

The Early Years of the RASKB : 1900 - 1920

Brother Anthony of Taizé

1. The First Beginnings

The Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch was born at 4:30 pm on June 16, 1900, when a founding meeting attended by seventeen men (all but four of them missionaries) was held in the Reading Room of the Seoul Union Club. On that day officers were elected and a constitution (based on that of the London RAS) was adopted. Among those present were the acting British Chargé d'affaires, J. H. Gubbins, and the missionaries James S. Gale, Homer B. Hulbert, George Heber Jones, Horace G. Underwood, H. G. Appenzeller, D. A. Bunker and William B. Scranton. Other missionaries who were members of the RASKB from the very start included H. N. Allen, O. R. Avison and M. N. Trollope.

The first paper presented to the Society, on "The Influence of China upon Korea," was given by James Scarth Gale on October 24, 1900 and it was the first paper published in Volume One of *Transactions* a few months later. It stressed the overwhelming influence of Chinese culture on Korea. The second paper, by Homer B. Hulbert, on "Korean Survivals," sought to contradict it and stress the role of native Korean traditions and values. In the two years that followed, seven more lectures were given and 2 more volumes of *Transactions* were published. But, after a final lecture about Ginseng at the end of 1902 and the publication of Volume 3 of *Transactions* soon after, everything stopped. The RASKB seemed to be dead.

The foundation of the RASKB in 1900 came at the end of two decades in which Korea had experienced almost unimaginable changes, in the course of traumatic events of which the most dramatic included the Gapsin Coup, the 1894 Donghak Rebellion and the resulting Sino-Japanese War, the Gapo Reforms with the royal decree ordering the cutting off of men's topknots and the abolition of the Gwageo exam in 1895, the assassination of the Queen in 1895, and the proclamation of the Daehan Empire in 1897.

Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, a series of remarkable Protestant missionaries, mostly from North America, came to settle in Korea. They founded schools and hospitals, set up a printing press, studied Korean, set about translating the Bible, and began to explore the very unfamiliar culture in which they were plunged. They began to publish books, reviews, even newspapers. Their activity went far beyond founding churches, it was essentially designed to transform Korea by contact with the modern world-at-large into something very different from what it had been hitherto. Outwardly, at least, their program of modernization linked in with the long-standing wish of the Korean intellectuals of the the reformist *Silhak* (practical learning) and *Gaehwapa* (enlightenment) schools. Equally importantly, it echoed many of the most positive aspects of Japan's Meiji reforms.

2. Korean Transformations 1882-1900

The choice facing Korea at the end of the 19th century, between the old and the new, was vividly reflected in the events that shook Seoul late in 1884, the Gapsin coup. Following the opening of Japan to western trade and modernization, the *Gaehwapa* (Enlightenment Party) group of reformers led by Kim Ok-gyun and Pak Yong-hyo sought to initiate rapid changes within Korea along similar lines. Thwarted by conservative factions within the court, particularly the pro-Chinese *Sugupa*, they launched a *coup d'état* with Japanese support on 4 December, 1884. On the evening of that day, a banquet was held at the new post office in Seoul to celebrate the successful inauguration of Korea's postal system. Members of the diplomatic community and Korean government officials were in attendance. This party was part of a plot to overthrow the pro-Chinese Korean clique, dominated by the Min clan, and establish a new government that would be more progressive and pro-Japanese. Chief amongst the conspirators in attendance were Hong Yong-sik, the host of the party and leader of the conspiracy; Pak Yong-hyo, the conspiracy's director of operations; and Kim Ok-gyun who was responsible for contact between the conspirators and the Japanese legation and

planning the coup. In addition to the conspirators were their foes, three conservative Korean ministers: Min Yeong-ik, head of the pro-Chinese Min clan, Yi Ja-yeon and General Han Kyu-sik. Just before 10 p.m., a small building near the post office was set afire, luring Min Yeong-ik out into an ambush. An assassin severely wounded him but he managed to stagger back into the building, bleeding profusely. By the end of the night the conspirators had gained control of the Korean government.

Faced with this threat to royal authority, Chinese military intervened, and after three days the revolt was suppressed by 1500 troops of the Chinese garrison based in Seoul. During the ensuing battle, the Japanese legation building was burned down, and forty Japanese were killed. The surviving *Gaehwapa* activists escaped to the port city of Chemulpo under escort of the Japanese minister to Korea, Takejo, and there boarded a Japanese ship for exile in Japan. Under intense international pressure, the Chinese and Japanese agreed to withdraw their troops, which had been stationed in Seoul since the food riots of 1882, but the underlying tension between the two countries remained alive and ultimately led to the Sino-Japanese War in 1894. Kim Ok-gyun and his companions had already understood in 1884 that Japan held the key to the modernization which Korean society urgently needed, particularly if it was to resist the territorial ambitions that Japan was already manifesting. China was in decline and its policies toward Korea strongly favored the status quo. In particular, Japan's army and navy were already far better equipped and trained.

