THE KOREA REVIEW

[361]

OCTOBER, 1906 .

**Missionary Work in Korea.**

The following resolution passed at the recent Annual Meeting of the Presbyterian Mission (North) is an excellent introduction to the discussion of a question of vital importance to Korea, to the vast majority of American citizens in Korea and to very large vested interests which various organizations both in America and in Europe have in this country. The resolution to which we refer has to do with an extract which we made from the printed report of one of the missionaries in the north. The resolution, which we are officially asked to publish, runs as fellows:

“Resolved that in view of the fact that quotations from the report of a certain missionary to his mission, referring to the relation of the Japanese to the Koreans and the part taken by Christian Koreans in these disputes, have been published in a recent issue of the KOREA REVIEW, this Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, in session assembled, declines to accept responsibility for the said report, in that it was published before it was presented to the mission and because the statements made do not represent the policy of the mission, in that the mission does not in any way interfere in the political affairs of Korea.

And further resolved that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the editor of THE KOREA REVIEW with the request that he publish the same in his next issue.” [362]

We received this communication on the fifteenth of October but as the REVIEW was mailed on the thirteenth it is plain that we could not print it in the issue next after the passing of the resolution. We did not even know that such a resolution had been passed. Had we known it, we would have seen to it that a copy was handed in in time for the issue of October 13th.

Early in September we received from the writer of the report in question a printed copy of it without any comment and without any desire expressed that we should use it or not. It was simply a report, nor was there anything to indicate that it was the property of the Presbyterian Mission and required to be passed upon by the mission before it could be published. In fact it was already published and had gone out into the hands of’ we know not how many people. Copies of it had presumably been sent to America and elsewhere and in making extracts from it we did only what we would have done in case of an article printed in any magazine or other periodical. We had no idea whatever that it was not a public matter, nor do we think so now We say this to show that no blame can attach to this magazine or its editor for copying from a printed report that was sent to us.

A careful reading of the resolution shows that “in view of the fact that quotations from the report of a certain missionary” *to his mission etc.* Now as this printed report was circulated before the meeting of the mission it is perfectly clear that whatever the intentions of its writer were in regard to any future use of it as a report “to his mission,” it was, in fact, not so used in the first instance and any implication in the resolution that this magazine, in quoting from the report, betrayed anyone’s confidence in the slightest degree would be quite unwarranted. We think the resolution should have been worded in such a way as to have made this perfectly clear. The printed report came to us entirely unsolicited. It would seem then that it was because of the added publicity given to this report that the resolutions were [363 ] passed; but in the wording of the resolution we find that, in addition to this cause, the resolution is followed by other explanatory clauses which give other reasons, They are as follows “In that (or because) it was published before it was presented to the mission and because the statements made do not represent the policy of the mission, in that the mission does not in any way interfere in the political affairs of Korea.”

We have already shown that we were not the ones who published the report; but the strong point is that in which the mission says that “the statements in the report do not represent the policy of the mission.” If one will turn to the extracts we made he will find that the whole thing was a straightforward statement of fact except in the final clause in which the writer says that the firmness of the Christian element in the north saved them from oppression by the Japanese and facetiously adds that the victories in Manchuria did not imply that Koreans’ rights could be trampled upon with impunity. Now as the whole report was a statement of fact the mission in this resolution asserts that it is not its policy to publish the facts about Japanese oppression.

To this no one can take exception. The mission as a mission has no calling to become a publishing agency of political matters but this is far from saying that when individual missionaries find grievous abuses being committed they must hold their peace. It is not in the Anglo Saxon temperament to let things of this nature pass without protesting. The question immediately arises how far should a missionary go in interfering with social matters in his community. Is every appeal to a Japanese official to be construed as an interference with politics? For instance, if a man finds that his town or village is being debauched by the sale of morphine by Japanese and holds prima facie evidence of such sale, is he at liberty to appeal to the Japanese authorities to have it stopped? This traffic is a grave misdemeanor in Japanese law and to our thinking the missionary has as good a right to help bring the criminal to justice as he would have to point out a murderer or a thief. The trouble is

[364] that the word “political” covers such a wide field. Everything that has to do with the people, is political. The religion of a nation has a distinct hearing on politics. Every act of the citizen is a political act and a man can escape from politics only by becoming a Robinson Crusoe .

The idea of steering clear of politics in the restricted sense of that term is a laudable one and the missionaries are undoubtedly right in their main attitude. They are here to teach Christianity and only that. But what will Christianity teach? Here as elsewhere it will teach morality, cleanness, honesty, patriotism. It will make a man discontented with bad moral surroundings as well as bad sanitary surroundings and he can no more refrain from trying to correct the evils that surround him than he can stop breathing. The early Church took the same attitude about politics that this resolution implies, but the growing force of Christianity finally, and without bloodshed, revolutionized society and put a Christian Emperor on the throne of Rome. Was this politics? Not exactly. It was something -larger than politics and included it.

To say that the evangelization of Korea, which is going on today with startling rapidity, has no political significance would be to belie history. And right here we touch the whole question of missions in China, Japan, India, Persia, Siam and everywhere else. Politics, at the bottom, is made up of moral forces and Christianity is nothing if it be not a moral force. ln order to keep missions from affecting politics you must drive every missionary and every Bible and tract and suggestion of Christianity out of the country. If you don’t want the bread to rise you must not let any yeast get into it. This whole effort to prevent Christian missionaries from having political significance while still allowing them to teach Christianity is as futile and illogical as it would be for any missionary to claim the ability to keep himself and his work out of politics. You can keep the Church and the State separate but you cannot keep morality and cleanliness and honesty and justice and patriotism [365] and the other qualities which are heightened if not actually caused by Christianity—you cannot keep these things and the State separate. No government was ever more despotic than that of the Caesars and yet even there it was proved that the State is the aggregate of individual wills, and the despotism of that line went down before the silent progress of Christianity as surely as the revolving year turns winter to summer.

If it were a question merely of missionaries keeping out of law cases into which Korean Christians may be drawn it would he easy of solution but the matter is far more complicated than this. Questions of morals come in and the missionary has to give his advice. Imagine for instance that Korean Christians are ordered by the Japanese to work on the railway on Sunday and the missionary is asked for his opinion. He can give but one answer and that is to refuse at all hazards. No missionary would dare to withhold his advice and he dare advise nothing less than this, but here he becomes mixed up in “‘politics” by advising resistance, though passive resistance only, to Japanese authority. In some cases the missionary is in duty bound to interfere, even when his advice is not sought; as in the cases cited in our last issue, where Japanese public women were quartered upon Christian homes in the interior.

But there is another aspect of the question. What is the missionary to do when his own personal rights or the rights of his employers are threatened? Suppose a Japanese comes and drives stakes around a part of the missionary’s property, what is he to do about. it? Why, just what has been done in half a score of cases already, take it to his Consul for adjustment. It always gets adjusted in the long run, for the Japanese authorities know that the missionary will claim no more than his legal rights and to refuse to rectify the matter would make a public scandal. The missionary gets his rights because he has behind him a government that has to be reckoned with. But the Korean who has no one to back him has his land or his house taken away from him without any hope of redress or indemnity. If he be [366] a Christian he comes to the missionary for advice. The missionary says it is a matter he cannot have anything to do with personally and the Korean goes sorrowfully away wondering who is to help him. If the missionary were to use his influence to the full and get the Korean out of trouble there would be ten thousand others flocking to the church for the purpose of securing such aid. This is why the missionary has to keep his hands off such cases. Scores of Koreans have appealed to us to help them secure justice and in every case where help has been attempted we have made it perfectly clear that we would as willingly help a heathen Korean as a Christian one in this matter of getting justice. To make a distinction would be to do a great injustice and injury to the Christian church.

In closing we would like to say that it must not be inferred from the passing of this resolution that the Christian people of Korea are not in full sympathy with the main object of this magazine for we know to a certainty that such is not the case. We have received too many words and letters of encouragement and good cheer to be at all in doubt on that point.

