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# The Educational Needs of Korea.

Second Paper

We have mentioned some of the difficulties in the way of the spread of education in Korea and some of the needs that must be supplied. We have here the public which needs educating and the society which proposes to supply the necessary text-books but there remains the great and important question as to the methods by which the contents of these text-books shall be gotten into the minds of the people. One thing is certain, foreigners are neither numerous enough nor have they the leisure to do the teaching. It must be done if at all through the medium of the natives themselves. Before any great progress can be made there must be found a body of capable and enthusiastic teachers from among the Koreans.

According to Korean custom and tradition any man who knows Chinese fairly well can become a teacher. There is no such thing as a science of teaching, and the general average of instruction is wretchedly poor. The teacher gets only his deserts, which are extremely small The traditional Korean school teacher, while receiving some small degree of social consideration because of his knowledge of the Chinese characters, is looked upon as more or less of a mendicant. Only the poorest will engage in this work, and they do it on a pittance which just keeps them above the starvation line. It has been [page 482] ingrained in the Korean character to reckon the profession of pedagogy as a mere makeshift which is only better than actual beggary. One of the most difficult things before us is to combat this feeling and to impress upon the people the fact that the true teacher is worth a better wage than the mere coolie. If you examine the pay list even of the Government schools you will find that the ordinary wage is about thirty Korean dollars, This means about fifteen yen a month, and is almost precisely the amount that an ordinary coolie receives. Of course there are other things to take into consideration. The teacher has far shorter hours than the coolie and does not work on Sunday but the actual amount received each month as a living wage is the same. This wretchedly low estimate of the value of a teacher’s services debauches the whole system. The men who hold these positions are doing so because nothing better has turned up, and they get their revenge for the inadequacy of the salary by shirking their work as much as possible. The fact is that the salary is not actually inadequate considering the quality of the man who does the work, but a minimum wage will never spur a man on to do his best or to improve the quality of the service he renders.

Before the best results can be obtained there must be an opportunity for normal instruction where men can be properly qualified for the profession of pedagogy, and the impression must be made gradually to prevail that this profession is worthy of as much consideration as any other. This can be done only by making it actually worthy of such consideration. How the traditional contempt of teachers can be speedily overcome we do not see, but even though it requires years of eflfort it must be done. One method will be by foreigners preparing men and giving them positions in the schools governed by foreigners, under adequate salaries and under such direction that they shall render the full equivalent for the money invested. The products of such schools must inevitably be far superior to that of schools in which the teachers are poorly qualified and under-paid. In time the superior school will become a standard of excellence [page 483] for its graduates will command better positions than those of other schools, and a spirit of emulation will be aroused. The other schools will be obliged in very selt defence to raise their standard.

But here again we meet the same difficulty as before. Who is to found such a school? It is the policy of the different missions at the present time to operate their schools strictly along denominational lines and to give instruction only to adherents or their children. For this they are not to be blamed, since their appropriations for such purposes are limited and their first duty is to the children of Christian natives. The need of raising up an educated native ministry also, and very rightly, engages the special attention of the missionary. Christian missions cannot be expected or asked to furnish secular education free to all comers, but there can be no question that Christianity develops an instant and pressing demand for liberal education. This was shown very plainly in the case of the little sea-side village of Sorai in Whang-hae Province, Almost simultaneous with the erection of a Christian church a school-house was provided wholly at native expense and for years the Christian children of that village have been studying the elementary branches as taught in common schools in America and England. So while we cannot look to missionary societies to provide the means and the men to push the distinctive work of secular education we can and do look to the results of mission work to give an incentive to education and to set the pace in its pursuit. It is a question that has been seriously asked, whether the desire for an education has not pushed many a Korean to a verbal profession of belief in Christianity in order that he might secure a place in a school. For such people we have the utmost sympathy, the same that we have for the man who cannot find employment and steals bread wherewith to feed his starving family. The theft is wrong but there is something still more wrong in the conditions which drive him to the crime. Even so in this case, the means employed to secure the opportunity are wrong but there is something still worse in [page 484] the condition of affairs which drives him to the questionable expedient.

In the second place we do not see how the government can be made to realize the importance of this work. When no protest is made against the appropriation of a paltry 60,000 dollars a year for education as compared with 4,000,000 dollars for the Korean Army (!) there is little use in expecting a change in the near future. The government could do nothing better than reverse these figures, but the age of miracles is past.

Before suggesting a possible solution of the question we should note with some care what is at present being done to provide young men with an education. There are the seven or eight primary schools in Seoul with a possible attendance of forty boys in each. This means a good deal less than 500 boys in this city of over 200,000 people, including the immediate suburbs. At the lowest estimate there ought to be 6,000 boys in school between the ages of ten and sixteen. Practically nothing is being done. As for intermediate education there is the Middle School with a corps of eight teachers and an average attendance of about thirty boys. The building, the apparatus and the teaching staff would suffice for 400 students. There are several foreign language schools with an attendance of anywhere from twenty to eighty each and they are fairly successful, but the study of a foreign language can never form part of a scheme for a general national education. Then there are the various private schools, almost every one of which is in a languishing condition. A Korean will start a private school on the least provocation. It runs a few months and then closes nobody being the wiser, though some be sadder. When, we come to reckon up the total number of young Koreans who are pursuing a regular course of instruction along modem lines we find that they represent only a fraction of one per cent of the men who ought, and easily might be doing so. It is the opinion of those Koreans who are in a position to know, that since the general discontinuance of the study of Chinese because of the stopping of the national examination or *kwaga* and the [page 485] failure of the present system of education to interest the people, the young men of Seoul have been rapidly deteriorating in character. Freed from the restraints imposed by the close study of the Chinese classics they seem to be giving themselves over to all the vagaries and excesses that youth is prone to. We foreigners perhaps do not see it, but the Korean who keeps his eyes open cannot but mark the difference. These young men are not vicious for the sake of vice but because they have nothing to do. Their own houses are dull and uncongenial; there are no meeting-places, clubs or social rendezvous, except those which are vicious in their tendencies and the natural results follow. We suggest that the foreigner in passing along the street some fine day note the crowd of young men between sixteen and twenty-two years old that are slouching along the street with nothing to do, evidently, but kill time. These young men ought to be in school and they would be there if there were the proper facilities; anything to waken their enthusiasm or kindle their interest. The whole range of School Life delights has yet to be revealed to them. Their whole idea of school is a dirty, dim, dreary aud unsanitary Korean room with its unpainted and torturesome benches, a battered blackboard and a teacher who knows just enough about the matter he is teaching to reveal its difficulties without arousing any interest in their solution. What we would emphasize is the dangers attending a continued and widening hiatus between the old system and some new one. When Japan threw off the old garment of feudalism she instantly donned the new one and threw herself into the work of mastering the modern system with an intensity and fervor that was almost fanatical, but Korea has been induced to throw off the old without donning the new and she is in danger of suffering from intellectual frost-bite in the interval. It would be better to go back to the old Kwaga system with all its anachronisms than to shuffle along in the present raw manner, like a snake that has cast its skin without arranging for a new one.

We see no hope of the Koreans taking the initiative [page 486] in any plan for the breaking of this intellectual dead-lock. They have schemes enough and they ckn plan to a dot what is needed but, like the lofty ideals of Confucius, the fruit, though tempting, hangs so high that they stand beneath the tree and praise it without having the energy to climb the tree and pluck it. They need the spur of sympathetic foreign leadership This will be a guarantee of the genuineness of the work done, of the continuity of the svstem and of the gradual victory of the new ideal over the old. But who is prepared to do this work? The foreigners now resident in Korea are all too busy to give time to such matters, but a plan has been broached which offers at least the beginning of a solution. We have not space in this number to discuss it but in the next issue we shall lay the matter before the public. (To be continued . )

# The Severance Hospital.

The present Severance Hospital is the direct successor to the Royal Korean Hospital which was established by Dr. H. N. Allen in 1884 under the patronage of His Majesty the King. For some years it was supported by His Majesty but the fund were increasingly diverted to other purposes until 1895, when the cost of the work was undertaken by the Presbyterian Mission. At that time the medical work for the Korean people was divided amongst the Presbyterian, Methodist and English Church Missions, none of whom had anything but the most inferior plants. This condition of things obtained up to 1899 when Dr. Avison who had been for nearly 6 years in charge of the Royal Korean Hospital returned to America on furlough with the great need for a proper hospital plant weighing heavily on his mind and also in the firm conviction that it was a very unwise use of men and money to place so many physicians in Seoul in so many different hospitals all with poor buildings, poor equipment, insufficient manning and very inadequate support.

[page 487] If fell to Dr. Avison’s lot while in America to read a paper before the great Ecumenical Missionary Conference in New York in the Spring of 1900, the subject assigned him being one which lay very close to his thought viz: “Comity in Medical Missions.’’ Dr. Avison in this paper referred to the conditions in Seoul mentioned above, viz: Seven physicians working separately in seven different hospitals and dispensaries, none of them having either buildings, equipment, manning or support at all commensurate with their needs, and he expressed the opinion that half the number of physicians placed in one good hospital could do the medical work of Seoul with greater ease and efficiency and at less actual cost than was then done by so many men and women. He pled for the extension of the plain business principle of comity into this feature of the Missionary enterprise, expressing the hope that the various Missions at work in Seoul might unite in the establishment and support of one good, well equipped and well supported hospital.

At the close of his address Dr. Avison was summoned to meet Mr. L. H. Severance, of Cleveland, Ohio, who was present at the meeting.