From February until November 1894, the Donghak Rebellion raged through Korea; China and Japan both sent in troops, still competing for control over Korea. The First Sino-Japanese War began late in July, 1894, and led to the invasion by Japan of western Manchuria and northern China. The war ended with a virtual Chinese surrender. The Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed on April 17, 1895. It gave Japan control over the Liaodong Peninsula, ended the tributary relationship between Korea and the Qing Dynasty, and gave Japan control over Taiwan. However, Russia brought France and Germany to its side and they forced Japan to return the Liaodong Peninsula to China. This only made Japan more determined to take full control of Korea, where Russia by now too had ambitions.

On October 8, 1895, the Queen was assassinated by a band of Japanese, because of her ongoing opposition to Japan's plans, and during the following months the terrified King, fearing for his life, insisted that a group of western missionaries should sleep close to him in the palace each night. The core members of this group were James S. Gale, Homer B. Hulbert, George Heber Jones, Horace G. Underwood, H. G. Appenzeller. All of these men were involved a few years later in the foundation of the RASKB. Mrs. Underwood had acted as the Queen's doctor and after the assassination she prepared meals for the King, who thought people were trying to poison him. They could hardly be closer to the making of Korean history.

3. The Founders of the RASKB

Henry Gerhard Appenzeller (1858 – 1902) was the first Methodist missionary to reach Korea. He and the American Presbyterian Horace Underwood arrived together in Korea on Easter Day, 1885. Appenzeller was a dynamic man with little interest in old Korean culture or traditions. He came as an agent of change, convinced that Koreans needed above all to become Christian, receive a western-style education, and adopt American-style democracy. He opened the first western-style school in the country in 1885, Pai Chai Hakdang (Hall for the Rearing of Useful Men). A brick school building was erected in 1887. In January 1890, Appenzeller founded the Trilingual Press (producing books in English, Hangul, and Chinese) on the school grounds. This later became the Methodist Printing and Publishing House. In 1892, the publishing house, under the direction of Rev. F. Ohlinger began to produce *The Korean Repository*, a monthly magazine about Korean life. Appenzeller was a born leader. He founded the Bible Society, the Literature Society and the Seoul Union Club, a social center for foreign residents, where the RASKB was born. He was on the Board of Official Translators of the Korean Bible, working with James Gale, Horace G. Underwood, William B. Scranton, and William D. Reynolds. But alas, still young, he was drowned in June 1902 when the boat he was on sank after colliding with another near Mokpo.

The first Vice-President of the RASKB was the Rev. Dr. George Heber Jones, a scholarly Methodist missionary born in Mohawk, NY on Aug 14, 1867. In 1887 the Methodist Episcopal Mission Board appointed him to Korea, where he was at first connected with Pai Chai High School and College in Seoul. In 1892 he moved to Chemulpo (Incheon), where he was stationed for the next ten years. Proficient in Korean and a member of the Board of Translators of the Bible, he was one of the founding editors of and a regular contributor to the *Korean Repository*, and later wrote for Hulbert's monthly *Korea Review*, as well as being the founder and editor of the *Sin-hak Wol-po*, a Korean-language theological review. One of his main

interests seems to have been the comparative study of religions and this is reflected in his three contributions to *Transactions*. After returning to the U.S. in 1903, in 1907 Jones came back to Korea and became president of the Bible Institute of Korea and Theological Seminary of the Methodist Church. He returned permanently to the U.S. in 1911 to care for his elderly parents and died in 1919. His published works in English include: *Korea, the Land, People and Customs* (1907), *The Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1910), and *Christian medical work in Korea* (1910?). He is remembered in Korea as one of the editors of the first Korean hymn book.

Probably the most admired by later generations of Koreans, for his support of Korean autonomy, Homer Bezaleel Hulbert was born on January 26, 1863 in New Haven, Vermont, graduated from Dartmouth College in 1884, then entered Union Theological College. While he was studying there, the Korean government announced plans to establish a school in Seoul teaching English and asked the American government to send teachers. As a result, Homer B. Hulbert arrived in Korea in 1886 with a few others to act as “professor” in the Royal English School, where the sons of high officials were to learn English. However, seeing no future in his role as teacher of a narrow-minded elite with no interest in English, he left Korea at the end of 1891.

