

CLASSICS TO GO

COREA

THE HERMIT NATION

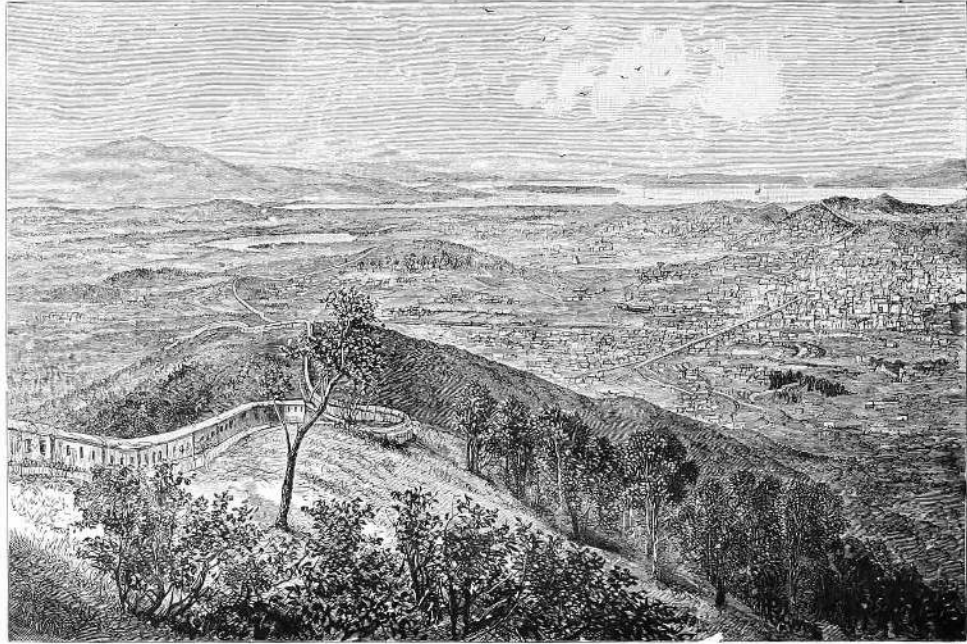


WILLIAM ELLIOT GRIFFIS

COREA

The Hermit Nation

William Elliot Griffis



A CITY IN COREA.

PREFACE TO THE NINTH EDITION.

The year 1910 saw the Land of the Plum Blossom and the Islands of the Cherry Blooms united. In this ninth edition of a work which for nearly thirty years has been a useful hand-book of information—having, by their own unsought confession, inspired not a few men and women to become devoted friends and teachers of the Corean people—I have made some corrections and added a final chapter, “Chōsen: A Province of Japan.” Besides outlining in brief the striking events from 1907 to 1911, I have analyzed the causes of the extinction of Corean sovereignty, aiming in this to be a disinterested interpreter rather than a mere annalist.

Although the sovereignty of Corea, first recognized and made known to the world by the Japanese in their treaty of 1876, has been, through the logic of events, destroyed, I doubt not that the hopes of twelve millions of people will be increasingly fulfilled under the new arrangement. Not in haste, but only after long compulsion, did the statesmen of Japan assume a responsibility that may test to the full their abilities and those of their successors. The severe criticisms, in Japan itself, of the policy of the Tokio government bear witness to the sensitiveness of the national conscience in regard to the treatment of their colonies. In this respect, as in so many other points of public ethics, the Japanese are ranging themselves abreast with the leading nations that are making a world-conscience.

In sending forth what may be the final edition of a work, with the title of which time has had its revenges, while the

contents are still of worth, the author thanks heartily all who, from 1876, when the work was planned, until the present time, have assisted in making this book valuable to humanity.

W. E. G.

ITHACA, N. Y., June 27, 1911.

PREFACE TO THE EIGHTH EDITION.