Mr. Severance expressed his cordial agreement with the views set forth in the paper and introduced the question of the cost of erecting a hospital in Seoul. He was told that $10,000 U. S. gold would probably be required. Later on Mr. Severance conferred with the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in New York on the subject and as an outcome offered to donate $10,000 for the purpose. When Dr. Avison returned to Korea he expected to erect the new hospital on the site of the old building near the center of the city, but circumstances prevented this. His Majesty the Emperor had expressed his intention of donating a site but his purpose was frustrated and the want of a site blocked the way for the erection of the building. The matter having been reported to Mr. Severance he generously donated another $5,000. gold for the purchase of a site, and with this the present beautiftil site outside the South Gate was bought and the work actually begun in the summer of 1902, the [page 488] corner stone being laid on the afternoon of Thanksgiving Day by His Excellency, Dr. H. N. Allen, U.S. Minister, in the presence of a large gathering of the foreign community and Korean officials.

The opening of the war and other causes contributed to increase the actual cost very materially above the estimated cost, but Mr. Severance realised the conditions and generously allowed the expenditure of the amount necessary to complete and equip the hospital in good shape, and by the time the adjunct buildings are completed at least $20,000 U. S. gold will have been spent.

The result is, however, that Seoul has now a modem hospital in which all kinds of cases can be treated in accordance with modem scientific methods.

The main building is about 40 by 80 ft., consists of two stories and a basement, but the basement having high ceilings and being well lighted and well finished practically adds another story to the building.

The basement contains the public dispensary, consisting of two waiting rooms, a consultation room, a laboratory and a pharmacy; a store room for medicines; furnace and coal room; kitchen and laundry with a modern drying room attached to the laundry. The first floor contains physician’s office with a room off it supplied with electrical apparatus to which an X-ray outfit will be at once added, steam bath cabinet, dry hot air apparatus for the treatment of joints, compressed air apparatus for the treatment of nose, throat, etc., and other special forms of apparatus, three medical wards for men, linen closet, bath room and W.C. for men, four wards for women with linen closet, bath room and W. C. for women, and a general meeting room.

The second floor is entirely devoted to surgical work for men, and here is located the operating room with wash room for the operators and sterilising room opening off it. This room is 16 by 16 ft. with ceiling 14 ft. high, the exposure is N.E. and that side is almost all glass which in addition to a large skylight gives good reflected light, no shadows interfering with the work of the operators. [page 489] This room is fitted up with white enamelled steel operating furniture and water-sterilizing apparatus, and is well adapted for the work to be done in it.

This floor has seven wards, linen closet, bath room and W.C., nurse’s room and minor operating room, and like the first floor has a diet kitchen which communicates with the basement kitchen by means of a dumb-waiter, for the distribution of food.

The physician’s office communicates by means of speaking tube with all parts of the building, while a private telephone connects the hospital with the doctor’s residence.

For the convenience of foreign patients it is intended to connect the hospital with the general telephone system of the city.

The whole interior of the building, including walls and ceilings, is painted in mild colors so that it can be washed and kept clean, and this feature of cleanliness is also facilitated by the rounding of all corners so as to prevent the lodgment of dust. Several private wards have been fitted up for the accommodation of those who wish to have a room to themselves, and these are suitable also for the use of foreign patients. The baths, W.C.’s, and wash-basins are all fitted up in a modem way and properly’ plumbed and supplied with hot and cold water.

The entire building is heated by a hot water system, so that neither smoke, coal dust nor ashes are present in the rooms, and an equable temperature can be kept in all parts.

Electric lighting throughout is a great help, too, in preventing the contamination of the wards with foul gases.

Ventilation has been well thought out and arranged for both by transoms placed over the doors and by a system of incoming and outgoing flues by which warmed fresh air is introduced into the wards and the fouled air carried off, so that the air of the wards is being constantly renewed even though doors and windows are closely shut, and that without noticeable drafts.

[page 490] The laboratory is fitted up with modern apparatus for the examination of blood, urine, faeces, sputum, etc.

A rabbit pen has been fitted up and a fully equipped, a Pasteur Institute will soon be in operation, so that those who are so unfortunate as to be bitten by a rabid dog may get prompt treatment according to the Pasteur method. The many accidents of this kind which have happened emphasize the great need of such an institution in our midst.

Plans are now out for the erection of an Isolation Building for the reception of contagious diseases. This will be built as soon as Spring opens. Other adjunct buildings such as mortuary storehouse etc. are to be added; and several houses for assistants and servants grouped around the main buildings combine to make a plant complete in almost every particular.

 Keeping in mind the fact that all forms of mission work must be only temporary and looking forward to the time when even hospital work must be done by native physicians, a strong effort has been made to give systematic medical instruction to a small number of young men, and this effort has meant special language study on the part of the doctor and much time spent in the preparation of text-books. The task altogether was found too heavy for one man to continue to do, and do it well, and again Mr. Severance opened his heart and purse and at his own expense sent out a second physician, Dr. J. W. Hirst to be associated with Dr. Avison in the work so that now all departments of the hospital can be carried on with greater vigor and more care, and the training of Korean young men and women as physicians and nurses will form a more prominent feature, while at the same time a series of medical text-books in the native language and script will result.

As might be expected in a country where the principles of sanitation are so constantly violated tuberculosis is rampant, a large proportion of those who apply for treatment being sufferers from some form of this disease.

It is the hope of those in charge to erect a tent or [page 491] other building suitable for the modem treatment of tuberculosis, which has proven so effective in Europe and America.

The building which has just been erected is planned to accommodate about 30 to 35 patients, but beds can be placed for 40 in case of need, and the isolation ward will have beds for about 6. The number of patients treated daily averages about 30, or about 10,000 in a year, but it is likely that a larger number will be treated at the new hospital as its advantages become more widely known.

To do this work well will mean the expenditure yearly of a considerable sum of money, a careful estimate putting this sum at Yen 7,500.00 exclusive of physician\*s salaries.

Towards meeting this there is an estimated income from various sources of say Yen 4,500.00 leaving a deficit of Yen 3,000.00 per year, and this sum those in charge hope to obtain from within the bounds of Korea. This looks like a goodly sum to expect yearly, but it is not a large sum for the successful diplomats, the business men and others to put into a benevolent work which promises so much definite and tangible good to the poor and suffering people who are so numerous. In many communities the cost of plant and the entire current expenditure is being given by the community but here in Seoul everything has been supplied and less than half of the current expenditure is being asked from the community at large.

A very important point to be borne in mind is that while the plant is owned and managed by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions yet it is entirely undenominational in the scope of its work, and while it has been built and is being carried on largely by American enterprise it is entirely without national bias in the distriubtion of its benefits. The sick of any religion or no religion and those of any nationality are admitted and given the best treatment its facilities will afford.

And while it is the avowed and definite aim of the Mission and those in charge to give religious instruction to all who come within its sphere of influence and so far [page 492] as possible to influence them in favor of Christianity yet no compulsion is used, and no persuasion other than the presentation to all of Christ as their Savior, and no effort is made to influence Christians of other denominations in favor of Presbyterianism. In the case of Methodists or Roman Catholics becoming patients in the hospital, the Methodist pastor or the Roman Catholic priest is as free to visit them as are the Presbyterian pastors, and so with any denomination whatsoever.

So long as there were several denominational hospitals in Seoul no effort was made to obtain local financial support, but now that the Methodist and English Churches have given up their general medical work (only the Methodist women’s hospital being now carried on on behalf of Korean women) it is felt that a part of the support of the work may well be looked for from the general community.

The cost of food and medicines for a general ward patient for a year is estimated at Yen 100, and several persons have already offered to support beds to be named as they may direct.

The general surgical ward of ten beds could be supported by the payrment of Yen 1,000 per year, or any bed in it for Yen 100.

Then there are several wards with three beds in each which could be supported with 300 yen per year.

The Pasteur Institute is not directly part of the Severance Hospital, the only donation thus far being that of Yen 100 by the guard of the Italian Legation, which was used in the erection of the rabbit pen. To properly establish this Institute will require the purchase of the apparatus for the manipulation of the virus and its storage. The work must be carried on under the strictest antiseptic precautions, and special apparatus is required. The cost of this will probably be about Yen 250, and the donation of this by some one would be a beneficent act.

Further than this a room about 12-16 feet is needed in which to keep the inocluated rabbits, and the erection of this will cost about Yen 100 to 125. [page 493] After the Institute has been thus started, whether there are patients or not the supply of fresh virus must be kept up constantly, and this will necessitate the using up of a large number of rabbits each month. It is calculated that at the Nagasaki Institute about 30 rabbits are used each month. The cost of maintaining the Institute therefore will not be small, as it will require almost all the time of one assistant to look after the rabbits, see that they are kept healthy, and especially watch over and care for those that have been inoculated. The sum of Yen 400 to 500 yearly will probably be needed for the upkeep of the Institute, and this offers a good opportunity for an exhibition of generosity.

Stock is offered in the Pasteur Institute at Yen 50 per share, and for each Yen 50 advanced the donor will be entitled to a full treatment at the Institute or to command the treatment of one other person, the same being a foreigner or well-to-do Korean, or to send for treatment four Koreans of the poor class for whom the cost of treatment will be reduced to Yen 12.50.

The treatment consists of 21 inoculations, and covers a period of 21 consecutive days.

Another direction in which generosity may be well placed is in the support of some bright young man as a medical student. This can be done at a cost of about Yen 100 per year.

Probably, however, the most urgent need at the present time is the support of beds in the hospital. Can Seoul not take up at least 20 of these at Yen 100 each per year and thus provide for the cure and relief of many of the sick and suffering poor in our midst?

Supporters of beds may choose a name for their beds and have them placed over them and each year a report will be rendered of the cases treated in them.