**Tax Collection in Korea.**

The new Japanese regime proposes to effect a radical change in the method of collecting taxes throughout the country. There can be no manner of doubt that a change of some kind is greatly needed. In this paper we propose to give the subject as thorough and critical a review as we can, dealing with it from various points of view and attempting to give our readers a comprehensive survey of the whole subject. It cannot be done in a few paragraphs and we crave the patience of the reader if he finds that it is long: We consider this matter one of great importance, both for the Korean people and as illustrating what Japan is doing and is capable of doing [367] in this peninsula. What we say may be susceptible of unfavorable criticism and we shall welcome any such criticism and give it space in these pages. We wish to illustrate every phase of this and every other question in regard to this unfortunate people.

At the outset we waive, for the purposes of discussion; the fact that the presence of Japan in Korea today ‘is internationally illegal, that she has no more moral right here in her present capacity than Germany would have in Denmark or than the United States would have in Canada. We waive also the fact that according to the so-called agreement of last November the Japanese have no right to assume control of all internal matters in Korea. Whether such assumption is a good thing in certain ways or not, it is illegal and a distinct usurpation. We waive these facts for the moment and for the sake of the argument acknowledge the absolute de facto control of every function of the Korean Government by Japan. For the time being, at least, Japan can work her will in Korea. Such being the case, the point under discussion is whether the present work of tax reform is calculated to work out the best results for Korea. To discuss it intelligently we must first go back and inquire what the method has been heretofore and then compare it with the proposed method.

From the most ancient times the collection of taxes has been in the hands of local prefects who have always carried out the work through the agency bf a special class of men called ajuns. As there are approximately 80,000 square miles in the Empire and about three hundred and fifty prefectures it follows that each prefect covers an average area of 228 square miles. and as the population may be roughly estimated at 12,000,000, each prefect has under his care an average of a little less than 35,000 people. This population has always been very largely agricultural, and as the land tax has always provided nine tenths of the revenue of the country it can be seen that the great bulk of the work of running the government has devolved upon the prefects and that from the practical point of view they and the ajuns [368] have done more to keep things going than all other officials combined.

The ajuns are different from all other Korean officials in that they are an hereditary class and have the most substantial local standing throughout the prefectures. The prefects are birds of passage but the ajuns are permanent. They are the esquires, so to speak, not exactly country gentlemen but generally solid men of affairs, intimately acquainted with the people and all their circumstances. They are the best read and the most intelligent and widely informed men in the country. It is to them that the people instinctively look for help and for suggestion. In some instances they are horribly corrupt and fleece the people to the limit of endurance but this is the exception rather than the rule. There is no doubt that in every prefecture in the land the people have had to pay much more than the nominally legal rate of taxation but the reason is that neither the prefects nor the ajuns have ever received from the government a living wage. Today the ajuns receive four yen a month, on which pittance they are supposed to support their families. This is less than half what it is possible for them to live on. It is the. same thing with the prefects, they have always been underpaid. This is true also in China, and must be taken into account when we begin to find fault with the so-called squeezing of the people. But these ajuns live right among the people and cannot get away, and if they go too far in indirection they know that the people have that last court of appeal, mob law, and many an ajun has been made to feel the heavy hand of popular condemnation. There is an average of at least ten ajuns in each district, or something over 3,500 in the whole country. Say what we may, these men .have more local influence in every line than do any other class of people. It may not be an ideal state of things but such is the fact. It is necessary to impress this important point, because it will help to show the nature and extent of the change which the Japanese have so lightly inaugurated. It is now settled that thirty-six new.ly appointed tax [369] collectors are to be given the complete management of the business of collecting and transmitting the taxes of the country. Under them there are 142 assistants or clerks or deputies who will assist in the work. From the statistics of area and population which we have already given it is susceptible of mathematical proof that each of these thirty-six collectors will have under him an average of about 300,000 people scattered over an area of about 2,000 square miles. Each collector will have under him four deputies or clerks. The overwhelming difficulties under which such a system will work may be easily summarized.

(1) The land tax produces almost the whole revenue of the country. This money comes from the sale of the annual crop which is harvested largely in the autumn by people who, as a rule, make a bare subsistence and who by necessity have become past masters of the art of concealing everything that might tempt the cupidity of those who are stronger than themselves. The result is that it has always been found necessary to collect the tax immediately after harvest. If there is delay the difficulty of collection will be enormously increased. At this time all the 3,600 ajuns of the country are kept as busy as bees seeing that the money is forthcoming, watching the people as a cat watches a mouse to see that the people do not evade the law. Of course the prefects could seize the land of any person who refused to pay but if this is done to any great extent trouble is likely to brew. The money must be collected at a time when the people have no excuse for not paying. This necessity is the reason why the number of tax collectors in each district is proportionately large. Each prefecture is divided into a large number of districts and the collection of the taxes in each district is in charge of an under official called a *sa-ryung*, Each district is again subdivided into villages or neighborhoods each in charge of a *so-im*. These last are the ones that come most closely in contact with the people. They hand over the tax money to the *sa-ryung* who pass it on to the ajuns and they in turn account to the prefect. This minute detail [370] seems cumbersome to us but there can be no doubt that under the circumstances a smaller number would find it impossible to collect the revenue. From this it seems quite evident that these new tax collectors will have to depend entirely upon the old machinery. Thirty-six Collectors with 142 deputies can do nothing more than have general supervision of the work and this supervision will be just as much more indefinite and subject to error than the old system as the new collectors a re less in number than the old time prefects. The question now arises whether the new regime will not be compelled to rely upon the present ajuns, sa-ryung and so-im: just as the prefects have relied upon them in the past. There can be but one answer to this, and that answer is Yes. The reason for this lies at the very root of the Korean social system, To collect taxes in Korea it is necessary for the immediate collectors to know the people intimately, to understand their individual circumstances and be able to detect any attempt to overreach the government. At the same time he must be able to see when, because of unforeseen circumstances or accidents, particular individuals are really unable. to pay promptly and to extend a certain degree of leniency as to the time of payment. If the work is done by those who do not know the people intimately some hard and fast rule will be necessary. Any degree of discrimination between individual cases would at once throw the whole machinery into confusion and great hardship and injustice would inevitably result.

Taking it as settled, then, that in the end the new collectors will have to depend upon the same instruments as of old, the important question arises whether either the people or the government will be benefitted by the change, The answer to this lies. in a brief consideration of the need of any change. Where does the trouble lie that the Japanese administration should suggest a change? We reply that the only difficulty about the taxes in the country is that the people have never been told definitely by the central government exactly what they must pay each year. It is understood in a general way that the legal tax is so many dollars a kyul but no [371] guarantee has ever been given the people that much more than this will not be exacted in the form of special imposts. In some cases these special taxes have been ordered from Seoul but more often they emanate from the cupidity of the prefects and the ajuns. But these are the very men upon whom the new collectors will have to depend. The ajuns have never been able to live on their salaries and the same practices as of old will have to be resorted to in order to make ends meet. It is certain that in connection with the new regime the government will have to give the people a carefully prepared schedule of taxation and rigidly adhere to it if the desire of the Japanese is that the people may benefit by the change. But if such a schedule were. made out and the people everywhere were clearly told that any attempt on the part of any official to collect more would be the signal for his immediate dismissal and punishment there would be no need of a new regime. The salaries of the prefects and ajuns could be raised to a point where cupidity would have no valid excuse for extortion and then the people could be assured that there would be no intermediate and vexatious imposts. But we have been told by some who are personally intimate with conditions in the country that even then the ajuns would oppress the people and the latter would not dare to report them to the higher authorities. This may be so but what is there about the new plan to prevent the very same thing? Any means for that end would apply equally well to the old system. It is said the prefects are corrupt and are only intent upon feathering their own nests. But what guarantee is there that the new men will not do the same, and if not why could not the same kind of men be appointed as prefects? And here we come to the second consideration.

(2) What is the quality of the men that have been appointed to these thirty-six collectorships? One would think, from the importance of their work that great care would be exercised in their selection. That only those would be chosen who have had large experience in prefectural work and who know the ropes. We have made a careful examination of the list of appointees and we [312] find that out of thirty-six men there are seven and possibly eight who are reasonably efficient. There are about the same number more who are doubtful, as they have never shown what they can do, and the remainder, more than half of the whole, are men who could scarcely hope to hold down a prefectural job to say nothing of exercising control of the collection of taxes in ten prefectures. Many of them are young fellows from twenty-five to thirty years old with no experience whatever and who can be easily manipulated by their underlings in whatever position they are put. It would be silly to hope for any good results from such material. The probability is that they will not be able to do the work nearly as well as the prefects have done it heretofore.