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

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

For twenty-four years, this book, besides enjoying popular favor, has been made good use of by writers and students, in Europe and America, and has served even in Corea itself as the first book of general information to be read by missionaries and other new comers. In this eighth edition, I have added to the original text, ending with Chapter XLVIII (September, 1882), five fresh chapters: on The Economic Condition of Corea; International Politics: Chinese and Japanese; The War of 1894: Corea an Empire; Japan and Russia in Conflict; and Corea a Japanese Protectorate, bringing the history down to the late autumn of 1906.

Within the brief period of time treated in these new chapters, the centre of the world's politics has shifted from the Atlantic and the Mediterranean to the waters surrounding Corea, the strange anomaly of dual sovereignty over the peninsular state has been eliminated, and the military reputation of China ruined, and that of Russia compromised. The rise of Japan, within half a century of immediate contact with the West, to the position of a modern state, able first to humiliate China and then to grapple successfully with Russia, has vitally affected Corea,

on behalf of whose independence Japan a second time went to war with a Power vastly greater in natural resources than herself. In this period also, the United States of America has become one of the great Powers interested in the politics of Asia, and with which the would-be conquerors of Asiatic peoples must reckon.

The present or eighth edition shows in both text and map, not only the swift, logical results both of Japan's military and naval successes in Manchuria and on the sea of Japan and of her signal diplomatic victory at Portsmouth, but more. It makes clear the reasons why Corea, as to her foreign relations, has lost her sovereignty.

The penalty laid upon the leaders of the peninsular kingdom for making intrigue instead of education their work, and class interests instead of national welfare their aim, is also shown to be pronounced—less by the writer than by the events themselves—in the final failure of intriguing Yang-banism, in May, 1906. The Japanese, in the administration of Corea, are like the other protecting nations, British, American, French, German, now on a moral trial before the world.

In again sending forth a work that has been so heartily welcomed, I reiterate gladly my great obligations to the scholars, native and foreign, who have so generously aided me by their conversation, correspondence, criticism, and publications, and the members of the Korean Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, who have honored me with membership in their honorable body. My special obligations are due to our late American Minister, H. N. Allen, for printed documents and illustrative matter; to Professor Homer B. Hulbert, Editor of *The Korea Review*, from the pages of which I have drawn liberally, and to the Editor of *The Japan Mail*, the columns of which are rich in

correspondence from Korea. I would call attention also to the additions made upon the map at the end of the volume.

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

W. E. G.

ITHACA, N. Y., December 12, 1906.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

In the year 1871, while living at Fukui, in the province of Echizen, Japan, I spent a few days at Tsuruga and Mikuni, by the sea which separates Japan and Corea. Like “the Saxon shore” of early Britain, the coast of Echizen had been in primeval times the landing-place of rovers, immigrants, and adventurers from the continental shore opposite. Here, at Tsuruga, Korean envoys had landed on their way to the mikado’s court. In the temple near by were shrines dedicated to the Korean Prince of Mimana, and to Jingu Kōgō, Ojin, and Takénouchi, whose names in Japanese traditions are associated with “The Treasure-land of the West.” Across the bay hung a sweet-toned bell, said to have been cast in Corea in A.D. 647; in which tradition—untested by chemistry—declared there was much gold. Among the hills not far away, nestled the little village of Awotabi (Green Nook), settled centuries ago by paper-makers, and visited a millenium ago by tribute-bearers, from the neighboring peninsula; and famous for producing the crinkled paper on which the diplomatic correspondence between the two nations was written. Some of the first families in Echizen were proud of their descent from Chōsen, while in the villages, where dwelt the Eta, or social outcasts, I beheld the descendants of Korean prisoners of war. Everywhere the finger of tradition pointed westward across the waters to the Asian mainland, and the whole region was eloquent of “kin beyond sea.” Birds and animals, fruits and falcons, vegetables and trees, farmers’ implements and the potter’s wheel, names in geography and things in the arts, and doctrines and systems in religion were in some way connected with Corea.