Appenzeller encouraged Hulbert to return as a member of the Methodist mission. The Methodists had established the Trilingual Press in Seoul, at the time in question under the management of the Rev. Franklin Ohlinger. In the summer of 1893, Ohlinger left for Singapore and Hulbert was invited to replace him at the press. He felt that his knowledge of Hangul would enable the Press to produce the general educational materials the country urgently needed. So he returned to Korea in 1894 to take charge of what was already a major printing house and in the years that followed he worked hard to improve its equipment. Early in 1892, encouraged by George Heber Jones, the Ohlingers had begun to produce the monthly *Korean Repository*, and although it was not published for one year after their departure, it was published again from 1895-8, with Appenzeller and George Heber Jones as co-editors. Hulbert became its editorial manager by virtue of his position at the Press and began to contribute articles about aspects of Korean culture and life.

In 1897, the King decided that Korea needed to train teachers who would teach in the western-style schools that were to be established across the country. He asked Hulbert to serve as the Principal of the Royal Normal School and prepare the necessary textbooks. Hulbert therefore passed management of the Trilingual Press (and the *Repository*) to another Methodist missionary, D. A. Bunker, who had formerly taught at the English School and was now head of the English Department at Pai Chai. Soon after the Royal Normal School was founded, its name changed to the Imperial Normal School with the proclamation of the Daehan Empire in the autumn of 1897. Later it became known as the Imperial Middle School.

James Scarth Gale was born on February 19, 1863, in Pilkington, Wellington County, Ontario (Canada), and graduated from University College at the University of Toronto with a B.A. in foreign languages in 1888. He had planned to study theology but instead left for Korea as a missionary volunteer with the YMCA the same year. He arrived in December 1888, and spent 1889 and 1890 preaching and teaching English in a number of places, in northern Korea and in Busan, before visiting Manchuria. In 1894 he published *Korean Grammatical Forms* at the Trilingual Press and in 1895 he produced a Korean translation prepared by himself and his wife of John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* at the same press, the first translation of a work of English literature into Korean. In 1897 he published his *Korean-English Dictionary* at Yokohama as well as *Korean Sketches* in Chicago. Gale was the leading scholar of the Korean language at this time, and he clearly enjoyed writing works of a literary kind, too. He later served as President of the RASKB in 1915, then as Vice-President 1923-7.

Another of the founders of the RASKB was Dr. Horace N. Allen (1858-1932). Allen had first come to Korea in 1884 as a Presbyterian missionary doctor stationed in the American legation. Soon after his arrival, he saved the life of Min Yeong-ik, the Queen's favorite nephew, when he had been seriously injured during the Gapsin Coup in 1884, demonstrating the value of Western medicine. In 1887 he accompanied the first Korean legation to Washington, D.C.. This led him to move from missionary, medical activities to diplomacy. In 1890, he became secretary to the American legation in Seoul. By 1897 he was US Minister and consul general in Seoul.

The first hospital in Korea was founded in 1885 by Allen as the Royal Hospital Gwanghyewon (House of Extended Grace) where the Constitutional Court stands today. Soon after its creation, the hospital was renamed Jejungwon (House of Universal Helpfulness), and in 1886, Jejungwon Medical School, Korea's first modern medical school, was founded. At the same time Dr. John Heron, a Presbyterian missionary,

arrived in Seoul and began work alongside Dr. Allen, later succeeding him as superintendent of the hospital. In 1888 Presbyterian Dr. Lillias S. Horton took the responsibility of the women's department in the hospital and became the trusted physician of the Queen. Horton married Rev. H. G. Underwood in 1889 and continued working in Korea for many years, opening a women's and children's dispensary in 1895. Jejungwon grew, and by 1899 it was determined that a new facility had to be erected. In 1900, Louis H. Severance, an American philanthropist, heard from O. R. Avison of the need for a modern hospital in Seoul. He had been hoping to fund a project of the sort and decided that Seoul would be an ideal place for his donation. The hospital was completed in September of 1904 and was named Severance Memorial Hospital.

Dr. William B. Scranton (1856-1922) came to Korea in June 1885 to begin medical work and soon opened Sibyeongwon (Universal Relief House), in Jeong-dong where Jeil Church now stands, and other clinics, including Boguyeogwan (in Jeong-dong) for women with the support of his mother, Mary F. B. Scranton, in the same area. His mother established Ewha Hakdang as the first school for girls, also in Jeong-dong, in 1886.

Oliver R. Avison (1860-1956) was born in England, his family moving to Canada when he was six. He became a doctor there and arrived in Korea in 1893 as part of the Presbyterian mission after meeting Horace G. Underwood. He became the head of Jejungwon Medical School in 1894 and his appeal for funds at a conference in New York decided Louis Severance to make his donation. The names were changed to Severance Hospital and Severance Medical School. The first seven graduates in 1908 received the first doctors' licenses issued by the Korean government. In 1913, the name changed to Severance Union Medical College. In 1916, on the death of H. G. Underwood, Avison also became president of Chosun Christian College. He was forced out of Korea by the Japanese in 1935, and L. George Paik (Paik Nakjun) was his successor as President of the Severance Union Medical College. In 1945, Paik became president of the newly named Chosen Christian University, that was to become Yonsei University in 1957.