(3) Another consideration that must weigh heavily in the balance is this; if the new men could depend upon the hearty and loyal cooperation of the prefects and ajuns in the various districts, even such men could perhaps do something effective but what is the truth of the case? Every prefect and every ajun will be from the first bitterly opposed to the new tax collectors. In some. places the ajun have already declared that they will do the new deputies physical injury if they come in contact with them. No reasonable man can suppose that the collectors will get anything but obstruction and hatred from the officials who are being superseded in this work. The ajun will not put at the service of the new commission any more of their intimate knowledge of local conditions than they are absolutely compelled to do. They have it in their power to put so many impalpable obstructions in the way that the new collectors will be glad to throw up the job, and we doubt very much whether this will not be the upshot of the matter. People who have been superseded are never eager to help those who have taken their places, and this is the way the prefects look at the matter, and the ajuns take their cue from the prefects.

(4) It is worth while asking what the cost of this new system will be. These collectors, carrying a heavy weight of responsibility, will naturally receive high salaries. [373] If they do not get this legitimately they will get it some other way. They are not going to do high work for low pay. The same is true of the deputies. The whole commission will be an added expenditure, for the fact that these men relieve the prefects of the major part of their work will not make it possible to lower the salaries of the prefects. What benefit is the government to receive from this added expenditure? From the considerations already mentioned we believe there will be little if any. If it is urged that checks can be put upon indirection we reply that the very same checks might as easily be put on the old method. In this new scheme the checks will simply have to be put upon a larger number of individuals. It is already said that, beginning with next February, the taxes are to be collected in the new currency. Just what this means we do not know. If it means that in place of one old nickel one new one will be demanded it follows that the tax will be doubled. If it means that the people are to pay the same value but in the new coinage nothing more absurd could be proposed for the new coins are not found to any extent in the interior and the people might as well be asked to pay in English sovereigns or Indian rupees.

Now these are the main reasons why we think a mistake has been made. It may be that the Japanese financial authorities mean to do the right thing, but, as in the Nagamori scheme and others, we do not think they have examined into the conditions sufficiently or have rightly gauged the difficulties to be met. They have underrated the conservative tendency of the people, the opposition of the men who are to be superseded, the difficulties of the work generally. If it be said that this criticism is merely destructive, it will be easy to show the way in which the collection of taxes could be made efficient and proper by the Japanese without going to all this trouble and without having the whole country about their ears. All that would be needed is to give the people a printed list of every tax that they will be called on to pay and make it a criminal offense for anyone to exact a single cash more. Make the issuance of special lists by [374] governors or prefects a felony and pass a law that any man who is made to pay a cent more than his legal tax shall collect double the amount from the man who has taken the money. Even then there would be indirection but if courts of law are to be established any man who dares to stand-up against being defrauded can bring the offender to justice. We have inquired carefully from foreigners living in the interior and who almost daily come in contact with Koreans who have been compelled to pay outrageous special taxes and it is their opinion that such a measure as we have here outlined would do away with nine tenths of the trouble.

But one other thing is needed: The prefects and other officers should be paid a living wage or else the squeezing system will remain as it has always been, the only way to keep from starvation on the part of the ajuns sa-ryung and other petty officials in be country. It would not be difficult to estimate what that living wage must be. Even with the new system this would be equally necessary in order to prevent over-taxation.

If we look at the matter in a more general way we shall see that before the best results can be obtained the oriental idea that public office is the only road to wealth must be done away and in its place must come the more rational western idea that public service is desirable only for one of two reasons: first the desire to serve the state and make an honorable name or secondly to obtain a position which will bring a good living wage and will be permanent so long as the work is well done. We do not say that these ideals are always followed in the west but they are recognized as being the usual motives in seeking public service. The contempt with which the public at large looks upon the use of office for illegitimate gain is evidence enough that such use is the exception rather than the rule. Nothing but education and Christianity combined will ever bring this ideal home to the Korean people or to any people; and the present enthusiasm along both these lines in Korea today form the silver lining to the cloud which envelops her. [375]

Later :-In what we have written above it is intimated that the ajuns will doubtless be utilized in the collection of taxes. We based this surmise on the utter impossibility of carrying out the work without them; but later advices indicate that they are not to be used at all. If so we are prepared to predict that the new system will prove an insupportable burden upon the common people. What will happen has already been foreshadowed in the action of the servants of one prefecture. Feeling sure that they were to be ignored by the new commission and that their means of livelihood was to be taken away they determined to do all that was in their power to hinder the operation of the new commission.

 They therefore destroyed all the records of the taxes and every means of discovering the amounts that different persons are accustomed to paying as taxes. This will throw an enormous burden on the shoulders of the commission, a burden that will crush them to the earth. The men who have been displaced have never been convicted as a body of indirection. It is true that many of them have probably oppressed the people, but to condemn them in toto and replace them with men who know nothing about the work to be done and who give no better promise of square dealing than they themselves, is not calculated to please the country officials or make them ready to aid in the new work.

There is one thing in this connection that should be barred against. As these commissioners go about their work accompanied by Japanese auditors or accountants there will be, as we have pointed out, thousands of cases where land will be seized and sold to pay taxes. Who will there be to buy this land and what will the price be? The Japanese authorities should be on the lookout for a class of men who might take advantage of the Korean farmer and buy up his land for a song under the grim necessity of tax payment. We do not say there will be such a class but we would suggest in the most pointed manner that the government should look to it that there be no sharks swimming about with this intent. Our pessimism may be unwarranted and if so, if the [376] danger to the safety and welfare of the Koreans which this move threatens, is warded off and comes to naught, no one will rejoice more than we.

**Koreans in America.**

The receipt of several copies of a Korean newspaper published in Oakland, California, by Koreans brings vividly before us the whole question of Koreans in that country and we are sure that the readers of this magazine will be glad to see a short account of what Korean enterprise is doing on the other side of the world.

At 177 West l2th St. Oakland, may be found The Korean Union Club which has an enrolled membership of about 700 and a regular attendance of something like 250 Koreans. Almost all these men are Christians and are regular attendants at some one of the churches of that city. It was in November of last year, about the time when Japan made her descent upon Korea, that this club deemed that the time was ripe for the publication of a paper in Korean which should bind together the scattered Koreans on the Pacific coast and prove a means of intercommunication between them. It was not thought that the number of subscribers would be enough to run the paper on the subscription price alone but many Koreans had enough public spirit and enterprise to put their hands in their pockets and contribute generously for the support of the journal until it could stand alone. There was no Korean or Chinese type available and so for the present the paper is being printed by use of one or other of the many duplicating devices in vogue in America. It is clearly printed on good paper and looks as if it had been written directly on the paper with a brush pen. Not only did Koreans in America contribute but a number of Koreans at home gave money to help set on foot this worthy enterprise. The people who print the paper are also interested in the matter of [377] school books to be translated from English into Korean for use among those who cannot speak or read English.

To give an idea of what the scope of the paper is we will quote the contents of a single number, the one issued on September 19th, 1906. It first sets forth the fact that it is a weekly sheet of four pages, price five cents a copy or $1.25 a year. The rates of advertising are 75 cents for four lines per issue.

The editorial in this number urges the importance of education and points out how much broader is a man’s outlook and opportunity for remunerative employment if he has an education .

The news columns contain a report of an address made. at Berkeley by a missionary of seven-teen years standing in Kyoto who gave the Japanese great credit for enterprise and push but said they were not prepared either by temperament or training for the ambitious role they wish to play in Korea and China. Next comes comment upon the evidence of working at cross-purposes between the civil and military authorities in Korea which must inevitably add enormously to the difficulty of solving the problem which Japan has set herself here. Next comes a curious story of a bear hunt in the Rockies in which an American shot a grizzly bear. The animal in its death throes scratched the ground so deeply as to uncover a ledge of stone which was discovered to be a rich seam of coal. Next comes a statement of the strengthening of the American fleet in Far Eastern waters. Bishop Harris on his return to America reported that Marquis Ito is doing good work in Korea but the editor adds that the Bishop’s well known leaning toward the Japanese has blinded him to some of the facts of the case and rendered it impossible for him to deliver an unbiased judgment of the situation.