O. R. Avision.

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# Opening of the Severance Memorial Hospital.

Wednesday, November 16th, 1904,

The weather and everything else combined to make the opening of the new Hospital in Seoul, known as the Severance Memorial Hospital, an auspicious event. The foreign community of Seoul, together with several of the native Korean officials, gathered in the large upstairs room, to hear something of the history of the Hospital; and also to be shown over the now completed building.

Dr. H. N. Allen, the United States Minister, whose name has from the start been so intimately associated with the beginnings of medical work in this land, and whose skill in 1884 opened a wide door for medicine and surgery, made the address of the afternoon, and pointed out clearly the need that exists in Korea for medicine and surgery; showed how an attempt had been made to supply the need with the poor facilities at hand; touched upon the notable success that had attended work with even poorer facilities; and heartily congratulated Dr. Avison, the foreign community, and the citizens of Seoul, on the magnificient plant that had been procured through the kindness and generosity of Mr. Louis H. Severance, of Cleveland, Ohio, U. S. A. His Excellency, Youn Chi Ho, of the Foreign Office, after addressing a few words to the Koreans who were present, in his inimitable way, referred to what foreign medicine might do in Korea; and, in the name of his country, thanked the foreign residents, and especially the Presbyterian Mission, for the fully equipped institution that was thrown open to the public on that day. Dr. Avison followed, giving in a concise way, the history of the development of the plans for the present Hospital and enlarged upon the generosity of the donor in providing such a complete outfit for Seoul.

The company were then escorted round the Hospital, [page 495] and soon saw there had been provided a comparatively small but perfectly equipped Hospital. It was said that one of Japan’s leading officials had remarked that there were larger institutions in Japan but none better equipped than the one just opened.

The generosity of an outsider, one who has never seen Seoul or Korea, has brought to our doors the means by which the people of this city can secure for their sick, rich and poor alike, the advantages of the best and latest researches in medical science and surgery. Much as we who are out here in the East may sympathize with and pity the sufferers of this land, it would have been absolutely beyond our reach to provide such an institution. It has now been bestowed upon us, and the least that we can do will be to take our share in furnishing the means for the running of the same.

In the hospital department there are some forty odd beds, and Doctor Avison told us that one hundred yen would pay for the keep of a patient in one bed throughout the year. Thus one hundred yen invested here, will, in all probability, give health and strength to an average of from eight co ten Koreans each year. Several have taken this into consideration and are purposing to provide the yearly sustenance for one bed; and, I should think that in Seoul, at least forty persons ought to be found who would be willing thus to endow a bed, which can then he named after the donor, if so desired. The dispensary department where some 10,000 or more patients are treated every year, cannot possibly pay its expenses, as necessarily a large number of the patients have to be provided with medicine free. Here is a way in which those who do not care to endow a bed can do something to help support the sick in Seoul.

While the institution has been provided through the generosity of a Christian gentleman in America, and has been placed by him under the care of the Presbyterian Board of Mission, as was said at this gathering, it is intended to care for all nationalities, all classes, all creeds, all religions, and as such commends itself most heartily to all those who have the interest of their fellow man at [page 496] heart. Is there not a responsibility resting especially upon those of us who have had the advantages of civilization to take our share in the alleviation of the suffering around us; and does not this institution offer us an opportunity of doing the same?

In our comfortable homes we do not have much chance of seeing the condition of the natives of this land; but any of us can easily imagine what it would be, had we no physicians, and had we to rely upon poor quackery with its acupuncture and blistering, crudely administered by so-called docters who are entirely ignorant of human anatomy. After the obnoxious, filthy and foul decoctions that these people prepare and administer, very little hope remains for the patient.

When an American gentleman reaches out arms of love and mercy from the other side of the globe to the destitute and suffering of this nation, we cannot afford to allow ourselves to be hindered from giving at least a little of what Providence has so bountifully given us; and, thereby, offer a few crumbs from our table to those who, like Lazarus, lie at our doors.

H. G. Underwood.

# The New Hospital

The ideal form of philanthropic giving is the personal kind, where the giver comes into personal contact with the individual to whom he gives. Shakespeare says that mercy is twice blessed because it blesses him who gives and him who receives. But aid that is given at second hand or through an agent loses at least a portion of the reflex half of its beneficent power.

And yet it is manifestly impossible for all people to engage to any considerable extent in the work of personal distribution of their benefactions. Wise giving requires a careful examination of the condition and needs of the recipient, and such examination takes far more time than the mere handing over of the money. The [page 497] great majority of people, therefore, find it wiser to put their money into the hands of those whose business it is to learn the conditions and who for this reason can make the most worthy disposal of the funds. Nor is this always done simply to save bother and relieve the donor of the onus of personal investigation and contact with uncongenial surroundings. Many people are actually afraid of the expressions of thankfulness and love which their kindness often elicits and give their money through others rather to hide from their left hand what the right hand does than to salve the conscience merely.

In such a land as this, where extreme poverty and lack of any considerable moral restraints render poor people very susceptible to the temptation to impose upon the generosity of the well-to-do, it is a great question how to give without doing more harm than good. Ignorance of the language makes it impossible to do the work personally and yet there is no man of right feeling who is willing to go on year after year without doing something to relieve the suffering which evidently exists.

In a general way it may be said that there is no object which appeals to all men so commonly as a free hospital. To those who are actuated by the distinctively religious side of the question it represents a continuation of the personal work of Jesus Christ who paid special attention to bodily ailments. To those who are actuated simply by humanitarian motives it must appear as the most definite and genuine of mediums through which to aid suffering humanity. There is the least possible danger of money being misapplied or of helping people that do not need help. A sick man is manifestly unable to earn a living; and who of us does not know that not one Korean in a thousand has any available funds to fall back upon in case of temporary disability?

The Severance Hospital is the only thoroughly organized and properly equipped institution of the kind in Seoul or its vicinity. The building is free of debt, the salaries of its medical staff are guaranteed and therefore every cent which you give will be used directly in the relieving of [page 498] suffering. The man of broad views will recognize that money given even for a subsidiary purpose such as fuel, lights and office expenses is as genuinely useful as that given directly in the care of the sick, but in this case even such a slight objection as this is wanting. Every dollar invested is applied directly to the providing of the actual wants of the patients. Some members of the foreign community have already seen fit to assume the support of individual beds in the wards of this hospital at the comparatively trifling expense of about one hundred yen a year and it would seem to be a matter of little difficulty to secure forty such guarantees from among a community such as this.

If it be objected that when a man builds a hospital to be called after his name he should also endow it, we must remember that Mr. Severance has already practically endowed the institution with the equivalent of Yen 35,000, for the sum which he annually donates amounts at a minimum estimate to the interest on the above sum, reckoned at five per cent. It would seem, then, that Mr. Severance has done all that could reasonably be expected toward the running expenses of the institution. But is it not true that such an enterprise must exert a greater influence over the community both direct and reflex if it engages the active financial support of the people among whom it is placed? Where the treasure is, there the heart is also, and if you have a little treasure invested in this enterprise it will do something toward helping you to remember that the physical sufferings of this people are beyond your wildest imagination and thus keep you true to your moral obligations to them.

There is every reason to believe that well-to-do Koreans will be unwilling to have all this work done with foreign money and will demand a share in the work. Already an attempt has been made in the Seoul Young Men’s Christian Association to endow a bed in the Severance Hospital, with Korean funds. Mr. T. H. Yun, Vice-minister of Foreign Affairs made a telling appeal at the Y. M. C. A. rooms the other night and there was an [page 499] instant response One man pledged $100 and others smaller sums, so that the required amount was raised.

We wish to bring this matter very plainly before the attention of the foreign community and urge that each individual settle with himself the question whether this is not the very best and safest medium through which to give expression to his sympathy for the Koreans. To the man without sympathy any appeal is vain but we do not believe there exists such a person in our community. Many of us are receiving a monthly stipend from the Korean government and is it not eminently fitting that a moiety of this sum should revert to the direct relief of Korean suffering?

# The Ghost of a Ghost.

It was a curious combination of justice and chicanery and illustrated to a dot the Korean ideal of official rectitude. But the reader must judge for himself.

A Korean country gentleman, Kim for convenience, had become a widower with a small son on his hands, and as this threw his domestic arrangements into confusion he looked about for a number two to share his joys and sorrows and incidentally to cook his *pap*. In this quest he was successful and in time another son was born. But by this time the first-born had grown into a young man and had developed a violent dislike to his step-mother and his little half-brother, and a person even less astute than the father could not fail to foresee that upon his demise the elder son would show small favor to the wife and the child.

For this reason the old gentleman upon his death-bed gave to his wife a piece of paper on which was drawn a picture of a man and his son, and told her to keep it with great care and when the time came that she could no longer make ends meet she should take the picture to the local magistrate and ask redress. He unhesitatingly affirmed that justice would thus be done her.

[page 500] Not long after this he breathed his last, and it was but a month or two later that the elder son began to show his teeth. The property was all taken from the widow and no provision whatever was made for her support. She had only one small box in which she preserved the picture. The little boy plead with his big brother to help his mother, but was driven from the door with blows. Finally the unhappy woman reached the point of destitution which her husband had foreseen, and taking the picture she went to the office of the prefect and told her story.