One of the leading missionary families through several generations were the Underwoods. Horace Grant Underwood was born in London, England, on July 19, 1859, then immigrated to the US when he was thirteen. He arrived in Korea on the same boat as Henry G. Appenzeller on Easter Sunday (April 5), 1885. Underwood worked with the other scholars mentioned above on the Korean Bible, producing the New Testament in 1900, the Old Testament in 1910. Underwood founded the Gyeongsin School in 1886, then Chosun Christian College, which first opened in March 1915 at the Seoul YMCA. It was renamed "Yonhi College" two years later in 1917. The current location of the main campus of Yonsei University was purchased in 1917 through a donation from Mr. John T. Underwood, the typewriter maker. Horace Grant Underwood's son, Horace Horton Underwood, who returned to Korea from studies in 1917, was to play a leading role in denouncing the Japanese repression of the March 1 1919 Movement. He served as president of Chosun Christian College from 1924 until 1941. He was active in the RASKB, especially after the death of Bishop Trollope in 1930.

One of the rare British, Anglican missionaries, Mark Napier Trollope was born in London on March 28, 1862, studied at New College, Oxford, then at Cuddesdon College and he was ordained deacon in 1887 and priest in 1888. Until 1890 he was Curate at Great Yarmouth and while there he responded to an appeal from Bishop Corfe in Korea for volunteers. He came to Korea in the same year. From 1890 to 1902 he was Chaplain to the Bishop and Senior S.P.G. Missionary, and from 1896-1902 he was Vicar General. In 1902 he returned to England for a time on account of the ill health of his father. He returned to Korea as the new Bishop in later 1911 and continued to serve there until his sudden death in 1930. Bishop Trollope served as President of the RASKB 1917-19, 1922-25, 1928-30.

The first President of the RASKB was J. H. Gubbins, at the time acting as her Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Seoul. The first Vice-President was George Heber Jones; the Honorary Secretaries were James S. Gale and Homer B. Hulbert. J. H. Gubbins had long lived in Japan but only spent comparatively little time in Korea. He was well acquainted with the Asiatic Society of Japan, of which he spoke at the inaugural meeting of the RASKB. John Harington Gubbins (1852-1929) attended Harrow School then became a student interpreter in the British Japan Consular Service in 1871. On June 1, 1889, he became Japanese Secretary at Tokyo, and was appointed Second Secretary at the Tokyo legation on February 13, 1890. He briefly served as acting Chargé d'Affaires in Korea from May 18, 1900 until November 4, 1901. Later he was appointed lecturer in Japanese language at Oxford University (1909-1912) but the position was soon terminated for lack of pupils. He published two books, *The Progress of Japan, 1853-1871* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911) and *The Making of Modern Japan* (London: Seeley, Service & Co, 1922).

The second President, in 1901-2, Sir John Newell Jordan GCMG GCIE KCB PC (1852 – 1925), as he later became during an illustrious diplomatic career, was the official British Chargé d'affaires whom J. H. Gubbins had been replacing during an absence the previous year. Born in Balloo, County Down, Ireland, he was educated in Ireland, then in 1876 he joined the Chinese Consular Service as a student interpreter. He held various posts in South China before being appointed Chinese Secretary at the British Legation in Peking in 1891. In 1896 he was appointed Consul-General at Seoul, becoming Chargé d'affaires in 1898 and Minister-Resident in 1901. He remained there until November 1905. In 1906 he was appointed HM Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China as the successor to Sir Ernest Satow and remained in the post until his retirement in 1920. He was also appointed to the Privy Council in 1915.

4. Steps to Annexation: 1903-1910

There is no way of knowing exactly why the RASKB stopped meeting after the end of 1902. Clearly, the drowning of H. G. Appenzeller in June 1902, the departure from Korea for a time of George Heber Jones in 1903, the increasing involvement of Hulbert in the Emperor's affairs, the return to England of Mark N. Trollope in 1902, the various absences of Gale in 1903 and the years following on account of his wife's ill-health, as well as the Russo-Japanese War (February 1904 - September 1905) and the departure of many diplomats with the closing of the legations late in 1905, all might help explain it.

In 1901 Homer Hulbert founded *The Korea Review*, which was very similar in format and scope to the *Korean Repository*. However, the editorial policy of the *Review* was perhaps more strongly oriented by its editor's vision than the *Repository* had been. His main ideas included the affirmation that Koreans were capable of the highest achievements but oppressed by ignorance; therefore widespread education conducted in Hangul was essential. The most controversial idea, one that he nourished almost to the end, was an idealistic view of Japan as a source and model of enlightenment and social progress, to which he opposed the Russian model of autocracy and stagnation.