Next we find a paragraph which shows the Koreans have come up against the medical fake in America. It speaks of a man who claims to be able to make short men tall and fat men lean and lean men fat and to work all sorts of wonders.

An account is given of a Japanese in Berkeley who [378] criminally assaulted a little American girl five years old and was arrested and lodged in jail. A word or two is spoken about the trouble caused by the workmen in America who resent Japanese competition, and the fact is noted that the public shows in unmistakable ways its aversion to the Japanese.

It quotes the New York Times in its strong advocacy of preventing the carrying-trade of the Pacific from falling into the hands of the Japanese. It gives a short account of the Cuban matter. It mentions the work of two good Koreans through whose efforts 200 Koreans in Hawaii have recently come into the Christian churches there.

It dwells upon the matter of a new constitution for China and affirms that India is hoping for independence!

It recounts the troubles of the Jews in Poland. It notes with satisfaction that a Korean is writing in his own tongue a history of the Presidents of the United States. It gives the minutes of one of the Korean Club meetings and dwells at length upon the curious coincidence of bamboo growing through the floor of Min Young-whan’s house in Seoul. Mention is made of a night school which Americans have kindly consented to start for Koreans in Oakland, and gives a long list of opportunities for work that Koreans can grasp. These include the gathering of the orange and grape crops, and positions as cooks, laundry-men, gardeners, etc., etc.

This commendable list of contents shows that the paper is wide awake and energetic and augurs well for the steady and rapid enlightenment of the Koreans who have gone to America. We wish this .journalistic venture all success.

**The Korean Prefecture.**

In different lands we find different units of government, In Switzerland it is the Canton, in England it is the [379] County or Shire, in America it is the State. We say of an Englishman that he is a Yorkshireman or a Devonshire man or a Cornishman as the case may be. Of an American we say he is a New Yorker or a Vermonter or a Virginian or a Californian. These names in themselves indicate the mental attitude of the public and their unconscious or traditional division of the land. Sometimes the names do not follow present geographical or administrative divisions but have been handed down from ancient times and have survived all political redistributions. Thus we have the solecisms “down east” and “down south” one arising from the fact that the watershed was toward the East the other that on the map the top is toward the North and the South at the bottom.

In Korea the popularly recognized unit is not the province but the prefecture, or township, as we would call it in America. It would hardly correspond to a county in an American State for the Korean prefecture averages only about sixteen miles square. In Korea they say of a man that he is a Song-do man, a Chin-ju man, a Kang-gye man, etc. In describing him particularly he is not spoken of by the name of his province. It sometimes happens that in an indefinite way a man is called a Yung-nam man which means a man who lives south of the Bird Pass or Cho-ryung. This in a general way would indicate that he lives in Kyung-sang Province. If he is from Chulla Province he may be spoken of as such. If he is from Chung-chong Province he will probably be called a Chung-chongDo yangban, because so many gentlemen live there. If he is from Ham-Kyung Province the chances are he will be called a Ham-gyungdo nom or “fellow,” since few if any officials are supposed to come from that section. This is a libel which has survived from the ancient times when the northeast was inhabited by a savage race. A Pyeng-an man will perhaps be called a Pyeng-an-do *Chong-Ja* or “tribe.” This is also a relic of long ago and indicates that the center of Korean civilization was in the south. A Whang-hai man will perhaps be called a Whang-chi, the chi [380] corresponding to our ending -ite as found in such words as Jerseyite and has a slightly facetious flavor. The same may be said of the term Pyeng-an-do *Chong-Ja*. Such terms are in common use, but if you .ask particularly about a man the name of his prefecture will be given, for that means the seat of his particular family. A man may be born in Seoul and never once see the family country seat and yet he will be called a native of that distant place. There is something of the flavor of feudalism about it all. There is a Korean geographical gazetteer which tells the country seat of all the principal families in Korea. There are exactly 494 family names in this country but this does not mean that there are only this number of families. There are, for instance, many Yi families. But it is definitely known in which prefecture each family has its seat.

It is for this reason that the people are very proud of their respective prefectures. The names of the people are so intimately connected with the names of the prefectures that to change the name of the latter is a great personal grievance to every man living there; just as the Carrolls of Carrollton would doubtless object if the name of the place were changed. Not only so but as the family seats are scattered about the prefecture in the various villages and hamlets the dismemberment of the prefecture and the attachment of a part of it to some other prefecture for administrative purposes forms a valid grievance in the eyes of the people.

As a rule the people have greater loyalty to their town than to the country as a whole. This is due to ignorance in large part. The lack of education and of the broadening influence of general culture intensify the provincialism of the people. In America or Europe a man can move from one town to another and settle there without any considerable inconvenience but for a Korean to do so would be as much of a change as for a European to pack up and emigrate to America. As like as not he would be looked upon by the inhabitants of his newly chosen place of abode as a fugitive from justice or as a man who has been so unpopular in his native place that [381] the people would not endure him longer. It would take years to live down such a prejudice.

All this is prefatory to what we have to say about the recent changes which have been made. It will be remembered that some months ago the government, doubtless under instruction from the Japanese, determined to reconstruct the whole prefectural system and join together several prefectures, thus lowering the total number from about 345 to something like 140. But no sooner was the scheme stated than the unforeseen difficulties in the way began to pile up so high that, like the Nagamori scheme, it had to be abandoned in toto. The benefits to be derived from the change were so problematic and the obstacles were so definite that the matter ended in a fiasco. But the new masters of Korea yearn for changes. Things must be overturned irrespective of their utility. The Japanese reform plan is largely iconoclastic and unless there is a universal overhauling of institutions they will. not be satisfied. So a substitute motion has been put, namely that the prefectures should be so far disintegrated as to allow them to be made more uniform in shape and area. It is proposed to lop off this projection and that corner and add them to contiguous prefectures. It is claimed that it will thus be easier to administer the government of the prefectures. But this is entirely problematic as yet. In one way it may simplify matters but in another and more important way it will complicate them. Thousands of people will be transferred’ from one jurisdiction to another and the amount of readjustment required in this process is not easily understood by the foreigner be he European or Japanese. Bear in mind that the ajuns in the country have everything under their eye, that all sorts of social institutions are familiarly known and critically scrutinized by these social leaders, that such intimate acquaintance is necessary to the successful adjudication of law cases where evidence is generally more a matter of public knowledge than of specific information. Imagine then a section of a prefecture detached from its old connections, taken out of the [382] hands of the men who have managed its affairs and whose fathers and grandfathers for hundreds of years back have held the same position and put into the hands of men of a neighboring and, in many cases, rival prefecture. Their new neighbors look upon them as newcomers and interlopers and it will take decades for the people thus transferred to gain a position where they will have as much influence in the affairs of the prefecture as they had before. The new ajuns, unused to the study of new peoples and new conditions, will be unable for a long time to adjust themselves to the new state of things. There will inevitably be discontent and a considerable degree of suffering before things will get to running smoothly again. . . Look how the would-be reformers leap from one extreme to the opposite one. In one breath they want to double or triple the work. of the prefect by throwing several districts together and with the next breath they sigh for a change which will relieve the present prefects of part of the burden of administration by equalizing the area of the prefectures. Both are wild-cat schemes and have no basis in common sense. Let the prefectures alone and begin the work by improving the quality of the men rather than the shape of the prefectures, The troubles of Korea today can be overcome only by a moral revolution, not a physical one. You cannot make it easy for a left handed man to use a pair of shears by taking the shears apart and putting them together differently. You must teach the man to use his right hand. So in Korea no gerrymandering of the prefectures will be of any use unless the quality of° the men be raised to a higher point of efficiency. The Japanese do not seem to realise this, as the recent appointments to tax collectorships show. We urge not the sudden change of methods of administration but a cleaning of the present methods, otherwise we shall see not only the same indirection as heretofore but added to it the confusion incident to sudden and violent attempts at social readjustment.

