couched in still stronger language, and they followed if up the next morning with a third. To their urgent advice was added that of Lady Om .herself and of many other of the officials. A crowd of officials gathered at the palace gate and on their knees awaited tbe decision of the Emperor. There was not a single soul of all that crowd but knew that the charge was a mere excuse and yet it was nominally valid. It was the will of that powerful company against the will of the Emperor. The tension was two great and His Majesty at last reluctantly consented, or at least expressed consent; but he first ordered the accused to be stripped of all his honors and to render all his accounts. This was nominally as reasonable as was the charge against the man. It was a case of “diamond cut diamond” in which the astuteness of the Emperor won. The accusers could not object to having the accused disgorge before being executed but it was at this very point that they were foiled Yi Yongik’s accounts were purposely in such shape that it would have taken a month to examine them, for he alone held the key. Nothing can exceed the desperate coolness of the man under the awful ordeal. At one point, just after the acquiescence of the Emperor, the written sentence of death is said to have gone forth but was recalled just as it was to have gone out of the palace gates, after which there would [page 479] have been no recall. No man ever escaped by a narrower margin. When Yi Yong-ik presented his accounts the Emperor announced that it would take some days to straighten matters out since the accused was the only man to unravel the skein. Here was probably the crucial point in the intrigue. If the white heat of the day before had been maintained and the officials had demanded instant punishment, accounts or no accounts, the thing would have been done, but as it happened the consciousness of having won relaxed the tension to such a degree that the accused gained time. This time was utilized by calling in a Russian guard and spiriting the accused away to the Russian Legation. This accomplished His Majesty suavely announced that the case would be considered, but that meanwhile the officials must disperse. There were further memorials, resignations en masse, passionate recriminations until at last two or three officials who had held their peace saw that the game was up and, in order to curry favor themselves, offered a counter memorial charging Yi Yong-ik’s accusers with indirection. This was listened to and the Prime Minister was deprived of his official rank. This made possible a compromise whereby both Yi Yong-ik and the Prime Minister were restored to all their former honors and all went “merry as a marriage bell.” But it was thought best to let Yi Yong-ik travel for his own and his country’s good, so he was made Commissioner to Buy Annam Rice, which was itself a pretty piece of diplomacy since it recalled prominently to the people the one phase of the injured man’s career which they could unhesitatingly applaud. He was taken off in a Russian cruiser to Port Arthur — to buy Annam rice!

When he returned to Seoul a few weeks later the Japanese lodged a strong protest against his return to political power but the Russian authorities made a counter-proposition urging that he was the only man capable of handling the finances of the country. Under existing circumstances the very protest of the Japanese was an argument in his favor and he came back into power on the flood tide, backed, as he had never been before, by the full favor of the Russian party. They naturally expected substantial payment for having saved him, and so far as he was able he liquidated the debt.

[page 480] Meanwhile another man, Yi Keun-t’ak, had risen to power through servile adherance to Russian interests. The somewhat enigmatical chiracter of Yi Yong-ik made him to a certain extent an unknown quantity. Not even the Japanese considered him wholly given over to Russia; but this new man was definitely committed to Russian interests and with his rise to important position it became evident for the first time that the Korean Government had decided to rely upon Russia and to reject the aid or the advice of Japan. The end of the year 1902 may be said to have been the approximate time when Japan first realized that all hope of a peaceful solution: of the Korean problem was gone. One naturally asks why Korea took this step, and, while we are still too near the event to secure an entirely dispassionate estimate or opinion, there seems to be little doubt that it was because Russia made no pretensions, and expessed no desire, to reform the administration of the Government. She was perfectly content to let things go along in the old way in the peninsula, knowing that this would constantly and increasingly jeopardize the interests of Japan while she herself had practically no commercial interests to suffer.

The immemorial policy of Russia in Asia sufficiently accounts for her work in Korea. Her policy of gradual absorption of native tribes has never held within its purview the civilizing or the strengthening of those tribes, until they have been gathered under her aegis. On the other hand, until that has been accomplished she has either waited patiently for the disintegration of the native tribes or has actually aided in such disintegration. History shows no case in which Russia has strengthened the hands of another people for the sake of profiting by the larger market that would be opened up; for until very recently the commercial side of the question has scarcely been considered, and even now the commercial interests of Russia depend upon an exclusive market. So that in any case a dominant political influence is the very first step in every move of Russia in the East. Why then should Russia have advised administrative or monetary or any other reform, since such action would inevitably form a bar to the success of her own ultimate plans?