Hulbert's positive vision of Japan and some other of his ideas, as well his relatively outspoken manner of writing, were strongly opposed by another of the founders of the RASKB, the American diplomat Dr. Horace N. Allen. Allen was increasingly convinced that Russian domination in Korea would be better than a Japanese takeover, and his conflict with Hulbert reached a peak during the Russo-Japanese War (February 1904 - September 1905), during which Hulbert continued to maintain an idealistically pro-Japanese position in the *Review*, only criticizing the negative activities and attitudes toward Korea of individual Japanese. Allen's support for Russia displeased the State Department in Washington, who strongly supported Japan, and perhaps led to his being recalled in 1905.

Throughout the same period, Korean ministers acting without the King's permission were signing a series of treaties with Japan, a process that would culminate in the notorious Japan-Korea Treaty of 1905, also known as the Eulsa Treaty, signed by just five ministers on November 17, 1905. This gave Japan complete responsibility for Korea's foreign affairs, and placed all trade through Korean ports under Japanese supervision, in effect making Korea a protectorate of Japan.

It was not until the September 1905 issue of the *Korea Review* that Hulbert finally denounced plainly the Japanese plans for reducing Korea to a protectorate. Then, early in October, he left for the United States, secretly carrying a letter for the American President signed by the Emperor, asking the United States to prevent Japan from taking control of Korea. At the time, nobody in Korea knew of the conversations that had been held late in July 1905 between the Japanese prime-minister Katsura Taro and the United States Secretary of War William Howard Taft, during which the American encouraged the Japanese plans to take full control of Korea.

Hulbert arrived in Washington at almost exactly the same moment as the Korean foreign minister signed the Eulsa Treaty in Seoul, which the Japanese claimed was sufficient to ratify it. The pro-Japanese American government therefore refused to accept the Emperor's letter, claiming that the ratification of the Treaty was a matter of fact, even though the Emperor himself had not signed it. After trying in vain to alert American public opinion through the press, which was also largely sympathetic to the Japanese, Hulbert returned to Korea in the summer of 1906. By the time he returned, all the foreign legations in Seoul had been reduced to the level of consulates.

When Hulbert returned to Korea in 1906, the Emperor immediately asked him to prepare to go as his ambassador to the nations due to attend the Second International Peace Conference to be held in The Hague in June 1907. His task was to contact the major powers, asking them to support the independence of

Korea. His role was to be secret, behind the scenes, and in April 1907 the Emperor secretly appointed three Korean representatives. They were all unable to gain access to the conference and Hulbert left The Hague only a day or so before the Emperor was forced to abdicate on July 19, 1907. He was succeeded by his feeble fourth son, who became known as the Yunhui Emperor, or Sunjong. On July 24 1907 the new ruler signed over control of the country's internal administration to Japan. On 22 August, 1910, the Empire of Daehan was annexed by Japan under the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty, a final formality.

Hulbert knew that he could never again live in Korea. He made a final visit to Seoul in the autumn of 1909. He was there when the Korean patriot An Jung-geun assassinated the former Japanese premier Ito Hirobumi in Harbin in October. A year before, in March 1908, Korean nationalist patriots had assassinated Durham White Stevens in San Francisco. Stevens had been an American diplomat stationed in Japan since 1873 then became a Japanese diplomat in 1883. In November 1904, Stevens was appointed as adviser to the Korean Foreign Office. He was intensely pro-Japanese and advocated the annexation. Previously, in July 1907, an attempt had been made by some Koreans to murder George Heber Jones for having praised the Japanese police for putting down a nationalistic demonstration. All these violent expressions of Korean resistance only served to drive the foreign community in Korea, whether missionaries or diplomats, towards stronger support for Japan, since they reinforced the feeling that Koreans were a violent, anarchic people incapable of governing themselves.

5. The RASKB Returns to Life: 1911

This was the context in which, on January 23, 1911, the RASKB was reborn, at a meeting attended by eight men and one woman. Only two of the original founders of the RASKB were present at the January 1911 meeting, James Gale and the Methodist missionary doctor William Benton Scranton (1856-1922). The meeting was held in Scranton's Sanitarium.

When the RASKB was revived, the first President elected was the British consul at Chemulpo, Arthur Hyde Lay (1865 - 1934). Lay was born in China, educated in Britain and arrived in Japan in 1887 as an interpreter trainee. From 1899 until 1902 he worked in Japan as an interpreter but seems to have mastered Korean by 1904. He published *Chinese Characters for the Use of Students of the Japanese Language* in 1898. He served as British Consul at Chemulpo (Incheon) in 1911, then went to be consul in Hawai'i (1912) and Shimonoseki (1913). From 1914 until 1927 he was British consul-general in Seoul and seems to have developed a great affection for Korea. However, Ku Daeyeol notes that "Lay had a stereotyped view of Korea, commonly shared by almost all Western diplomats. In a report he wrote following his retirement, he recalled that the Korean political situation had been dismal before the Russo-Japanese War of 1904, and concluded that the country still lacked the ability to maintain an autonomous government." In October 1911, Lay was obliged to resign as President of the RASKB since he was leaving Korea for Hawai'i. His son has written that he had grown so attached to Korea that he did everything to have his posting to Hawai'i cancelled. He was replaced as President by James S. Gale, who resigned in February 1916, allowing Lay, now back as British Consul-General in Seoul, to be re-elected President for another year before he was replaced by Bishop Trollope.