O Seung-Keun. [383]

**Swift Retribution.**

We are in receipt of certain details connected with one of the worst atrocities ever perpetrated in Korea by a Japanese. It occurred near the town of Mokpo and is thoroughly authenticated. A young Japanese about twenty-two years old was determined to secure possession of the house of a Korean in one of the villages near the port. We are not told whether he had secured any lien on the property or had put the owner under any sort of monetary obligation to himself but, be that as it may, he went to the man’s house a few days ago and demanded possession of the property without process of law. The owner, a man about fifty years of age, refused to give up the house. The young Japanese thereupon seized the Korean and bound him. He tied a heavy stick across his shoulders and attached a weight to each end of the stick and then hung him to the roof-tree of his own house in a position of the most exquisite torture that was calculated to kill him by inches. This is what happened for after a few hours of intense agony the man expired. This may have frightened the Japanese, for he made off, but the murdered man’s son returning home soon after, armed himself with a knife and started in pursuit. He overtook the Japanese at a riverside. The Japanese plunged in and swam across. The Korean carrying the knife in his teeth followed without an instant’s hesitation. Near the other side of the stream he caught the murderer and bound him. Others of the villagers hurried up and they dragged the Japanese back to the scene of his revolting crime. There they killed him and taking out his heart and liver sacrificed them to the spirit of the murdered Korean.

There are two or three things to note in connection with this crime and the summary punishment. In the first place the murder of a father is in the eyes of the son a crime that demands sure punishment. In Korea the whole social system is built on the reverence [384] of parents by their children and if the son had not sought to avenge the murder as speedily as possible he would have been set down as a greater criminal than the murderer. Whatever the result might be to himself he was in duty bound both by the tenets of his own religion and by the unwritten law of his social environment to avenge his father’s death.

In the second place the murderer was not a Korean. lf he had been, the law would have upheld the punishment meted out to him. It would not have been necessary to carry out the execution instantly for the law would have done it in any case, without fail. But with a Japanese the case was different. The Korean knew, as all Koreans know and as has been demonstrated more than once, that to have appealed to the Japanese authorities would not have secured the extreme penalty of the law. The Japanese would have been locked up for a time perhaps and probably deported back to Japan but no one conversant with the history of this present occupation will believe for a moment that strict justice would have been done. Here was a second and a very strong motive . In the third place it must be noted that the act of vengeance was carried out in a sense deliberately. The criminal was not cut down and killed at the point where he was caught but he was brought back to. the spot where he had. committed the crime and, in the presence of the object of his crime was given all the hearing that was necessary. He was convicted by the very sight of his victim. Sentence was carried out there and then and all the atonement that could be made, in the Koreans’ eyes, was there made by sacrificing his vitals to appease the spirit of the murdered man. There was a certain judicial method in it in spite of its promptness.

Now we are far from saying that this is the civilized way of doing things, but no one will deny that justice was done, albeit the hand was rough; and under the circumstances it was the only way in which justice could have been secured.

Another fact lies right on the surface and cannot be [385] passed without remark. If the Japanese regime were what it ought to be and what its apologists claim it to be this Japanese would never have allowed the underlying savagery of his nature to get the upper hand. The whole story shows he was a coward, and if he had known that Japanese law would grip him and inflict the ultimate penalty he would have thought twice before exhausting his ingenuity in torturing his victim to death. He knew be was safe from capital punishment or from any other serious penalty. Everything he had heard or seen confirmed him in the conviction that he would be screened and gotten off, or if worse came to worst he could only be deported. He never would have committed this crime in Japan against one of his own countrymen. He had been led to think that against a Korean the crime would be condoned or that if he could get among his own countrymen he could hide and defy prosecution. He knew that no Japanese court would take the evidence of a Korean to the extent of pronouncing the sentence of death. Now we do not hesitate to say that the administration is responsible for the condition of things which rendered this crime possible. They cannot hide behind the excuse that so many Japanese came that it was impossible to hold them in check, for the Japanese government could have prevented their coming faster than the legal machinery for their management was introduced. No one now doubts that Japan wanted a large number of her people to come here and still wants them to come, irrespective of her power to hold them in check.

There is still one more deduction to be made. When the Koreans become desperate, as they are fast doing, no fear of punishment will prevent their attempting reprisals. Take that particular village, for instance. They have tasted blood. They have gotten even with one of the hated race, and we feel sure that Japanese renegades will give it a wide berth for some time to come. If Koreans begin reprisals some of them will be killed, but others will not, and for every one that escapes the consequences there will be a hundred who will want to [386] follow his example. Every Korean who hears of this case before us will applaud it and wish he had been there to help.

In 1592 the Japanese swept through Korea unretarded and unchecked, but the time came when even the weak Koreans turned on them and in the end made them wish they had never come. Have the Japanese estimated what it would mean if the Koreans as a people, as a whole, should turn and hurl themselves at the throats of the people who claim this country as the spoil of war? Let us imagine Japan engaged in a great war at some other point of the compass. Does she suppose the Korean people, armed or unarmed, would let the opportunity pass unimproved ? We fear not.

A Chequered Career.

There is a Korean official now lying in prison in the hands of the law and his fate will be either death or imprisonment for life or perpetual banishment. The Korean people look upon this man’s downfall as a judgment from Heaven. His name is Yi Yu-in and we will here trace his career in brief to show how he came to rise and to fall.

He was born and reared in Kyung-sang Province in the town of Ye-chun. and lived there until he was about thirty years old and being of good family was carefully educated in the conventional manner. He spent much time in practicing that form of divination which consists in interpreting fortuitous combinations of Chinese characters. These polite occupations left him no time to acquire any means of earning a livelihood, with the result that when he arrived at the age of thirty he found himself penniless.

Like so many others who are obliged to live by their wits he gravitated toward Seoul and when he arrived he was reduced to such extremities that he was compelled to get odd shoes from people who wore out one shoe [387] faster than the other. He lodged in a little room in an outhouse of an acquaintance in the Northern part of Seoul and he ate here there and wherever anyone would invite him to a meal.

One day as he was sitting in his room he saw a face at the window of an adjoining house. It was the face of a young and beautiful woman who had been the concubine of an official but for some reason had been discarded. He picked up a brush pen and wrote a poem about the pretty face and repeated it aloud in tones calculated to reach the ear of the woman. She happened to be something of a judge of poetry and thought this production was rather above the average. The next day he wrote another one still better and after the third attempt he received an invitation to visit the neighboring house where he was entertained and where be told the story of his misfortunes. He told it to a sympathetic ear with the result that he was appropriated in full and became the head of the household with the woman for his wife. She had discovered his skill at juggling with Chinese characters and one day she put him to the test. A certain man had run away and someone who was deeply interested in the movements of the fugitive was anxious to find out when, if ever, he would come back. The matter was laid before Mr. Yi and after manipulating the characters he declared where the man was at that moment and when he would come back. As chance would have it he did come back, and this settled the question as to Mr. Yi’s capacity. It was not long before the fame of his performance reached the palace and the late Queen had him come to court where his native cleverness won him a speedy rise to rank and wealth. From one step to another he ascended till at last he obtained the grade of p’an-sŭ, than which there is no higher, short of royalty itself. If he had left well enough alone he might have retained his high position but he trusted too implicitly to his lucky star or rather he began to assist his lucky star in the work of pushing himself to the very top of the top. He wanted to be the very froth upon the surface. His opportunity seemed to have come when the [388] agitation against Yi Chun-yong the grandson of the Tai-wun-kun came up. After that young man had gone to Japan he was still pursued by the suspicion and ill-will of the Min faction and this Yi Yu-in thought to make his own position solid by incriminating some one on the ground of complicity in a traitorous plot. He decided upon a certain man in Kyung-sang Province, the wealthiest of the many and prosperous descendants of the great scholar and statesman Toi-ge. He charged this man with having, by the use of the wealth of his clan, planned and laid up provisions and arms for a rebellion in favor of Yi Chun-yong. The whole thing was absolutely false from beginning to end, and when the incriminated man was brought up to Seoul as a felon and faced with this monstrous charge he denied it up and down and persisted in the denial in spite of all the pressure that could be brought to bear upon him .