The prefect looked long and intently at the piece of paper, studied it from every point of view, but said at last that he could make nothing out of it. The enigma was too deep for him. He told her to leave the picture with him over night and he would think it over. As he pondered the matter he concluded there must be some solution and was piqued at his own inability to find it. Late into the night he sat and thought about it but the more he thought the more insoluble became the riddle. About midnight he called his servant and ordered a bowl of water. After drinking a little he set the bowl down, but in doing so a portion of the water was spilled upon the picture which lay on the floor beside him. He was startled, for this might injure the picture and render the solution wholly impossible; so he picked up the paper carefully and held it near the candle flame to dry it, when lo! the riddle solved itself. The porous paper was made semi-transparent by the water, and the light, shining through, revealed a written communication concealed between the two thicknesses of paper which formed the substance of the picture. He glanced around to see whether his servant had noticed it and was relieved to find that he alone was the possessor of the secret. His first act was to destroy the picture, after which he retired as usual.

In the morning when the ajuns came to pay their respects he ordered one of them to go down to the house of the man who had treated his step-mother so badly and announce that the prefect would call there at two in the [page 501] afternoon. This created something of a sensation and when the prefect arrived he found the place swept and garnished. Quite a crowd of the towns-people had gathered out of curiosity to see what this visit might portend.

As the prefect entered the gate he saw the master of the house and the others gathered about the steps of the sarang or reception room but on the left the yard was empty. The host came forward to greet him but strange to say he waved him aside and looked intently to the left. Then folding the front part of his coat about him as the Korean does in the presence of a superior he advanced a few steps toward the left, bent forward in a deferential manner and said:

Yes, certainly no, never before without doubt . . . .Oh no, no I could not think of it . . . . yes quite sure . . . .no difficulty whatever . . . . It shall be done at once . . . .Indeed I shall not forget.

All this in reply to apparently unheard questions of an unseen interlocutor! The people stood open-mouthed with wonder. Had the prefect indeed gone mad? But the play was not yet finished. The prefect went toward the gate as if taking leave of some one, said good-by with the utmost deference and then came back to the amazed group of spectators and said:

“Who was that man?” They hesitated but at last one of them made bold to answer :

“There was no one there.”

“What; that man I was just talking to and who has just gone? You didn’t see him?”

“No, we saw no one nor did we hear anything but your words.”

“Amazing! Wonderful! Astounding! I saw an elderly gentleman standing there and he had the air of a great official. He spoke to me and said that in this town his widow and her little boy were suffering because the grown-up son had defrauded them of their rights. He told me he had foreseen this and had buried beneath the floor of that deserted house, over there, three caskets of silver and two of gold for the use of his widow. He told [page 502] me to take two of the silver caskets and give the rest to his widow. And you never saw him! Well, well, it was a singular hallucination. Let us think no more about it.”

But what company of people would rest satisfied with this? They protested that there must be some reason behind the vision and urged the prefect to dig for the treasure. He demurred and said it was foolish but was finally persuaded. Mattocks were secured and they all hastened to the deserted house where, sure enough, the caskets were unearthed. Instead of thinking the prefect was crazy they now concluded that he was inspired. He took it very modestly, and calling the widow and her son turned over the valuable treasure to them.

“The old gentleman told me to keep two of the silver caskets for myself, but I am going to venture to disobey him and keep only one.”

A murmur of admiration went around the company and they, and the woman, begged him to take two, but he protested that even the fear of the spirits’ anger would not induce him to take more than one.

Thus the woman was vindicated, the prefect enveloped in the odor of sanctity and his exchequer replenished; for the writing in the picture had only revealed the position of the buried treasure but had made no provision for the prefect’s squeeze.

# Corea: The Hermit Nation.

Preface To The Seventh Edition.

When in October, 1882, the publishers of “Corea the Hermit Nation” presented this work to the public of English-speaking nations, they wrote :

“Corea stands much the same relation to the traveller that the region of the pole does to the explorer, and menaces with the same penalty the too inquisitive tourist who ventures to penetrate its inhospitable borders.”

[page 503] For twenty-two years, this book, besides enjoying popular favor, has been made good use of by writers and students, in Europe and America, and has also served even in Korea itself as the first book of general information to be read by missionaries and other new comers. In this seventh edition, I have added to the original text ending with Chapter XLVIII (September, 1882), four fresh chapters : on The Economic Condition of Korea; Internal Politics: Chinese and Japanese; The War of 1894: Korea aa Empire; and Japan and Russia in Conflict; bringing the history down to the autumn of 1904.

Within the brief period of time treated in these new chapters, the centre of the word’s politics has shifted from the Atlantic and the Mediterranean to the waters surrounding Korea, the stange anomaly of dual sovereignty over the peninsular state has been eliminated, and the military reputation of China ruined. The rise of Japan, within a half century of immediate contact with the West, to the position of a modern state, able first to humiliate China and then to grapple with Russia, has vitally affected Korea, on behalf of whose independence Japan has a second time gone to war with a Power vastly greater in natural resources than herself. In this period, also, the United States of America has become one of the great Powers interested in the politics of Asia, and with which the would-be conquerors of Asiatic peoples must reckon.

In again sending forth a work that has been so heartily welcomed, I reiterate gladly my great obligations to the scholars, native and foreign, who have so generously aided me by their conversation, correspondence, criticism, and publications, and the members of the Korean Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, who have honored me with membership in their honorable body. My special obligations are due to our American Minister, H. N. Allen, for printed documents and illustrative matter; to Professor Homer B.Hulbert, Editor of The Korea Review, from the pages of which I have drawn liberally; and to Professor Asakawa of Dartmouth College, author [page 504] of “The Early Institutional Life of Japan.” I call attention also to the additions made upon the map at the end of the volume.

I beg again the indulgence of my readers, especially of those who by long residence on the soil, while so thoroughly able to criticize, have been so profuse in their expressions of appreciation. From both sides of the Atlantic and Pacific have come these gratifying tokens, and to them as well as to my publishers I make glad acknowledgments in sending forth this seventh edition.

Ithaca, N.Y., September 22, 1904.

Wm. Elliot Griffis.

# Review.

## Corea e Coreani

by Lieut. Carlo Rossetti, Cr 8° pp300 Rome, 1904. Illustated.

We have received from the author a copy of the above mentioned book and in spite of one sad deficiency in knowledge of the Italian language we have taken pains to examine with some care the contents of the volume. It is a large crown octavo in flexible covers and is an excellent example of typographical and artistic skill. It is *par excellence* a book of illustrations and shows the exceptional skill and taste of the author, who took most of the photographs himself. An examination of the letter press will convince anyone that the author confined his remarks to things which he had personally verified, and made no pretense to an intimate knowledge of, or an authoritative voice in, matter which can be known only after a long and thorough acquaintance with the Korean people. Even a brief account of things that one knows at first hand is worth more than long chapters of generalizations and inductions, and the author is to be congratulated upon the stamp of verisimilitude which is impessed upon every page of this book.

[page 505]

## A New Book on Japan

We have received from the Japanese authorities a neat volume entitled *Japan in the Beginning of the 20th Century*. It is published by the Imperial Japanese Commission to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, and contains some 800 pages. After all the descriptive and sentimental books on Japan based upon a partial or onesided observation it is indeed pleasant to take up a book that is simply crammed with facts, well authenticated facts. In one sense it is dry but in another it is most interesting reading. We want to know what Japan has back of her as genuine resource from which to draw in this her time of life and death struggle. Nowhere else can these facts be found so succinctly stated, so clearly exposed and so scientifically grouped as in this work. It has all one wants to know about the geography, population, administrative system, agriculture, forestry, mines, fisheries, manufactures, foreign and domestic trade, finances, army and navy, communication, transportation and education. Under each of these heads there are numerous subdivisions which take one right down to the bed rock of Japanese institutions and life, and to one who wants serious and exact knowledge of the country we know of no book nearly so satisfactory. This is the kind of book that will some time be written about Korea, giving not mere sketches here and there but telling us the facts in their proper proportions and bearings. The Japanese authorities are to be highly complimented upon the neat and attractive get-up of the book, its unexceptionable English and its entire adequacy to fill the requirements of the case.

## Mr. Kennan on Seoul.

Mr. Geo. Kennan has a very readable article on Seoul in the October number of the *Outlook*. He is a keen [page 506] observer and describes things in a very dramatic way. The results of some of the extravagant praises which Mr, Hamilton lavished upon Seoul are evident in this article, for Mr. Kennan had been given to expect so much that his disappointment drove him to the other extreme and he could see very little in Seoul worth seeing. For instance his description of the natural scenery about Seoul does not imply that Seoul is the most picturesquely situated city in the Far East with the single exception of Hongkong. Mr. Kennan leaps from the extreme laudation of Mr. Hamilton to the other extreme when he says that Seoul is much more truthfully set forth in the doggerel verses of “a former resident of Seoul’’ who was in fact a U. S. Naval officer whose acquaintance with Korea was but one degree more complete than that of Mr. Kennan. We must demur at the impression left by the writer’s reference to semi-nude women on the street. Any resident of Seoul will agree that while a few slave women go about with the breasts exposed this is not a characterstic of Korean women on the streets, generally. The term “semi-nude” implies a far more objectionable state of things than actually exists. To have been fair Mr. Kennan should have added a contrast between the Japanese and Koreans in the matter of nudity, to his other comparisons. What we fail to get in any of these passing notices of Seoul is a fair compariscm.

Mr. Kennan makes much of the filth and the smells of the Capital but we would have it clearly understood that something more than a passing observation of this and other cities of the East will show that Seoul is less objectionable in the matter of offensive odors than any native town in the open ports of China. It is notorious that the native towns of Tientsin, Chefoo, Shanghai, Suchow and hundreds of others are incomparably worse than those of Seoul. Mr. Kennan must have seen some of these other places, but one would gather from his article that Seoul stands preeminent in this matter. We have been in Tokyo many times and have never failed to be more annoyed by evil odors in that city than in Seoul.