The thought often came to me as I walked within the moss-grown feudal castle walls—old in story, but then newly given up to schools of Western science and languages—why should Corea be sealed and mysterious, when Japan, once a hermit, had opened her doors and come out into the world's market-place? When would Corea's awakening come? As one diamond cuts another, why should not Chō-ka (Japan) open Chō-sen (Corea)?

Turning with delight and fascination to the study of Japanese history and antiquities, I found much that reflected light upon the neighbor country. On my return home, I continued to search for materials for the story of the last of the hermit nations. No master of research in China or Japan having attempted the task, from what Locke calls "the roundabout view," I have essayed it, with no claim to originality or profound research, for the benefit of the general reader, to whom Corea "suggests," as an American lady said, "no more than a sea-shell." Many ask "What's in Corea?" and "Is Corea of any importance in the history of the world?"

My purpose in this work is to give an outline of the history of the Land of Morning Calm—as the natives call their country—from before the Christian era to the present year. As "an honest tale speeds best, being plainly told," I have made no attempt to embellish the narrative, though I have sought information from sources from within and without Corea, in maps and charts, coins and pottery, the language and art, notes and narratives of eye-witnesses, pencil-sketches, paintings and photographs, the standard histories of Japan and China, the testimony of sailor and diplomatist, missionary and castaway, and the digested knowledge of critical scholars. I have attempted nothing more than a historical outline of the nation and a glimpse at the political and social life of the people. For lack of space, the original

manuscript of "Recent and Modern History," part III., has been greatly abridged, and many topics of interest have been left untouched.

The bulk of the text was written between the years 1877 and 1880; since which time the literature of the subject has been enriched by Ross's "Corea" and "Corean Primer," besides the Grammar and Dictionary of the Corean language made by the French missionaries. With these linguistic helps I have been able to get access to the language, and thus clear up doubtful points and obtain much needed data. I have borrowed largely from Dallet's "Histoire d'Eglise de Corée," especially in the chapters devoted to Folk-lore, Social Life, and Christianity. In the Bibliography following the Preface is a list of works to which I have been more or less indebted.

Many friends have assisted me with correspondence, advice, or help in translation, among whom I must first thank my former students, Haségawa, Hiraii, Haraguchi, Matsui, and Imadatté, and my newer Japanese friends, Ohgimi and Kimura, while others, alas! will never in this world see my record of acknowledgment—K. Yaye' and Egi Takato—whose interest was manifested not only in discussion of mooted points, but by search among the book-shops in Kiōto and Tōkiō, which put much valuable standard matter in my hands. I also thank Mr. Charles Lanman, Secretary of the Legation of Japan in Washington, for four ferrotypes taken in Seoul in 1878 by members of the Japanese embassy; Mr. D. R. Clark, of the United States Transit of Venus Survey, for four photographs of the Corean villages in Russian Manchuria; Mr. R. Idéura, of Tōkiō, for a set of photographs of Kang-wa and vicinity, taken in 1876, and Mr. Ozawa Nankoku, for sketches of Corean articles in Japanese museums. To Lieutenant Wadhams, of the United States Navy, for the use of charts and maps made by

himself while in Corea in 1871, and for photographs of flags and other trophies, now at Annapolis, captured in the Han forts; to Fleet-Surgeon H. O. Mayo, and other officers of the United States Navy, for valuable information, I hereby express my grateful appreciation of kindness shown. I would that Admiral John Rodgers, Commodore H. C. Blake, and Minister F. F. Low were living to receive my thanks for their courtesies personally shown me, even though, in attempting to write history, I have made criticisms also. To Lieutenant N. Y. Yanagi, of the Hydrographic Bureau, of the Japanese Navy, for a set of charts of the coast of Corea; to Mr. Metcalfe, of Milwaukee, for photographs of Coreans; to Miss Marshall, of New York, for making colored copies of the battle-flags captured by our naval battalion in 1871, and for the many favors of correspondents—in St. Petersburg, Mr. Hoffman Atkinson; in Peking, Jugoï Arinori Mori; in Tōkiō, Dr. D. B. McCartee, Hon. David Murray, Rev. J. L. Amerman, and others whose names I need not mention. To Gen. George W. McCullum, Vice-President, and to Mr. Leopold Lindau, Librarian, of the American Geographical Society, I return my warmest thanks; as well as to my dear wife and helpmeet, for her aid in copying, proof-reading, suggestions, and criticism during the progress of the work.