At last the son of the accused man boldly faced the powerful minister and began questioning him as to the sources of his information. This seems to have given the other officials an opening which they had doubtless been long looking for and they called upon him to account for the accusation he had made. He had no evidence to present and he was convicted of having made a false accusation. According to law he could be dealt with in the same manner as if he were guilty of the crime which he charged the other man with having committed. The authorities did not go to this extremity but the man is condemned to life long banishment at the very least, and he may be executed.

All this is one more added to the long list of examples which prove that if a Korean official, having attained to the highest rank tries to climb still higher by trampling upon others, he is sure to reap the reward of hatred which he deserves. Other cases in recent years were those of Kim Yung-jun, Kim Hong-nyuk and Yi Yong-ik, the latter of whom escaped the hatred of his enemies only by leaning upon a foreign power. [389]

Editorial Comment.

DOUGLAS STORY ON KOREA

Mr. Douglas Story, a special correspondent of the London Tribune, takes up in the September 4 issue of that paper the statements of the Times correspondent in Tokio relative to the events of one year ago in Seoul.

He was in Seoul at the time and was in close touch with the palace officials. No one has questioned his veracity or the unique opportunity he had to study the situation. It was great good luck for Korea to have him here as he was to give the world an unvarnished and unlacquered tale of what actually occurred. He makes six definite and categorical statements for the truth of which he vouches.

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(1) His Majesty the Emperor of Korea did not sign nor agree to the treaty signed by Mr. Hyashi and Pak Che-sun on November 17th 1905.

(2) His Majesty objects to the details of the treaty as published through the tongues of Japan.

(3) His Majesty proclaimed the sovereignty of Korea and denies that he has by any act made that sovereignty over to any foreign power.

(4) Under the terms of the treaty as published by Japan, the only terms. referred to concern the management of Korea’s external affairs with foreign powers. Japan’s assumption of control of Korean internal affairs never was authorized by His Majesty, the Emperor of Korea.

(5) His Majesty never consented to the appointment of a Resident General from Japan. nor has he conceived the possibility of the appointment of a Japanese who should exercise imperial powers in Korea.

(6) His Majesty invites the Great Powers to exercise a joint protectorate over Korea for a period not exceeding five years with respect to the control of Korean foreign affairs. .

Mr. Story goes on to give details of the method by [390] which he secured authentic documents setting forth these facts, and he declares that certified copies of the same lie at Seoul today. There never was a more straight-forward and unequivocal account. It would stand before any unbiased jury. It is so conclusive as to the main facts of the events described that the only way it can be attacked is by saying that Mr. Story received a forged document with seal of the Emperor fraudulently affixed. But Mr. Story was doubtless aware of the facts through other channels as well. They were well known in Seoul within twenty-four hours. It seems most strange that anyone who knows anything about Eastern court life would suppose that such a thing could be kept secret and the Editor of the Japan Mail by hanging to the exploded theory that the document forced on Korea that night is internationally legal is doing it in the face of direct evidence which no intelligent man can deny. But there is other evidence that can be brought to bear to prove the attitude of His Majesty. A few days after the event in question the editor of this magazine, who was in Washington at the time, received a cablegram dictated by His Majesty in which he denounced the document as being null and void because it had been forced upon him by intimidation and under duress. He declared he had never signed it nor given his consent to the signing of it and never would. He instructed the writer to lodge a protest with the Department of State in Washington and take whatever steps were necessary to have the document repudiated by the treaty powers. He further intimated that a joint protectorate would be acceded to if necessary. This cablegram was forwarded immediately after the events in question and before the removal of the American Legation from Seoul. This had nothing whatever to do with the documents put in the hands of Mr. Story and forms independent corroborative testimony if such were needed. We know precisely by what agencies this cablegram was sent and we are as positive that it was authentic as we can be of any event.

Not only so but we have received from men who participated in the events of that night clear and specific [391] accounts of all that occurred. The facts of the case are settled beyond dispute and to attempt to hold the contrary is as senseless as to stick to the theory that the earth is flat and not round. But why does the Japan Mail cling so tenaciously to the exploded theory? Evidently because it can see no moral excuse whereby to condone the forcible seizure of Korea contrary to treaty stipulations. In this the Japan Mail is more squeamish than the Japanese themselves for the latter tacitly admit that Korea was obliged to submit. . \_

But there are many who say it is folly to say anything more about the matter. The thing is done and cannot be undone. Therefore the less said about it the better, There are good reasons for continuing the discussion. The world at large is not yet fully aware of the facts. It is the ignorance of the European and American publics that augurs ill for the future. Someone burns down your house. You make a fuss about it. Your neighbor says, “What’s the use of talking about it? The thing is done and cannot be undone. The less said the better.” You reply that your outcry is for the purpose of warning others to keep watch over their property lest a similar fate should overtake it; and your argument would be unanswerable. The fate of Korea and the means by which it was effected should be held up before the world as a perpetual warning .

But there are other reasons for not dropping the subject. We have no reason to believe the world is coming to an end in the near future and there is probably time for much to happen before that consummation.. Things happen so rapidly in the Far East. the kaleidoscope is turning so fast that the keenest sighted cannot tell what combination of circumstances may tum up tomorrow. The nation will not die. It is too numerous; too virile, too homogeneous to be destroyed speedily even under the blows which Japan is dealing. Let the people cling to their language, to their soil and to the best of their traditions and a century hence will see them still as distinct from the people that oppress them as the Shemitic stock is distinct from the Slavic in Russia. [392]

If one wants to know what Japan is doing to Korea he must not stay about Seoul. He will see only a certain side of it there, and the best side. He must go down into the country where there is no one to note and record what is being done. We commend to the perusal of the reader the account of what has happened in the town of Kwang-ju in Southern Korea during the last week or two.

This place is the capital of the Southern Chul-la Province and the seat of the Governor. The Governor has his official residence and near this are the government offices where the business of the province is done. For some time Japanese police officials and soldiers have occupied the government offices to the exclusion of every thing else and the governor has had to carry on the office work in his residence. But recently a newly appointed Japanese financial agent was sent to that point where he found that the offices were all occupied by Japanese police, soldiers and private citizens. Unless some of these were displaced he could find no lodging in keeping with the dignity of his position, and perhaps it may be added that he did not think it wise to enter upon the question with the military element. The only thing to do was to oust the governor from his residence, at least from part of it. This was done and then the Japanese chief of police feeling, it would seem, that he was entitled to an equal place, proceeded to drive the governor out entirely. The latter protested against this outrage and was compelled to submit only when he saw the Japanese police removing the furniture from his house. At the same time a large number of Japanese soldiers and police crowded into the yard, tacitly suggesting that if force were necessary to accomplish the desired result it would be forthcoming.

The governor of the province was compelled to find lodgment in a little room belonging to one of his clerks. The people were loud in their complaints and refused to do business in the market-place. It looks as if local. trade would be paralyzed. In this case the Japanese perpetrated a wanton and unprovoked insult upon the [393] Governor and upon the whole Korean Government and yet there are those who talk about the Koreans holding back and not cooperating with the Japanese in the “reformation” of Korea. Never was irony more cruel. The Japanese themselves put every obstacle in the way of friendly intercourse. They do not want friendly intercourse. The welfare or success or comfort of the Korean is a matter of utter indifference.

**News Calendar.**

The tennis tournament has come to a close after a very successful contest. The finals in the mixed sets were played off on Saturday the 10th inst resulting in a victory of two straight sets for Miss Gillett and Mr. Lynde Selden against Miss Selden and Mr. Barham. The winners had a handicap of +1/2 30 while the losers were rated at -1/2 30. Handsome prizes given by Mrs. Cockburn were handed to the winners at the end of the contest. In the singles Mr. Barham won in the finals against Mr. Wallace, the latter giving Mr. Barham half a point. The Seoul Union has been a most popular spot during the Autumn tennis season. The membership has increased rapidly and the institution is in a flourishing condition.

A Chess club bas been formed in Seoul with a membership of six.

This is, however, only the beginning. To those benighted souls who say that chess is “too much work” we can only say, learn it and see whether this work is not more fun than most play.