[page 507] “There seem to be no scavenger birds in Korea.” This amazing statement shows conclusively that Mr. Kennan kept his eyes on the ground, for one of the conspicuous things about Seoul is the immense numbers of large hawks that soar about the city all day long catching up any stray bits of garbage. There are simply thousands of them, and when the little boys find a dead mouse they amuse themselves by throwing it up in the air for the hawks to swoop down upon and seize before it reaches the ground.

Many of Mr. Kennan’s statements are true to fact and those that fall short of this are due to incomplete or imperfect observation. This much may be said, that for a visit of such short duration and such limited range it shows a marvelous power of concentration and quick appreciation of salient features.

Of course there is this to be said, that those who have lived here some time get used to conditions as they are and are in a sense hardened to them but if we are not mistaken it is the general opinion of people who have lived in Chinese cities that Seoul is far preferable to them. And as for sanitation, we should think that Korean methods are far preferable to the Chinese, Mr. Kennan doubtless knows that an open ditch with the sun shining into it all day, though more repulsive to the eye, is far less unhealthful than a ditch indifferently boarded over so that the sun cannot get at the germs. It is said that diphtheria was practically unknown in Tokyo until they covered over the ditches.

In Seoul there are ten miles of street that are wide as many of the streets in New York City and the lay of the land is such that every good rain sweeps the sewers fairly clean for an Eastern city. The night soil is all carried out by men who make this a special business. Mr. Kennan unfortunately did not have time to learn what the interesting sights in and about Seoul are. Someone ought to compile a good guide book to the capital and vicinity so that travellers will not go away and say they cannot find things of interest here.

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## Editorial Comment.

This number of the Review may properly be called the *Hospital Edition*. We have given a full account of the beginnings of the new Severance Hospital and have added some words by different people as to the value of this work and the duty of foreigners in Seoul and Korea generally to rally to the support of this institution. It needs no other words to commend it to the public, and we feel sure that there will be a generous response to the appeal. Since the articles were in press we have learned that two Korean merchants in the vicinity of the hospital joined in guaranteeing the support of one of the beds.

We have decided to suspend the publication of the Korea Review with the end of this year. It was begun four years ago as a “Medium of communication between those who are interested in Korean matters,” an ideal which has not been realized. Foreigners in Korea who are competent to handle questions of history, folk-lore, language, sociology, religion and other topics have been too much engaged in other matters to spend time in writing, the consequence being that the entire work has fallen upon the shoulders of a single individual. One third of the space has been filled with a detailed history of Korea from the earliest beginnings to the present hour. That being now completed the work of supplying material for the magazine will be increased by fifty per cent. There is abundance of material at hand to continue the publication of this magazine indefinitely, and while the management acknowledges no difficulty in securing interesting matter we think that a magazine like this ought to be filled with articles from many pens rather than from one alone. We should probably have stopped sooner had we not felt in duty bound to keep on until the history was completed, but now we feel at liberty to say our work is done and if the public is [page 509] to have a magazine it must be the product of a common effort. It has been suggested that there are many who would write for the magazine if they were solicited for material, but we do not care to ask any favors. If people are not interested enough in the interchange of information about Korea to submit material of their own accord no amount of solicitation would be of use.

We are far from granting that the magazine has not been a success. The list of subscribers has grown continually and every month sees new names upon the mailing list from America and Europe. The Review circulates in America, Canada, England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Italy, Morocco, South Africa, India, Annam, Australia, China, Japan and Korea. So far as we can learn there is no diminution of interest in the periodical and we are constantly receiving letters from abroad expressing interest in this publication. Financially the Review has been as successfal as we ever expected it would be, in that it has paid for itself and more. The sole reason for discontinuing is that the mere manual labor of preparing the manuscript, reading proof and attending to the business interests of the magazine leave so little time for other and, as we believe, more important work.

We would be pleased to receive from any subscriber his views as to the utility of continuing publication and suggestions as to the way in which this can be done without letting the entire burden of it fall upon a single individual. We still hold to the opinion that there ought to be a magazine of some kind published in Korea. It should be of a general nature and take up at least as wide a range of subjects as the Review. It may be that some other individual would be willing to shoulder the responsibility and the work alone. It may be that a joint committee or company could be found whereby the work would be divided up. The present management would gladly co-operate with any such committee or body or would turn the whole thing over to them in the interests of the public.

As the matter stands, therefore, the Korea Review as [page 510] now operated, will suspend publication on the thirtyfirst of December 1904. If there are any who desire to complete their file of the Review, we have on hand a certain number of odd copies of many of the issues and these can be obtained upon application.

If there are any who have odd numbers of the first volume, 1901, we will be glad to purchase them, paying the full amount that they originally cost. And for full sets of the 1901 Review we will pay five yen.

We have already indicated by circular that the History of Korea in two volumes, with copious indexes, appendices and chronological, geographical and other tables will be issued about the end of the year, bound in halfleather. Our purpose was primarily to furnish a few sets of the history alone for libraries at home, but there has been some little demand for it here so that we have reserved a few sets for the local trade. The readers of the Review already have the subject matter of the history serially in the four years of the magazine but it is evident that the general index for the history itself will not apply to the history as printed serially, because of the difference in paging. The various sketch maps of Korea at various stages of her history, some seven in number, will appear in the history proper. The considerable expense connected with their publication makes it impossible to furnish them free in connection with the Review, as we would like to have done.

## News Calendar.

It is with great regret that we have to record the death, on Oct. 18th, of Joseph Allen Kearns, the infant son of Rev. and Mrs. Kearns, of Sun-ch’un at the age of seventeen months.

We learn from the far north that “ever since the gathering of the tongkak in all the county-seats of North Pyeng-yang Province on Oct. 8th they have been having a hard time of it. They have been searched for by the ‘hunter police’ in a most relentless way, and all for the sake of ‘squeeze’. It has gotten to such a state that in some sections the country houses are deserted, and everywhere, as a result of tonghak persecution and forced labor on the railroad, harvesting has [page 511] been much delayed. The work on the railway all the way up from Seoul, wherever I saw it on my overland trip, is well advanced and with the exception of the bridges over the big streams I should think they could have it operating to Pyeng-yang this winter as they claim. The grades in some places are tremendous, especially over one hill in ChungWha. The labor question is a bad one, however, and the Japanese have won the most universal and bitter hatred of the Koreans. The policy seems to differ every few miles according to the whim of the man in charge. In many places there is no pay and in others only a very small wage. The worst thing I have heard of the Japanese doing was the burning of a whole village of eighteen houses near Wiju as the result of a small fight caused by the unjust demands of one of the villainous Korean interpreters. Only four or five of the owners were involved in the trouble. Three or four hundred troops were sent over from Wuntung to burn the village. This seizing of large sections of land for their new ports, notably on the East bank of the Ta-dong River above Chinnampo. also thirty li from An-ju and thirty li from Pak-ch’un with absolutely no pay for the land is nothing better than common stealing.”

It is unfortunately evident that while the underlying principle of Japanese action may be all right, the methods they use to carry them out are sometimes open to grave questions.

A very painful incident occurred last month near Fusan. Some Japanese coolies were making trouble at the house of a Korean attached to Rev. G. Engel. The latter went to the Korean’s support and succeeded in driving the Japanese away. Thereupon the Korean who was naturally rather excited called to them saying that they could not ride rough-shod over his rights since he had a foreigner to defend him. Thereupon the Japanese came back and attacked Mr. Engle with great ferocity and after rendering him insensible tied him to two posts, head to one and feet to another and left him. The matter was referred to Seoul and became the subject of diplomatic communication. The Japanese authorities recognize the lawless character of many of their nationals in Korea and it is greatly to be wished that these men might be held in check in some way. It is a heavy strain upon the good will which Americans and British have had and still try to have for the Japanese in their struggle.

The completion of the Seoul-Fusan Railway marks an epoch in the material progress of Korea. It is a great work and deserving of praise though in the construction of it the Koreans have been made to fear that the Japanese people have small respect for their rights. This feeling may wear away as the Koreans come to see the great benefits that it may bring them if rightly used.

Yi Seung-man who was imprisoned for five or six years on account of his connection with the Independence Club and who has but recently been liberated, has gone to America to take a course of study. He is a man of exceptional ability and breadth of view and the future should have in store for him a very useful career.

[page 512] An attempt has been made to secure a rough estimate of the numbers of Il-chin and Chin-bo followers in the country and it is found that there can hardly be less than 50,000 of them in all.

The Crown Princess of Korea died on the sixth of November after a lingering illness. This sad event threw the court and the people into double mourning and extended the period of mourning one year beyond that for the late Queen Dowager. The funeral expenses were put at $1 000,000 but the Adviser to the Finance Department demurred and advised that the sum be cut in two.

The Japanese authorities complain that stones are put on the track of the Seoul-Fusan Railway, and threaten to take the matter of bringing these people to justice into their own hands unless the government attends to it.

A man in Mapo dressed up two little boys in women’s clothes and sold them as slaves. The purchaser discovered the fraud and the seller was arrested There is no such thing as male slavery in Korea, hence the illegality of the act, aside from its otherwise fraudulent character.

The American Legation guard has been relieved and twenty-eight new men have been stationed in Seoul in their place. On the whole the men feel that they have had a pretty good time here, though rather quiet. One of the new arrivals said very feelingly that “It is good to get into a place where people shake hands with a fellow.” The American residents of Seoul have taken special pains to organize dififerent forms of entertainment for the “boys” and this is much appreciated. We trust that this effort will be continued and enlarged during the present winter and that the genuine demonocracy of the American people will be demonstrated in acts of social courtesy to these young men.