One other diplomat who clearly played a vital role in the 1911 RASKB revival was the American consul-general George Hawthorne Scidmore (1854-1922). A career diplomat, he first came to Yokohama (Japan) in 1881 after several years in Europe, served in Oceania 1891-4, returned to Japan, then served as consul-general in Seoul 1909-13 during the annexation, before becoming consul-general in Yokohama, where he died. Several RASKB meetings were held at his invitation in the US Consulate General. Ku Daeyeol writes: "George Scidmore, the American consul general at the time of annexation, supported Japanese policy, as he had been impressed by Japan's efficient reform drive in his previous appointments in many Japanese ports, which he deemed to contrast the corrupt Korea that lacked any reform drive."

The first lecture given to the resurrected Society, at a meeting held on March 4, 1911, in the U.S. Consulate on the invitation of Scidmore, was titled "The Old People and the New Government." It was given by Midori Komatsu, the Japanese Director of Foreign Affairs of the Government General of Chosen. It was the first paper published in Volume Four of *Transactions* a few months later. Komatsu's paper was a formal justification for the annexation of Chosen, based on claims that Korea had "originally" been a state founded from Japan, that the two peoples were "really" one "race", and as such it was natural and desirable for them to be reunited.

It is sometimes claimed that the Japanese imposed the paper on an unwilling Society but this is

fairly clearly not the case. First of all, it must be said that in early 1911 a large majority of the foreigners living in Korea still considered the annexation in a positive light. Besides, the accounts of the Council's meetings published in *Transactions* Volume IV Part 2 make it clear that it was the president, Mr. Lay, and James Gale who decided on February 8, 1911, that this should be the first paper. Then, on March 4th, the paper was given in the US Consulate on the invitation of George Scidmore with nine RASKB members present, as well as "many guests," "including members of the local diplomatic corps and ladies." At the end, the Chairman (Lay) proposed a "heartily vote of thanks." Later, on April 12, the Council met and "directed" the Recording Secretary (James Gale) to ask Mr. Komatsu for a copy of his paper for publication.

Two other papers were given by Japanese speakers that same year and were published in other parts of the same volume of *Transactions*, after which no papers by Japanese were ever given or published. One, that by Isoh Yamagata, the editor of the *Seoul Press*, evokes in cheerful tones the restoration of cordial relations between Japan and Korea after the Imjin War. The *Seoul Press* was the only English-language newspaper allowed in Korea and its role was to express the official Japanese version of events. The other, on "Coinage of Old Korea" by Morihiro Ichihara, who had earned a Ph.D. in finance from Yale and was first governor of the Bank of Chosen (1909-1915), begins: "To find and destroy the venerable old coins of Korea and replace them with new ones . . . has been my duty for many years." It ends: "New Chosen begins its career with new vigor and strength as a part of the Empire of Japan."

It is hard to know what was in the minds of Lay, Scidmore and Gale in deciding to invite these very highly placed, official Japanese speakers, or to sense what considerations, if any, led to the invitations. That the Western diplomats and missionaries were still trying to be positive about Japan's ways of dealing with Korea and optimistic about the future seems clear. Within ten years, by the time of the March 1 1919 uprising, much had changed but it is easy to imagine that the RASKB Council of early 1911 felt that they could deal with the top members of the Japanese administration as reasonable, educated gentlemen like themselves. They might even have hoped that by bringing them into the Society they would help them better understand the concerns of the western community in Seoul, and the demands of the civilized world. They very quickly learned that they were wrong.

6. From the Annexation to March 1, 1919

Ku Daeyeol has stressed that as soon as Japan had annexed Korea, or even before, the British government began to be anxious that it would soon be moving to take control of Manchuria and then China, which Britain considered a threat to its interests. However, he continues:

Establishing a Government-General invested with "supreme authority" by the emperor and therefore unhindered by the Japanese constitution, the Japanese pursued, on the one hand, a modernization policy based on "efficiency" and "conciseness" and, on the other hand, an assimilation policy bent upon eradicating the national identity of the Korean people. While the powers did not agree with this program in its entirety, they expressed a supportive attitude, especially when they compared the Japanese policies with the corruption and inefficiency of the former Korean government. While the United States and Great Britain characterized the projects pursued by Japan as "costly and burdensome," and Japan as "having bitten off more than she can chew," they also portrayed them as "decidedly progressive" and as programs that would result in an increase of material wealth for Koreans. They, therefore, emphasized that "it is patience and help, not criticism, that are required." At the same time, Korean resistance against the Terauchi administration was roundly condemned: "still the voice of calumny is raised against the authorities by good-for-nothing fellows whose ambitions are thwarted." In other words, as long as Japanese policies were viewed positively, the Korean independence movement was seen as nothing more than the expression of a "rancorous hatred of the Japanese" occasioned by a "distorted idea of patriotism."