Among the foreign visitors to Seoul during the past month were Mr. and Mrs. James of New York. Mr. James has long been known and honored in New York’s business circles and Mrs. James has won a national reputation as a leader in the struggle against the Mormon interests in the Senate as represented by Senator Reed Smoot. We have reason to believe they made a pretty complete examination of the conditions prevailing in Korea today.

We hear that Mr. and Mrs. Haywood are intending to go to Arizona where it is hoped the climate will help to improve the condition of Mr. Haywood’s broken health. We sincerely trust this can be effected.

Dr. H. N. Allen, the lately retired United States Minister to Korea, has settled in Toledo, Ohio, where he will make his home.

The Agricultural Department in its forestry program is to plant in Seoul under Inwang Mountain and inside the Northwest gate 12,387,000 trees. They will begin next Spring and the work will cover five years. The estimated expense will be Y 15,964. This includes also planting of Kwan-ak Mountain. [394]

The last month has seen the return .to Korea of Rev. Geo. Heber Jones, D. D., after an absence of several years. Dr. Jones is one of the few men who have made a critical study of some of the most important phases of Korean life. He is the Vice-President of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, and his return means among other things, the resuscitation of this useful organization which is not, as some suppose, dead but merely hibernating .

Rev. W. A. Noble. Ph.D. of Pyeng-yang, has just published in America a story based on Korean life. We have not yet seen a copy but we know from those who have seen the manuscript that the public has a rare treat in store. We understand that this novel holds more closely to the distinctively native life than The Vanguard.

Min Byung-sik, the Vice-Minister of Education, has set a good example to Korean officials. Some years ago while governor of South Kyung-sang Province he took a concubine from among the dancing girls. Recently he determined that this sort of thing was not in keeping with the new spirit of the times, so he sent her back to the country after explaining carefully the reasons for his action.

At Cho-chi-wun station on the Seoul-Fusan Railway some Japanese police and gendarmes did noble work in helping the people at the .time of the recent flood. Fearing that there would be a flood these Japanese prepared some boats and at the time of the catastrophe they saved many lives and much property. The Koreans praise them highly and desire to raise a monument in their honor. This is a clear light in a dark place and shows how willing the Koreans are to make friends with the Japanese when such a thing is possible.

The Mayor’s office has paid Y19,883 more for the land taken for military purposes outside the South Gate near Yong-san. This includes the brick kilns operated by the Chinese.

Mr. Cho Pyung-ho, ex-Prime Minister has memorialized the throne recounting the evils which beset the empire and nation at the present time. The Emperor replied that this is true and efforts must be made to remedy these evils.

The native press states that some thirty six Korean young men of means have been ruined both financially, morally and physically because of the disgraceful institution called a “theater” near the gate of the Mulberry-Palace. The authorities ought to look after this business.

The Prefect of Ulleung-do (Dagelet Island) reports that there are 614 horses, 1946 men and 1116 women on the island.

The Korean court at Pyeng-yang announces to the Law Department that a Japanese in Pong-san murdered a Korean. The criminal was caught and taken to Pyeng-yang where the Japanese authorities sentenced him to *two years imprisonment*! A Korean would have gotten that much punishment for stealing a single rice bowl.

A company has been formed for the exploitation of Korean salt industries. [395]

The Law Department has been making some regulations to govern the rates of interest on mortgages, etc. (1) Interest shall not exceed 40 % a year. (2) If no rate is mentioned not more than 20% per year shall be levied. (3) Interest cannot be compounded. (4) Whatever rate is mentioned not more than the legal rate can be collected. (5) If delay occurs in paying an obligation no interest shall be charged unless the amount in question exceeds Y50. If a man sues for wages he cannot get interest unless the amount is more than Y50. (6) Interest shall not be charged on debts that are allowed to run.

A Japanese company called The Korean Land Improvement Company has been formed with a capital of Yen 1,000,000 for the development of Korean resources.

Nam Kungok, well known to foreigners here, is the prefect of Yang-yang and he has opened a very promising school in that town.

It is said that through the disturbances of the last two years the population of North Ham-gyung Province has decreased by 16,361.

A Japanese physician has been secured to attend to prisoners in the City Jail at Chong-no.

Five Korean students in Tokyo have applied to the War Department in Seoul for permission to enter the Japanese Military School in Tokyo.

The campaign against the top-knot is putting an end to this characteristic mark of Korean citizenship. It can well be dispensed with, and there is also coming in a strong feeling in favor of European clothes. This is all well enough but something deeper is necessary before Korea will see good government.

On the hill near the Temple of the God of War outside the South Gate, the Chun-do sect are about to erect a building for worship. That is to be the central office of the sect and there are to be branches all over the country. It is hard to find out just what the tenets of this sect are but in our next issue we shall endeavor to set them forth.

Careful inquiry as to the status of the timber business on the Yalu has brought out the following statements which seem to be true. At first the Japanese started in to cut everything in the way of timber that they came across whether it was government property or private property. Whether this still continues we do not know but on the Manchurian side a joint Chinese and Japanese company is to exploit the industry while on the Korean side it will be done by a company nominally at least, Korean. The company is composed of six of the Ministers of State each of whom puts down Y100,000 of capital. The Japanese put in an equal amount.

A very unusual thing occurred in Sang-ju in the south, where a son being intoxicated struck and killed his father with a club. He was immediately executed by the prefect, as this is one of the six kinds of crime for whose punishment the prefect does not have to obtain orders from Seoul before carrying it out. [396]

In accordance with the so-called treaty of last year the Residency General has ordered all Provincial governors and prefects to refer any case that concerns foreigners directly to the Residency without first reporting to the Home Office.

The prefect of Ka-san caught a tortoise and fed it for three years and prized it highly. The governor of the province sent and demanded it. The prefect demurred. The governor sent and took it by force and thought to gain great credit by forwarding the highly prized amphibian to the Home Office. There it was found that the so-called tortoise was only a common mud-turtle and the governor and the prefect were both called some very bad names. They thought it was a *Ku-buk* but it was only a *Nam-sangi*. We leave it to the reader to figure out the difference, We confess that. . . .but why confess?

Kim Yejin is the son of Kim Ok-kyun the refugee who was murdered in Shanghai in 1894. The young man has been living in Japan all these years and has studied the matter of police and police supervision. He has lately been invited by the Korean Police Department to come back to Korea and take a high place in that office but the young man declined with thanks.

In Yang-ju a pretty scene was recently enacted. Three Japanese medicine vendors came to a private house in that town and asked for accommodations for the night. This was given and a good meal was set out by the host with eggs and chestnuts and other dainties. In the course of the evening one of the Japanese took out a box of pills which sell for about twenty sen a hundred and handed the host nine of them and told him to try them. He did so to his own cost for when morning came the Japanese demanded fifty thousand cash as payment for the pills. The Korean indignantly refused to pay, whereupon the Japanese fell upon him and gave him a beating. Then they went to his stable and stole his horse and made off with it. Seeing that there was no help for it the owner sent a messenger with the money and bought back the horse. Since that time the people of that town have cherished a sort of deep affection for their protectors.

The Russians who were engaged by the Korean government before the war to start a glass factory are now asking for salary, reckoned up to the present time, because their contracts were not formally annulled. A certain Russian Count is also asking for yen 2.000,000 indemnity because of the fishing rights on the east coast which he lost because of the war

The Educational Department has sent throughout the country a large number of school readers in the mixed script for use in the elementary schools. It seems that a knowledge of Chinese is still to be demanded.

We are very sorry to learn that thieves broke into the house of a Japanese in Kong-ju and killed a small Japanese child. It is surmised that this was because the child cried out and this threatened to alarm the neighbors. [397]

The Agricultural Department has asked for Y4736 to pay for establishing a horticultural garden inside the Little East Gate for use in connection with the Agricultural and Industrial School.

In the flood which swept the prefecture of Chungju all the prefecture records were lost.