In one respect, the presentation of such a subject by a compiler, while shorn of the fascinating element of personal experience, has an advantage even over the narrator who describes a country through which he has travelled. With the various reports of many witnesses, in many times and places, before him, he views the whole subject and reduces the many impressions of detail to unity, correcting one by the other. Travellers usually see but a portion of the country at one time. The compiler, if able even in part to control his authorities, and if anything more than a tyro in the art of literary appraisal, may be able to furnish a

hand-book of information more valuable to the general reader.

In the use of my authorities I have given heed to Bacon's advice—tasting some, chewing others, and swallowing few. In ancient history, original authorities have been sought, and for the story of modern life, only the reports of careful eye-witnesses have been set down as facts; while opinions and judgments of alien occidentals concerning Korean social life are rarely borrowed without due flavoring of critical salt.

Corean and Japanese life, customs, beliefs, and history are often reflections one of the other. Much of what is reported from Corea, which the eye-witnesses themselves do not appear to understand, is perfectly clear to one familiar with Japanese life and history. China, Corea, and Japan are as links in the same chain of civilization. Corea, like Cyprus between Egypt and Greece, will yet supply many missing details to the comparative student of language, art, science, the development of civilization, and the distribution of life on the globe.

Some future writer, with more ability and space at command than the undersigned, may discuss the question as to how far the opening of Corea to the commerce of the world has been the result of internal forces; the scholar, by his original research, may prepare the materials for a worthy history of Corea during the two or three thousand years of her history; the geologist or miner may determine the question as to how far the metallic wealth of Corea will affect the monetary equilibrium of the world. The missionary has yet to prove the full power of Christianity upon the people—and before Corean paganism, any form of the religion of Jesus, Roman, Greek or Reformed, should be welcomed; while to the linguist, the man of science, and the

political economist, the new country opened by American diplomacy presents problems of profound interest.

W. E. G.

SCHENECTADY, N. Y., October 2, 1882.

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I.

ANCIENT AND MEDIÆVAL HISTORY

COREA:
THE HERMIT NATION.

CHAPTER I.

THE COREAN PENINSULA.

Corea, though unknown even by name in Europe until the sixteenth century, was the subject of description by Arab geographers of the middle ages. Before the peninsula was known as a political unit, the envoys of Shinra, one of the three Corean states, and those from Persia met face to face before the throne of China. The Arab merchants trading to Chinese ports crossed the Yellow Sea, visited the peninsula, and even settled there. The youths of Shinra, sent by their sovereign to study the arts of war and peace at Nanking, the mediæval capitol of China, may often have seen and talked with the merchants of Bagdad and Damascus. The Corean term for Mussulmans is *hoi-hoi*, "round and round" men. Corean art shows the undoubted influence of Persia.

A very interesting passage in the chronicles of Japan, while illustrating the sensitive regard of the Japanese for the forms of etiquette, shows another point of contact between Corean and Saracen civilization. It occurs in the *Nihon O Dai Ichi Ran*, or "A View of the Imperial Family of Japan." "In the first month of the sixth year of *Tempiō Shōhō* [February, 754 A.D.], the Japanese nobles *Ohan no Komaro* and *Kibi no Mabi* returned from China, in which country they had left *Fujiwara no Seiga*. The former reported that at the audience which they had of the Emperor *Gen-sho*, on *New Tear's Day* [January 18th], the ambassadors of *Towan* [Thibet] occupied the first place to the west, those from Shinra the first place to the east, and that the second place to the west had been destined for them (the Japanese

envoys), and the second place to the east for the ambassadors of the Kingdom of Dai Shoku [Persia, then part of the empire of the Caliphs]. Komaro, offended with this arrangement, asked why the Chinese should give precedence over them to the envoys of Shinra, a state which had long been tributary to Japan. The Chinese officials, impressed alike with the firmness and displeasure exhibited by Komaro, assigned to the Japanese envoys a place above those of Persia and to the envoys of Shinra a place above those of Thibet."