Now the first set of quotations in this text are from dispatches written by Arthur Hyde Lay in February 1911, the later quotations were written by Lay in July 1911, at the very moment that the RASKB was engaged with these high-ranking Japanese speakers. We know that Lay was essentially supportive of Japan.

Lay and Gale soon began to hear reports of what was to become known as the "Christian Conspiracy case" or the "Case of the One Hundred Five." Early in 1911, the Japanese began to claim that there had been an attempt to assassinate the Japanese Governor-General Terauchi Masatake during a meeting between him and the American missionary George Shannon McCune in Seoncheon, North Pyeongan Province, on December 28, 1910. From October 1911, especially, hundreds of Koreans were arrested, including Kim Ku and other leaders of the *Sinminhoe*, and, most important, a great majority of them were Christians. Nagata Akifumi points out that Gale, far from being indignant at the arrests, "demonstrated his sympathy for Terauchi with the statement that he had 'succeeded to the difficult task of governing an alien

people of Korea after the Japanese annexation of Korea.' He further wrote that Korea had prospered or been improved by the Japanese intervention, and would continue to do so under the rule of Terauchi, a 'Governor of good manners and so kindly disposed to every one.' He argued that Korea was under military rule at the time when the Case occurred, and that it had happened during 'the period of change,' thereby implying the necessity of overlooking faults in Japan's governing of Korea. [Gale, "Count Terauchi, Governor of Chosen," *New York Independent*, 29 February 1912, and *The Christian Question in Korea*, 2 March 1912.]"

By the time 123 of those arrested came to trial on June 28, 1912, world opinion had been alerted that the Japanese were persecuting Korean Christians. The trial was a farce, the accused had been tortured to produce confessions, there was no evidence and the accused were not allowed to defend themselves; foreign missionaries were not allowed to testify in support of them. 105 were found guilty of treason and sentenced to prison with hard labor. The leaders of American churches with missions in Korea held a meeting with the American President Taft in July 1912 to express their dismay. They pointed out that the Korean Protestant mission included "330 foreign missionaries, 962 schools, a medical college, a nurses' training school, thirteen hospitals, eighteen dispensaries . . . 600 churches, a Christian community of 250,000."

A lengthy appeals process brought little satisfaction but finally, by February 1915, all those convicted had been released; it was probably less that the Japanese realized that a mistake had been made, more a matter of their feeling they had made their point. American legal experts condemned the Japanese criminal code and court system as "archaic, barbaric and uncivilized." Ku Daeyeol writes: "Japanese colonial rule was viewed as having failed its moral obligations to provide legal protection to Koreans and to treat them in an equitable manner." The British Ambassador to Japan, Sir Claude MacDonald, told the Japanese Foreign Minister, Uchida Yasuya, that the trial was a "travesty of justice." Everyone understood that the case had revealed Japan's deep distrust of and hostility to Christianity and the presence of western missionaries in Korea.

The other way in which the Japanese quickly lost the sympathy and support of the western community was by legislation limiting the right of foreigners to be active in education, medical work and business in Korea. Ku Daeyeol writes: "The first of these laws was the Company Law, put into effect in early 1911. The Company Law made it necessary to obtain Government-General's approval to set up new companies in Korea, to locate branch offices in Korea, and to conduct business in Korea. In its practical application, this law was used in a variety of ways to discourage and prevent foreign firms from establishing a base of operations in Korea. As a result, the powers had lost nearly all of their rights and privileges on the peninsula within a few years of the Annexation." In November 1913, ordinance 100 was issued that made it almost impossible for non-Japanese to practice medicine. In August 1914, ordinance 83 made it necessary to obtain government permission to open a new church or pay church workers; in March 1915 the Bible was excluded from school curricula at the same time as the Japanese language was made the sole language of instruction within the next five years . . . The ultimate result within Korea was the 1919 March 1 Independence Uprising.