All the mines belonging to the Household Department are situated in the following prefectures: In Hamgyung Province: Kapsan, Tal-chun, Yong-heung, Chong-pyung, Ham-heung, Sam-su; in Whang-hai Province, Charyung, Su-an, Eul-yu. Changyun; in Pyeng-an Province, Pyeng-yang, Sang-deung, Kang-dong, Eun-san, Chang-sung, Kwi-chun, Wi-wun, Un-san; Chang-sung, Kwi-sung, Whi-chun, Sun-chun, Cho-sung, Hu-chang, Tui-chun, Wi-wun, Un san; Kang-wun Province, Kim-sung; in Chung-chung Province, Chiksan. This makes twenty-four in all. This includes all the mines in these districts.

The Finance Department has decreed that the old nickels shall be considered subsidiary coin and shall not be legal tender for a sum above one yen. The new nickels are good up to two yen, the silver coins up to ten yen. The copper cent pieces and the old time cash are good up to one yen. The Japanese bank notes are good up to any amount.

The Finance Department is dressing all the tax collectors and the clerks at public expense; Each collector has seventy yen and each clerk forty yen to buy the foreign garments.

The Japanese have decreed that in all the country schools the children from eight years of age must study Japanese. Books have been distributed for this purpose. The *Whang-sung* daily criticises this act as being an encroachment upon the interests of the Korean people. The Japanese seem determined that if the Koreans want education they must gain it through Japanese channels.

The terms of the timber concession on the Yalu and Tuman Rivers are as follows. The company is ostensibly a Korean one but is practically in Japanese control.

(1) As the forests along the Yalu and Tuman are very valuable they should be exploited and developed.

(2) The Japanese and Koreans shall jointly furnish capital to the amount of Y 1,200,000

(3) The profits arising from this business shall be carefully reported to both governments and the accounts shall be annually published.

(4) The profits shall be divided equally and assessments shall also be paid equally.

(5) lf it is found necessary to increase the capital of the company it shall be done by mutual agreement.

(6) If new rules are found necessary they will be drawn up and adopted by mutual consent.

(7) If it is found wise to form a stock company the two governments shall arrange the matter by mutual consent. [398]

The Japanese adviser to the Educational Department is being severely censured by the Koreans for his dilatoriness in attending to the business of the Department. The Japanese authorities compel the Department to have all details pass through this man’s hands. Numerous cases come up for decision and are tabled by him and people from distant provinces have to wait his convenience before having things settled. This is a sample of what the Japanese really care about education in this country.

The long bridge at Ham-hung is in very bad repair and it is now intended to put it in good shape. The bridge is 2,250 feet long. It will require the cutting of 50,000 trees and the estimated total of expense is Y 150,000.

On September 14th. the Agricultural and Industrial Bank opened a branch in the town of Hai-ju.

The Emperor on October 1st ordered the release of all prisoners in the Seoul prisons except. those sentenced for grave crime, and about 134 were released. We know, however, of one man who has been a long time in prison without being charged with or convicted of any crime. It is a mere matter of jealousy. The people in control ought to clean out the prisons and set free those who have no crime to their charge.

Yun Chi-o, a cousin of Yun Chi-ho, has been appointed superintendent of the Korean students in Tokyo.

Snow fell in Wonsan, for the first time this season, on October 2nd,

In Pyeng-yang the Koreans are establishing a private school for the study of railroading in all its branches. This is a most encouraging piece of news and is typical of the enterprising people of that metropolis.

The passion which Koreans have for handling money is shown by the rush for the position of clerk to the newly appointed collectors. There were 142 places to be filled and there were over 500 applications There occurred a bitter strife of tongues, each telling how unfit the others were for the job. It was a pretty scene and augurs well for the efficiency of the force!

The Home Department has decided to cut off all special police expenses and all expenses for sacrifices in the country districts. This means sacrifices to mountains, or for rain, or for local spirits of any kind.

The question of making Lady Om Empress of Korea bas been to the fore all during the past month. Arguments pro and con have been coming thick and fast. There is a traditional prejudice against the elevation of a concubine to royal or imperial rank. There seems to be no reason to believe that the Japanese favor this move. It is said that the people of the south are specially opposed to it, but a strong coterie of her relatives and their adherents are pushing the matter as best they can . [398]

Yi Chai-guy, a Prince of a collateral line of the Imperial family, was condemned to ten years in the chain-gang because of his oppressive acts against the people but the Emperor had the sentence changed to banishment for the same period. This is the first time a man of his rank has been sentenced to the chain-gang.

Yi Wan-yong the Minister of Education has made an extended tour of inspection throughout the northwest and in the south even to the island of Quelpart. This energy displayed is an encouraging feature and it is to be hoped that it will result in greatly improved conditions.

The officials who were held in durance at the Gendarmes head quarters in connection with the uprising at Hong-ju on the part of the Volunteers were released on October 23rd after being in detention for 130 days. No crime was proved against them and they were held solely on suspicion.

The Finance Department arranged with the Residency General that until the branches of the Dai Ichi Ginko were established in the interior the taxes should be transmitted through the Post Offices throughout the country but the condition of the roads make it necessary to spend a considerable sum for repairs if this program is to be carried out.

Many country people have come up to Seoul to protest against the reorganization of the prefectures and the lopping off of parts of prefectures to add them to other prefectures adjoining. They consider this a great hardship. They do not like to have the status of their ancestral homes changed.

The Koreans have started a company for the manufacture of candles similar to those imported from Europe. They seem to have succeeded very well. The candles are very white and the price is ridiculously small. Twenty seven of them sell for thirty cents.

The month of October saw the completion of the plans for the taking over of Chin-hai and Yong-heung Bays by the Japanese for naval stations. Large tracts of land in both places were secured by the payment of five Japanese sen per tsubo six feet square. Violent disputes arose from time to time because Koreans considered that they were not treated right, but that did not delay matters. The Koreans had to move on.

On October 26th all the private elementary schools held a field day at the Hun-yun-won and all sorts of sports were indulged in.

Choi Tong-sik, the prefect of So-heung, mourning over the down fall of his country, cleared up the accounts of this office to date, wrote numerous farewell letters to his friends. and then took opium and died.

At the foot of Chi-ri Mountain there is a great monastery called “Shining Cliff monastery. ‘‘ There are about 600 monks there and they an: very desirous of establishing a school for their own self improvement. [400]

The. Russian Government has announced that Yen 3,000 will be necessary for sending back eleven Koreans who became prisoners of war in 1904.

Song Pyung-jun, the former head of the Il-chin people has at last been liberated from prison but not till after he had received a sharp reminder in the shape of forty blows of the whip. He has resumed his former position as head of the society.

After the Finance Department had selected the men for assistant tax collectors the Residency recommended seventeen others. This made it necessary to reject that number of men already selected. How to do this was the question. The Minister got around it by stating that of course no man under twenty-five years of age could serve. So the seventeen men were discarded and the Resident’s candidates substituted. This made the rejected men exceedingly angry and they demanded why they should be thrown out when nothing had been said about an age limit. This did no good so they contented themselves with insulting the Minister and withdrawing.

A very large society has been established. called the Po-an Society, or Universal Peace Society. Its proposed platform is the protection of Korean interests and strict carrying out of the terms of the so called treaty of one year ago.

The Whang-sung Daily states in its issue of October 29tb that the Japanese coolies employed in the grounds of the Finance Department receive forty yen a month for their services. Korean workmen at one quarter of that wage could do the work as well. Korean teachers in the highest school in the country receive from twenty yen to forty-five a month.

The story is going the rounds that two hundred years ago the Japanese brought a gilded Buddha to Korea, whether as a present or not, we do not know. But at any rate it was left here. Recently a high Buddhist monk came from Japan and he asked where this gilded Buddha was. No one could tell him, and finally the police were set to work to find the treasure. After rigid investigation it was found outside the East Gate in the home of a private citizen where it had lain for many years. It was brought out and placed in the new Buddhist temple in the Japanese quarter.

The Cha-gang Society, of which Yun Chi-ho is the president, has urged upon the Government the necessity of making education compulsory.

A Chinaman obtained four little girls in Kyung-sang Province and one in Seoul. In trying to dispose of his wares at a profit he was discovered by the authorities and the girls were taken away and returned to their proper guardians and the Chinaman was handed over to his Consul for punishment. It is not definitely known how he obtained the girls in the south and it is supposed he bought them, but this is so unusual a thing in Korea that we may be permitted to doubt it at least until better evidence is forthcoming.