The Minister of Education Yi Chi-geuk returned from Japan via the Seoul-Fusan Railway arriving in Seoul on the First of December. He was met at the station by hundreds of the school boys of Seoul with lanterns and received quite an ovation. It is much to be hoped that his experiences in Japan will pave the way to radical and far-reaching reforms in the system, or lack of system, of education in this country. The Japanese was eminently right who advised that hereafter money should be diverted from the army estimates to those of education. The Korean army will never amount to anything until popular education results in that enlightened public sentiment called patriotism.

A daughter was born to Rev. and Mrs. C. E. Sharp of Seoul on Nov. 15th.

A woman of Nam-po came up to Seoul and threw herself on the ground in front of the Palace gate and cried to the Emperor for help. When asked what the trouble was she said that she evidently had been born with a very unfortunate P’al-cha (at an unlucky time) for her husband died and left her with a young son and the questionable legacy of a mother-in-law. The uncle of her husband charged her with a serious offence against morals and drove her away and seized all her household effects. She had applied to magistrates and governors without avail and at last in desperation she determined to throw herself at the feet of her sovereign for redress. The Emperor sent word to her to apply to the Law Office and she proceeded to present her claim there.

[page 513]

# Korean History.

The historian of the future, taking his stand above and out of the smoke of battle, will take a dispassionate view of the whole situation. Then and not till then will it be possible to tell whether the present recorders of events are right in asserting that while the policies of both Powers are essentially selfish the success of Russia’s policy involves the disintegration and national ruin of the peoples she conies in contact with while the success of Japan’s policy demands the rehabilitation of the Far East,

Much depended upon the attitude which Korea should finally assume toward these two mutually antagonistic policies. If she had sided with Japan and had shown a fixed determination to resist the encroachments of Russia by adopting a policy of internal renovation which would enlist the interest and command the admiration of the world, the present war might have been indefinitely postponed. Whether it could have been finally avoided would depend largely upon the changes that are taking place in Russia herself where in spite of all repressive agencies education and enlightenment are filtering in and causing a gradual change. Here again the future historian may be able to say with confidence that it was better that the war came when it did in that it confirmed Japan in her course of commercial, industrial and intellectual expansion, guaranteed China against disintegration and opened the eyes of the Russians themselves to their need of radical internal reform. And he may be able to say that tfhe temporary suspension of Korean autonomy was but a small price to pay for these enormous benefits to the Far East and to the world at large.

Chapter XXVI.

Return of Yi Yong-ik. . . . Attack on Japanese Bank . . . . Government backs down . . . .Roman Catholic troubles in Whang-ha Province . . . . trials at Hi-ju . . . . difficulty settled . . . . Korean students to be sent to [page 514] Russia. . . .The Russian timber concession. . . .Russia enters Yongampo. . . .Korean prophecies. . . . Japan, England and America urge the opening of Yonganipo. . . . Russia prevents it. . . . Russians exceed limits of concession . . . . Japanese protest . . . Port Nicholas. . . Japanese suspend business in Seoul. . . . Korean pawn brokers stop business . . . . Legation guards . . . . government protest against them . . . . fears of popular uprising . . . . native press incendiary. . . .fears of trouble in the country. . .Foreigner threatened

The year 1903 beheld the rapid culmination of the difficulties between Japan and Russia, It had already become almost sure that war alone would cut the Gordian knot, and if any more proof was necessary this year supplied it.

Yi Yong-ik in Port Arthur received assurance from the Emperor that if he returned he would be given a powerful guard, and in this he was doubtless seconded by the Russians who could use him to better advantage in Seoul than in Port Arthur. He telegraphed for 15/300 bags of Annam rice and arrived in Chemulpo on the very day the rice came. It formed a sort of peace offering which, in the temporary scarcity, was very agreeable to the people. His return was the signal for a vigorous attack upon Japanese interests. On the eleventh of the preceding September the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs had issued an order prohibiting the use of the Japanese bank notes, alleging that since they were not government notes they were unsafe. This was a direct breach of faith, because as we have seen the Japanese Bank had already obtained the full consent of the government to issue and circulate these notes. It is almost inconceivable that any man of ministerial rank would be so devoid of ordinary common sense as to attempt such a thing as this. Of course there was an instant and peremptory protest on the part of the Japanese authorities and the government had to stultify itself by taking it all back. The promise was made that the governors of the provinces would be instructed to remove all objections to the circulation of the notes, but the promise was never kept. Now on the seventeenth of January Yi Yong-ik, who had but just returned, made a fierce attack upon the Japanese bank and a note was sent from the Finance Department to that of Foreign Affairs demanding by what right the latter had ventured to interfere in the finances of [page 515] the country, Cho Pyong-sik who had reinstated the Japanese notes was dismissed from the Foreign Office and everything fell into the hands of Yi Yong-ik. A few days later the Mayor of Seoul posted a circular forbidding the use of these notes on pain of severe punishment. This went all over the country and there was an immediate run on the bank, which was tided over with the greatest difficulty. Of course the Japanese were in a position to make reprisals, and after a little pointed talk the bluster of the favorite subsided to a weak whisper, and the authorities apologized in the most abject manner. It should be noted that the Russians gave no help to Yi Yong-ik when it came to the point of an actual breach with Japan.

For some time there had been great unrest throughout the province of Whang-ha owing to the lawless acts of the Roman Catholic adherents there. The matter was brought clearly before the notice of the Government through American Protestant missionaries because many of the Protestant native Christians had been involved in those troubles and had been imprisoned, beaten, tortured and robbed by those who were avowedly members of the Roman Church. A number of these lawless acts were committed under the sign and seal of the Church itself. When the matter became too notorious to escape action on the part of the Government a native official named Yi Eung-ik was appointed as a special Commissioner to go to Ha-ju, the capital the province, and investigate the matter thoroughly. Foreign representatives of both the Roman Catholics and of the Protestants were present and the trial was instituted in a perfectly fair and impartial manner. It was clear that the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth was to be elicited by this trial and after vain attempts to quash the indictment one of the French Catholic priests left the place accompanied and followed by a considerable number of those against whom there were most serious charges. These people gathered at a certain town and assumed a threatening attitude toward the Korean Government, but though all the foreign Roman Catholic representatives refused to attend the trial of the dozen or more of their adherents who had been arrested, the trial continued and charge after charge of the [page 516] most grievous nature was proved, one man being convicted of murder. During the trial various attempts were made to discredit the Commissioner but before the end of the trials his power was greatly increased. The result was to put an end to the difficulties and though those responsible for the outrages were never adequately punished it is probable that the Korean Government sufficiently demonstrated its purpose to deal with such matters in a strictly impartial manner.

The great preponderance of Russian influence was manifested early in 1903 by the decision on the part of the Government to send a number of young Koreans to Russia to study, but when it came to the point of selecting the men it was found that there was no desire on the part of the students to go. This was due in part to the feeling that Korean students abroad are not looked after very carefully by the authorities and there are long delays in, if not complete cessation of, transmission of money for their support.

Early in the year it transpired that the Russians had obtained from the Korean Emperor a concession to cut timber along the Yalu River. The thing was done secretly and irregularly and the government never received a tithe of the value of the concession. By this act the government dispossessed itself of one of its finest sources of wealth and sacrificed future millions for a few paltry thousand in hand, and a promise to pay a share of the profits, though no provision was made for giving the government an opportunity of watching the work in its own interests. Soon after the Russians had begun to work the concession they began to make advances for the obtaining of harbor facilities in connection with it. The port of Yongampo was decided upon and the Korean government was asked to allow the Russians the use of it for this purpose. This created a very profound impression upon Japan and upon the world at large. It was felt that this was giving Russia a foothold upon the soil of Korea, and Russia’s history shows that, once gained, the point would never be given up. The activity of Russia in the north gave rise to the notion that Japanese influence was predominant in the southern half of the peninsula and Russian in the northern half. This gave birth to all sorts of rumors among the Korean people and the ancient books were ransacked for prophecies [page 517] that would fit the situation. One of these is worth repeating since it illustrates very perfectly the Korean tendency to consult some oracle in times of national peril. This particular prophecy is supposed to say that “when white pine-trees grow in Korea the northern half of the peninsula will go to the Tartar and the southern half to the Shrimp.” Japan, from its shape, is said to resemble a shrimp, while Tartar covers the Muscovite. The people interpreted the “white pines” to refer to the telegraph poles! And thus the prophecy was considered to mean that when Korea is opened to foreign intercourse it will be divided between Russia and Japan. It cannot be said that this caused any considerable stir among the people and its only value lies in the certain indication that it afforded of the general unrest and suspicion among them. As a whole the attitude of the Korean has always been a rational and consistent one as between Russia and Japan. He has a greater personal antipathy for the latter because they have come into closer contact, but there is a mysterious dread in his heart which warns him of the Russian. He will never say which he would rather have in power here, but always says, “I pray to be delivered from them both.”

Japan began to urge upon the government the necessity of opening Yongampo to foreign trade, but Russia, of course, opposed this with all her powers of persuasion. Great Brit ain and the United States joined in urging the opening of the port. The United States had already arranged for the opening of the port of Antung just opposite Yongampo, and for the sake of trade it was highly desirable that a port on the Korean side of the Yalu should be opened. It had no special reference to the Russian occupation of the port, but as pressure was being brought to bear upon the government to throw open the port it was considered an opportune time to join forces in pushing for this desired end. And it was more for the interest of Korea to do this than for any of the powers that were urging it. Such an act would have been a check to Russian aggression and would have rendered nugatory any ulterior plan she might have as regards Korea. But the Russian power in Seoul was too great. It had not upheld the cause of Yi Yong-ik in vain, and the government, while using very specious language, withstood [page 518] every attempt to secure the opening of the port. At last the American Government modified its request and asked that Wiju be opened, but to this Russia objected almost as strongly as to the other. There can be little doubt that this uncompromising attitude of Russia on the Korean border confirmed Japan in the position she had doubtlesss already assumed. It was quite evident that the force of arms was the only thing that would make Russia retire from Korean soil.