This led to a violent crackdown culminating in the burning of the church in Cheam-ri, near Suwon, with thirty or so Koreans locked inside, on April 15, 1919, and the destruction of many villages in the surrounding region. Raymond Scofield (US Vice-Consul 1913-18; Consul, 1918-19), Horace H. Underwood, and A. W. Taylor, a gold miner and photographer serving as correspondent of the A.P. News Agency in Seoul, traveled to the region and Underwood wrote a report for the State Department. Another American missionary, W. A. Noble, went to Cheam-ri a few days later with William M. Royds, the acting British Consul General in Seoul.

Nagata summarizes what followed:

After this, a delegation of Christian missionaries including Noble met with Governor-General Hasegawa, and Noble informed Hasegawa of the things he had seen and heard at Cheamri. Hasegawa expressed his regret and told the delegation that not only would the persons in charge of the incident be punished, but also that such an atrocity would never happen again. He insisted that no order to massacre the inhabitants of Cheam-ri and destroy the village had been given to the military police. But the delegation was not greatly persuaded by Hasegawa's explanation, because by that point a further eighteen villages besides Cheam-ri had been destroyed. (. . .)

Under these circumstances, the American missionaries in Korea could not ignore the brutality of the Japanese authorities evident in their suppression of the March First Movement, and "No Neutrality for Brutality" became a common slogan among them. [The Japanese Prime Minister] Hara's wish to transform the "Rule by Bayonet" into "Cultural Administration (Bunka Seiji)" was realized by naming the former Naval

Minister Makoto Saito to the post of Governor-General. (. . .) Saito met several times with American missionaries over dinner in 1919. So the American missionaries in Korea had to change their views. Originally they had had no intention of intervening in political issues in Korea (especially the issue of Korean independence). Knowing that measures were being taken to reform the rule of Korea by Japan (especially regarding the issue of religion) and the new Government-General of Korea was reacting severely against the participation of Christian groups with Korean nationalist movements, the American missionaries in Korea sought a way to cooperate with the new Governor-General. Some missionaries warned Korean church leaders not to take part in Korean nationalist movements and to keep aloof from Korean politics

In trying to imagine the context in which the RASKB came into being and was revived, one important fact has become clear. Whereas missionaries usually came directly to Korea from their home countries, learned Korean language and first experienced life in Asia in the Korean cultural context, the same was not true for diplomats. With the exception of John Newell Jordan, who came from and soon went back to China, and Horace Allen, who began his life in Korea as a missionary doctor, the diplomats mentioned previously had without exception spent long years in Japan before being assigned to Korea. They had mostly mastered Japanese language and culture and were familiar with some of the most refined and talented figures in Meiji Japan. What united both groups was a conviction that Korea needed to be rescued from its old self and re-made in a modern form; Japan was seen on both sides as working for such change.

It would be interesting to have greater access to personal expressions of the ways in which missionaries and diplomats viewed Koreans and Japanese. It is too easy for us to see things with hindsight and to assume that the rightness of the Korean demand for independence from Japan was always widely supported by the missionaries, at least. Clearly this was not the case until events following the Annexation forced the Western powers to realize that many of the Japanese viewed the missionaries as enemy agents of foreign powers and the Korean Christians as a threat. Even after the suppression of the 1919 March 1 Movement, there were some missionaries who continued to support Japan unconditionally, but they were certainly a minority, although many probably tried to avoid direct confrontations.

One other American diplomat with very strong Japanese connections had been active in the RASKB from 1914. Ransford Stevens Miller Jr. (1867-1932) was born in Ithaca, New York on October 3, 1867. He entered Ithaca High School from Ithaca Grammar School in September, 1880, graduated in 1884, and entered Cornell University the same year. He graduated A.B. in 1888. He went to Japan in about 1890 to serve as secretary to the International Committee of the YMCA in Tokyo. He quickly mastered Japanese and from 1895 was acting as interpreter to US Legation, Tokyo. By 1898 he was acting as "Japanese secretary" in the American Legation in Tokyo, having become part of the diplomatic corps by an indirect route. He served for a time as a member of the Council of the Asiatic Society of Japan. In 1909 he was called to Washington to become chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs at the State Department. There he drafted, in negotiation with Japan, the U.S. policy memorandum supporting Japan's 1910 annexation of Korea. He was present at the meeting of the Protestant leaders with President Taft in 1912. He was appointed as the consul general to Seoul in 1914 and remained in that post, with an unexplained interruption 1917-1920, until 1930.

Miller was absent from Korea at the time of the March 1, 1919, demonstrations, returning soon after. He was first elected to be a Councillor of the RASKB on February 5, 1915, and served as President of the RASKB for a year in 1920, replacing Bishop Trollope. This was probably because at that critical juncture the missionaries felt that an association with the American consul-general at its head was more likely to be left in peace. Once they had gained a positive impression of the new attitude espoused by Saito, they felt able to bring Trollope back as President the following year. The RASKB continued to be active until the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, when its president, Horace H. Underwood, and the other remaining foreigners from non-Axis countries were detained then repatriated.

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