Thus the point at issue was settled, by avoiding it, and assigning equal honor to Shinra and Japan.

This incident alone shows that close communications were kept up between the far east and the west of Asia, and that Korea was known beyond Chinese Asia. At that time the boundaries of the two empires, the Arab and the Chinese, touched each other.

The first notice of Korea in western books or writings occurs in the works of Khordadbeh, an Arab geographer of the ninth century, in his Book of Roads and Provinces. He is thus quoted by Richthofen in his work on China (p. 575, note):

"What lies on the other side of China is unknown land. But high mountains rise up densely across from Kantu. These lie over in the land of Sila, which is rich in gold. Mussulmans who visit this country often allow themselves, through the advantages of the same, to be induced to settle here. They export from thence ginseng, deerhorn, aloes, camphor, nails, saddles, porcelain, satin, zimmit (cinnamon?) and galanga (ginger?)."

Richthofen rightly argues that Sila is Shinra and Kantu is the promontory province of Shantung. This Arabic term "Sila" is a corruption of Shinra—the predominant state in Corea at the time of Khordadbeh.

The name of this kingdom was pronounced by the Japanese, Shinra, and by the Chinese, Sinlo—the latter easily altered in Arabic mouths to Sila.

The European name Corea is derived from the Japanese term Korai (Chinese Kaoli), the name of another state in the peninsula, rival to Shinra. It was also the official title of the nation from the eleventh to the fourteenth century. The Portuguese, who were the first navigators of the Yellow Sea, brought the name to Europe, calling the country Coria, whence the English Corea.

The French Jesuits at Peking Gallicized this into Corée. Following the genius of their language, they call it La Corée, just as they speak of England as L'Angleterre, Germany as L'Allemagne, and America as L'Amérique. Hence has arisen the curious designation, used even by English writers, of this peninsula as "the Corea." But what is good French in this case is very bad English, and we should no more say "the Corea" than "the Germany," "the England," or "the America." English usage forbids the employment of the definite article before a proper name, and those writers who persist in prefixing the definite article to the proper name Corea are either ignorant of the significance of the word, or knowingly violate the laws of the English language. The native name of the country is Chō-sen (Morning Calm or Fresh Morning), which French writers, always prodigal in the use of vowels, spell Tsio-sen, Teo-cen, or Tchao-sian. The Chinese call it Tung-kwo (Eastern Kingdom), and the Manchius, Sol-ho or Solbo.

The peninsula, with its outlying islands, is nearly equal in size to Minnesota or to Great Britain. Its area is between eighty and ninety thousand square miles. Its coast line measures 1,740 miles. In general shape and relative position to the Asian Continent it resembles Florida. It hangs down between the Middle Kingdom and the Sunrise Land, separating the sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea, between the 34th and 43d parallels of north latitude. In its general configuration, when looked at from the westward on a good map, especially the magnificent one made by the Japanese War Department, Chō-sen resembles the outspread wings of a headless butterfly, the lobes of the wings being toward China, and their tops toward Japan.

Legend, tradition, and geological indications lead us to believe that anciently the Chinese promontory and province of Shantung and the Korean peninsula were connected, and that dry land once covered the space filled by the waters joining the Gulf of Pechili and the Yellow Sea. These waters are so shallow that the elevation of their bottoms but a few feet would restore their area to the land surface of the globe. On the other side, also, the sea of Japan is very shallow, and the straits of Corea, at their greatest depth, have but eighty-three feet of water. That portion of the Chinese province of Shing King, or Southern Manchuria, bordering the sea, is a great plain, or series of flats elevated but a few feet above tide water, which becomes nearly impassable during heavy rains.