 All through the summer complaints came in from the north that the Russians were working their own will along the northern border and taking every advantage of the loose language in which the agreement had been worded. Again and again information came up to Seoul that the Russian agents were going outside the limits specified in the bond but there was no one to check it. It was impossible to police the territory encroached upon and there is reason to believe that the Government chafed under the imposition. At least the telegraph lines which the Russians erected entirely with out warrant were repeatedly torn down by emissaries of the Government and apparently without check from the central authorities.

In the Summer when the text of the proposed Agreement between Russia and Korea anent Yongampo became public the Japanese Government made a strong protest. She probably knew that this was a mere form but she owed it to herself to file a protest against such suicidal action on the part of Korea. The insolence of the Russians swelled to the point of renaming Yongampo Port Nicholas.

In October the Japanese merchants in Seoul and other commercial centers began calling in all outstanding moneys, with the evident expectation of war. All brokers and loan associations closed their accounts and refused to make further loans. It is more than probable that they had received the hint that it might be well to suspend operations for the time being. From this time until war was declared the people of Korea waited in utmost suspense. They knew war only as a Universal desolation. They had no notion of any of the comparative amenities of modern warfare or the immunities of noncombatants. War meant to them the breaking up of the [page 519] very foundations of society, and many a time the anxious inquiry was put as to whether the war would probably be fought on Korean soil or in Manchuria. Once more Korea found herself the “Shrimp between two whales” and doubly afflicted in that whichever one should win she would in all probability form part of the booty of the victor.

The year 1904, which will be recorded in history as one of the most momentous in all the annals of the Far East, opened upon a very unsatisfactory state of things in Korea. It had become as certain as any future event can be that Japan and Russia would soon be at swords points. The negotiations between these two powers were being carried on in St. Petersburg and, as published later, were of the most unsatisfactory nature. Japan was completing her arrangements for striking the blow which fell on February the ninth. Of course these plans were not made public but there was conflict in the very air and all men were bracing themselves for the shock that they felt must soon come. The action of Japanese moneylenders in suspending operations was followed in January by the Korean pawn brokers and at a season when such action inflicted the greastest possible harm upon the poor people of the capital, who find it impossible to live without temporarily hypothecating a portion of their personal effects. This together with the excessive cold aroused a spirit of unrest which came near assuming dangerous proportions. Some of the native papers were so unwise as to fan the embers by dilating upon the hard conditions under which the Koreans labored. Their sharpest comments were directed at the Government but their tendency was to incite the populace against foreigners.

All through the month the various foreign legations were bringing in guards to protect their legations and their respective nationals and this very natural and entirely justifiable action was resented by the Government. It protested time and again against the presence of foreign troops, as if their coming were in some way an insult to Korea. The officials in charge thereby showed their utter incompetence to diagnose the situation correctly. It was well known that the disaffection among the Korean troops in Seoul was great and that the dangerous element known as the Peddlars Guild was [page 520] capable of any excesses. The unfriendlv attitude of Yi Yong-ik and Yi Keun-tak towards western foreigners, excepting Russians and French, together with their more or less close connection with the Peddlars was sufficient reason for the precautionary measures that were adopted. But the native papers made matters worse by ridiculing both the government and the army. At one time there was considerable solicitude on the part of foreigners, not lest the Korean populace itself would break into open revolt but lest some violent faction would be encouraged by the authorities to make trouble; so little confidence had they in the good sense of the court favorite. It was fairly evident that in case of trouble the Japanese would very soon hold the capital and it was feared that the violently pro-Russian officials, despairing of protection at the hands of Russia, would cause a general insurrection, hoping in the tumult to make good their escape. It was felt that great precautions should be taken by foreigners not to give any excuse for a popular uprising. The electric cars diminished their speed so as to obviate the possibility of any accident, for even the smallest casualty might form the match while would set the people on fire.

But popular unrest was not confined to Seoul. A serious movement was begun in the two southern provinces where, it was reported, hundreds of the ajuns or prefectural constables were preparing to lead a formidable insurrection. The firm hold that these men have upon the people made it not unlikely that it would prove much more serious than the Tonghak insurrection of 1894. From the north, as well, persistent reports came of the banding together of the disaffected people, and foreign residents in those parts affirmed that they had never before seen such a state of affairs. One of them was driven from a country village and threatened with death if he should ever return. The Korean soldiers who formed the garrison of Pyeng-yang joined the police in breaking into the houses of wealthy natives and stealing money and goods. The authorities remonstrated, but without effect. By the twentieth of January the tension became so great in Seoul that a considerable number of the wealthy natives began removing there families and there valuables to the country. About the 20th of January the report circulated that Russia [page 521] had proposed that northern Korea be made a neutral zone and that Japan exercise predominant influence in the south. This was only an echo of the negotiations which were nearing the breaking point in St Petersburg, and it confirmed those who knew Japan in their opinion that war alone could settle the matter. On the following day the Korean Government issued its proclamation of neutrality as between Russia and Japan. This curious action, taken before any declaration of war or any act of hostility, was a pretty demonstration of Russian tactics. It was evident that in case of war Japan would be the first in the field and Korea would naturally be the road by which she would attack Russia. Therefore while the two were technically at peace with each other Korea was evidently induced by Russia to put forth a premature declaration of neutrality in order to anticipate any use of Korean territory by Japanese troops. At the time this was done the Foreign Office was shorn of all real power and was only the mouth-piece through which these friends of Russia spoke in order to make their pronouncements official. It was already known that two of the most powerful Koreans at court had strongly urged that Russia be asked to send troops to guard the imperial palace in Seoul and the Japanese were keenly on the lookout for evidences of bad faith in the matter of this declared neutrality, When, therefore, they picked up a boat on the Yellow Sea a few days later and found on it a Korean bearing a letter to Port Arthur asking for troops, and that, while unofficial in form, it came from the very officials who had promulgated the declaration of neutrality, it became abundantly clear that the spirit of neutrality was non-existent. It must be left to the future historian to declare whether the Japanese were justified in impairing a declared neutrality that existed only in name and under cover of which the Korean officials were proved to be acting in a manner distinctly hostile to the interests of Japan. All through January the Japanese were busy making military stations every fifteen miles between Fusan and Seoul. All along the line small buildings were erected, sufficiently large to house twenty or thirty men. On January 22nd Gen. Ijichi arrived in Seoul as military attaché of the Japanese Legation. The appointment of a man of such [page 522] rank as this was most significant and should have aroused the Russians to a realizing sense of their danger, but it did not do so. Four days later thia general made a final appeal to the Korean Government, asking for some definite statement as to its attitude toward Russia and Japan. The Foreign Office answered that the government was entirely neutral. Two days later the Japanese landed a large amount of barley at the port of Kunsan, a few hours’ run south of Chemulpo, and a light railway of the Decauville type was also landed in the same place. On the 29th all Korean students were recalled from Japan.

On February the first the Russians appeared to be the only ones who did not realize that trouble was brewing, otherwise why should they have stored 1,500 tons of coal and a quantity of barley in their godown on Roze Island in Chemulpo Harbor on the second of that month? On the seventh the government received a dispatch from Wiju saying that seveal thousand Russian troops were approaching the border and that the Japanese merchants and others were preparing to retire from that place. The same day the Foreign Office sent to all the open ports orderrng that news should be immediately telegraphed of any important movements.

On the eighth day of February the Japanese posted notices in Seoul and vicinity that what Japan was about to do was dictated by motives of right and justice and that the property and personal rights of Koreans would be respected. Koreans were urged to report any cases of ill-treatment to the Japanese authorities and immediate justice was promised. From this day the port of Chemulpo was practically blockaded by the Japanese and only by their consent could vessels enter or clear.

Having arrived at the point of actual rupture between Japan and Russia, it is necessary before entering into any details of the struggle to indicate the precise bearing of it upon Korea. Japan has always looked upon Korea as a land whose political status and affinities are of vital interest to herself, just as England once looked upon the Cinque ports, namely as a possible base of hostile action, and therefore to be carefully watched. One of two things have therefore been deemed essential, either that Korea should be thoroughly independent [page 533] or that she should be under a Japanese protectorate. These two ideas have animated different parties in Japan, and have led to occasional troubles. There is one radical faction which has consistently and persistently demanded that Japan’s suzerainty over Korea should be established and maintained, and it was the unwillingness of the Japanese authorities to adopt strong measures in the Peninsula which led to the Satsuma Rebellion. Another large fraction of the Japanese, of more moderate and rational view, are committed to the policy of simply holding to the independence of Korea, arguing very rightly that if such independence is maintained and the resources of the country are gradually developed Japan will reap all the material advantages of the situation without shouldering the burden of the Korean administration or meeting the violent opposition of the Koreans which such a step would inevitably entail. It is this latter policy which has prevailed and according to which Japan has attempted to work during the past three decades. It is this which actuated her during the period of China’s active claim to suzerainty and finally caused the war of 1894 which finally settled the question of Korea’s independence. But following upon this came the encroachments of Russia in Manchuria and the adoption of a vigorous policy in Korea. Japan’s efforts to preserve the intrinsic autonomy of Korea were rendered abortive partly through mistakes which her own representatives and agents made but still more through the supineness and venality of Korean officials. The subjects of the Czar at the capital of Korea made use of the most corrupt officials at court and through them opposed Japanese interests at every point. Furthermore they made demands for exclusive rights in different Korean ports and succeeded in encroaching upon Korean sovereignty in Yongampo. The evident policy of Russia was to supplant Japan in the peninsula, and no reasonable person can fail to see that it was their ultimate plan to add Korea to the map of Russia. The cause of the war was, therefore, the necessity laid upon Japan of safe-guarding her vital interests, nay her very existence, by checking the encroachments of Russia upon Korean territory.