A marked difference is noted between the east and west coasts of the peninsula. The former is comparatively destitute of harbors, and the shore is high, monotonous, and but slightly indented or fringed with islands. It contains but three provinces. On the west coast are five provinces, and the sea is thickly strewn with islands, harbors and landing places, while navigable rivers are

more numerous. The “Corean Archipelago” contains an amazing number of fertile and inhabited islands and islets rising out of deep water. They are thus described by the naturalist Arthur Adams:

“Leaving the huge, cone-like island of Quelpaert in the distance, the freshening breeze bears us gallantly toward those unknown islands which form the Archipelago of Korea. As you approach them you look from the deck of the vessel and you see them dotting the wide, blue, boundless plain of the sea—groups and clusters of islands stretching away into the far distance. Far as the eye can reach, their dark masses can be faintly discerned, and as we close, one after another, the bold outlines of their mountain peaks stand out clearly against the cloudless sky. The water from which they seem to arise is so deep around them that a ship can almost range up alongside them. The rough, gray granite and basaltic cliffs, of which they are composed, show them to be only the rugged peaks of submerged mountain masses which have been rent, in some great convulsion of nature, from the peninsula which stretches into the sea from the main land. You gaze upward and see the weird, fantastic outline which some of their torn and riven peaks present. In fact, they have assumed such peculiar forms as to have suggested to navigators characteristic names. Here, for example, stands out the fretted, crumbling towers of one called Windsor Castle, there frowns a noble rock-ruin, the Monastery, and here again, mounting to the skies, the Abbey Peak.

“Some of the islands of this Archipelago are very lofty, and one was ascertained to boast of a naked granite peak more than two thousand feet above the level of the sea. Many of the summits are crowned with a dense forest of conifers, dark trees, very similar in appearance to Scotch firs.”

The king of Corea may well be called "Sovereign of Ten Thousand Isles."

Almost the only striking feature of the inland physical geography of Chō-sen, heretofore generally known, is that chain of mountains which traverses the peninsula from North to South, not in a straight line, but in an exceedingly sinuous course, similar to the tacking of a ship when sailing in the eye of the wind. As the Coreans say, "it winds out and in ninety-nine times."

Striking out from Manchuria it trends eastward to the sea at Cape Bruat on the 41st parallel, thence it strikes southwest about eighty miles to the region west of Broughton's Bay (the narrowest part of Corea), whence it bears westward to the sea at the 37th parallel, or Cape Pelissier, where its angle culminates in the lofty mountain peaks named by the Russians Mount Popoff—after the inventor of the high turret ships. From this point it throws off a fringe of lesser hills to the southward while the main chain strikes southwest, and after forming the boundary between two most southern provinces reaches the sea near the Amherst Isles. Nor does its course end here, for the uncounted islands of the Archipelago, with their fantastic rock-ruins and perennial greenery, that suggest deserted castles and abbeys mantled with ivy, are but the wave-worn and shattered remnants of this lordly range.

This chief feature in the physical geography of the peninsula determines largely its configuration, climate, river system and watershed, political divisions, and natural barriers. Speaking roughly, Eastern Corea is a mountainous ridge of which Western Corea is but the slope.

No river of any importance is found inside the peninsula east of these mountains, except the Nak-tong, which drains

the valley formed by the interior and the sea-coast ranges, while on the westward slope ten broad streams collect the tribute of their melted snows to enrich the valleys of five provinces.

Through seven parallels of latitude this range fronts the sea of Japan with a coast barrier which, except at Yung-hing Bay, is nearly destitute of harbors. Its timbered heights present a wall of living green to the mariner sailing from Vladivostok to Shanghai.