But before submitting the matter to the arbitrament of the sword Japan exerted every effort to make Russia define [page 524] her intentions in the Far East. With a patience that elicited the admiration of the world she kept plying Russia with pertinent questions until at last it was revealed that Russia intended to deal with Manchuria as she wished and would concede Japanese interests in Southern Korea only and even then only as Japan would engage not to act in that sphere as Russia was acting in Manchuria.

All this time the Japanese people were clamoring for war. They wanted to get at the throat of their manifest foe; but their Government, in a masterly way, held them in check, kept its own secrets so inviolable as to astonish the most astute diplomatists of the day, and at last, when the hour struck,, she declared for war without having weakened the enthusiasm of her people and without giving occasion to adverse critics to say that she had yielded to popular importunity. When she communicated to Russia her irreducible minimum one would think that even the blind could see that war was certain to follow soon. But even then, if there is any truth in direct evidence, the great majority of the Russians laughed the matter aside as impossible. The moderation and self-control of Japan was counted to her for hesitation, so that when the moment for action came and Japan sprang upon her like a tigress robbed of her whelps, Russia cried aloud that she had been wronged.. It was on the morning of the seventh that Baron Rosen’s credentials had been handed back to him in Tokyo. The evening before this the Japanese Minister had left St. Petersburg. This in itself was a declaration of war but forty hours elapsed before Japan struck the first blow. During those hours Russia had ample time in which to withdraw her boats from Chenrulpo even though the Japanese refused to transmit telegrams to Seoul. A fast boat from Port Arthur could easily have brought the message.

It was on the sixth and seventh that reports circulated in Seoul that the Japanese were landing large bodies of troops at Kunsan or Asan or both. These rumors turned out to be false, but beneath them was the fact that a fleet was approaching Chemulpo. The question has been insistently asked why the Russian Minister did not inform the commanders of these Russian vessels and see to it that they were clear of the harbor before these rumors were realized. The [page 525] answer as given is that the Russian Minister had no control over these boats. They had their orders to remain in Chemulpo and they must stay. One would think that there would be at least enough *raport* between the civil and military (or naval) authorities to use the one in forwarding the interests of the other.

Even yet the Russians did not appreciate the seriousness of the situation, but they decided that it was time to send notice to their authorities in Port Arthur of what was rumored at Chemulpo. So the small gunboat *Koryetz* made ready to move out. Her captain, Belaieff, proposed to the Russian Consul that the Russian steamship *Sungari*, which was in port, should go with the *Koryetz* and thus enjoy her protection, but the agent of the company which owned the steamship strongly objected to her leaving the neutral port at such a time. He evidently realized in part the acuteness of the situation. So the *Sungari* remained at her anchorage and the Koryetz steamed out of port at two o’clock in the afternoon. Now, the harbor of Chemulpo is a somewhat peculiar one, for in one sense it is land-locked and in another it is not. It is formed by islands between which there are many openings to the open sea, but most of these are so shallow that ships of medium draught do not dare attempt them. There is but one recognized entrance and that is from the southwest, or between that and the south. This entrance is several miles wide and in the center of it lies Round Island. When the *Koryetz* arrived at the exit of the harbor she suddenly found herself surrounded by torpedo-boats. The only witnesses of what occurred at this point are the Japanese and the Russians and we can only give their accounts. The Russians say that the Japanese launched four torpedoes at the *Koryetz* and when within ten feet of her side they sank. Another statement is that a shot was fired on board the *Koryetz* but it was a mere accident! The Japanese claim that the *Koryetz* fired first. If we try to weigh the probabilities it seems impossible that the torpedoes of the Japanese should have missed the *Koryetz* if the torpedo-boats were as near as the Russians claim. On the other hand the admission on the part of a single Russian that the first gun was fired on the *Koryetz*, even though by accident, is rather damaging, for it is more [page 526] than singular that an accident should have happened at that precise time. It is a tax on the credulity of the public to give this lame excuse.

In any case it makes little difference who began the firing. The Japanese had already seized the Russian steamer *Mukden* in the harbor of Fusan and the war had begun. The Japanese doubtless held with Polonius, that if it is necessary to fight the man who strikes first and hardest will have the advantage. The *Koryetz* turned back to her anchorage and the Russians became aware of the extreme precariousncss of their position. Whatever attitude one may take toward the general situation it is impossible not to extend a large degree of sympathy to these Russians personally. Through no fault of their own they were trapped in the harbor and found too late that they must engage in a hopeless fight in order to uphold the honor of the Russian flag. But even yet it was not sure that the neutrality of the port would be ignored by the Japanese. Lying at anchor among neutral vessels in a neutral harbor, there was more or less reason to believe that they were safe for the time being.

About four o’clock in the afternoon of February eighth, which fell on Monday, three Japanese transports entered Chemulpo harbor from the south, convoyed by cruisers and torpedo-boats. They seemingly took no notice of the two Russian boats lying at anchor and were evidently sure that the Russians would not fire upon the transports. It would be interesting to know whether the Japanese were relying upon the declared neutrality of the port in thus venturing or whether they felt sure that their own superior strength would keep the Russians still, or whether, again, they were certain that the Russians had orders not to fire the first gun. But it is bootless to ask questions that can never be answered. Here is where the assailant has the advantage. He can choose the time and method of his attack. We may surmise that had the Russians divined the intentions of the Japanese and had foreseen the outcome they would have acted differently, but divination of Japanese intentions does not seem to be Russians’ strong point.

As soon as the Japanese came to anchor preparations were made for the immediate landing of the troops, and the [page 527] cruisers and torpedo-boats, that had convoyed them in, left the port and joined the fleet outside. This fleet consisted of six cruisers and several torpedo-boats. The *Asama* and the *Chiyoda* were the most powerful of the cruisers, the former being nearly half as large again as the *Variak*.

Night came on, and throughout its long hours the Japanese troops, by the light of huge fires burning on the jetty, were landed and marched up into the town. When morning came everyone was in a stat,e of expectancy. If there was a Japanese fleet outside they doubtless had other work on hand than simply watching two Russian boats. Nor could they leave them behind, for one of them was Russia’s fastest cruiser and might steam out of the harbor at any time and destroy Japanese transports. Knowing, as we do now, that an immediate attack on Port Arthur had been decided upon we see it was impossible to leave these Russian boats in the rear. Japan had never recognized the nuetrality of Korea, for she knew that the declaration was merely a Russian move to embarrass her, and she never hesitated a moment to break the thin shell of pretense.

About ten o’clock a sealed letter was handed to Captain Rudnieff of the *Variak*, It was from the Japanese Admiral and had been sent through the Russian Consulate. It was delivered on board the *Variak* by the hand of Mr. N. Krell, a Russian resident of the port. This letter informed the Russian commander that unless both Russian boats should leave the anchorage and steam out of the bay before twelve o’clock the Japanese would come in at four o’clock and attack them where they lay. Captain Rudnieff immediately communicated the startling intelligence to Captain Belaieff of the *Koryetz* and to the commanders of the British, American, French and Italian war-vessels. We are informed that a conference of the various commanders took place and that the Russians were advised to lie where they were. The British commander was deputed to confer with the Japanese, This was done by signal and it is said a protest was made against the proposed violation of neutrality of the port, and that the neutral boats refused to shift their anchorage. But all complications of this nature were avoided by the determination of the Russians to accept the challenge. This they deemed [page 528] to be due their flag. It is not improbable that they now foresaw that the neutrality of the port would not avail them against the enemy. By remaining at anchor they could only succeed in involving France, Italy, Great Britain and the United States, and there would be sure to be those who would charge the Russians with cowardice. If this was to begin the war it must at least prove the dauntless courage of the servants of the Czar. So the commander of the *Variak* ordered the decks cleared for action. It has been stated that he would have preferred to have the *Koryetz* stay at her anchorage, for by a quick dash it was just possible that the swift *Variak* alone might be able to evade the Japanese and run the gauntlet successfully. But the commander of the *Koryetz* refused to listen to any such proposition. If the only honor to be gotten out of the affair was by a desperate attack he was not going to forego his share of it. He would go out and sink with the *Variak*. So the Koryetz also cleared for action. It was done in such haste that all moveables that were unnecessary were thrown overboard, a topmast that would not come down in the usual manner was hewn down with an axe and by half past eleven the two vessels were ready to go out to their doom. It was an almost hopeless task — an entirely hopeless one unless the Japanese should change their minds or should make some grave mistake, and neither of these things was at all probable. The Russians were going to certain destruction. Some call it rashness, not bravery, but they say not well. The boats were doomed in any case and it was the duty of their officers and crews to go forth and in dying inflict what injury they could upon the enemy. To go into battle with chances equal is the act of a brave man, but to walk into the jaws of death with nothing but defeat in prospect is the act of a hero, and the Japanese would be the last to detract from the noble record that the Russians made. Time has not yet lent its glamor to this event, we are too near it to see it in proper proportions, but if the six hundred heroes of Balaclava, veterans of many a fight, gained undying honor for the desperate charge they made how shall not the future crown these men who, having never been in action before, made such a gallant dash at the foe?