Great differences of climate in the same latitude are observed on opposite sides of this mountain range, which has various local epithets. From their height and the permanence of their winter covering, the word "white" forms an oft-recurring part of their names.

The division of the country into eight *dō*, or provinces, which are grouped in southern, central, and northern, is based mainly on the river basins. The rainfall in nearly every province finds an outlet on its own sea-border. Only the western slopes of the two northeastern provinces are exceptions to this rule, since they discharge part of their waters into streams emptying beyond their boundaries. The Yalu, and the Han—"the river"—are the only streams whose sources lie beyond their own provinces. In rare instances are the rivers known by the same word along their whole length, various local names being applied by the people of different neighborhoods. On the maps in this work only the name most commonly given to each stream near its mouth is printed.

In respect to the sea basins, three provinces on the west coast form one side of the depression called the Yellow Sea Basin, of which Northeastern China forms the opposite rim. The three eastern *dō*, or circuits, lining the Sea of Japan,

make the concave in the sea basin to which Japan offers the corresponding edge. The entire northern boundary of the peninsula from sea to gulf, except where the colossal peak Paik-tu ('White Head') forms the water-shed, is one vast valley in which lie the basins of the Yalu and Tumen.

Corea is, in reality, an island, as the following description of White Head Mountain, obtained from the Journal of the Chinese Ambassador to Seoul, shows. This mountain has two summits, one facing north, the other east. On the top is a lake thirty ri around. In shape the peak is that of a colossal white vase open to the sky, and fluted or scalloped round the edge like the vases of Chinese porcelain. Its crater, white on the outside, is red, with whitish veins, inside. Snow and ice clothe the sides, sometimes as late as June. On the side of the north, there issues a runnel, a yard in depth, which falls in a cascade and forms the source of the (Tumen) river. Three or four *ri* from the summit of the mountain the stream divides into two parts; one is the source of the Yalu River.

In general, it may be said to dwellers in the temperate zone that the climate of Corea is excellent, bracing in the north, and in the south tempered by the ocean breezes of summer. The winters in the higher latitudes are not more rigorous than in the State of New York; while, in the most southern, they are as delightful as those in the Carolinas. In so mountainous and sea-girt a country there are, of course, great climatic varieties even in the same provinces.

As compared with European countries of the same latitude, Corea is much colder in winter and hotter in summer. In the north, the Tumen River is usually frozen during five months in the year. The Han River at Seoul may be crossed on ice during two or three months. Even in the southern provinces, deep snows cover the mountains, though the

plains are usually free, rarely holding the snow during a whole day. The lowest point to which the mercury fell, in the observation of the French missionaries, was at the 35th parallel of latitude 8° and at the 37th parallel 15° (F.). The most delightful seasons in the year are spring and autumn. In summer, in addition to the great heat, the rain falls often in torrents that blockade the roads and render travelling and transport next to impossible. Toward the end of September occurs the period of tempests and variable winds.

A glance at the fauna of Corea suggests at once India, Europe, Massachusetts, and Florida. In the forests, especially of the two northern circuits, tigers of the largest size and fiercest aspect abound. When food fails them, they attack human habitations, and the annual list of victims is very large. The leopard is common. There are several species of deer, which furnish not only hides and venison, but horns which, when "in velvet," are highly prized as medicine. In the fauna are included bears, wild hogs and the common pigs of stunted breed, wild cats, badgers, foxes, beavers, otters, several species of martens. The salamander is found in the streams, as in western Japan.

Of domestic beasts, horses are very numerous, being mostly of a short, stunted breed. Immense numbers of oxen are found in the south, furnishing the meat diet craved by the people who eat much more of fatty stuff than the Japanese.

Goats are rare. Sheep are imported from China only for sacrificial purposes. The dog serves for food as well as for companionship and defence. Of birds, the pheasant, falcon, eagle, crane, and stork, are common.

Corea has for centuries successfully carried out the policy of isolation. Instead of a peninsula, her rulers have striven to make her an inaccessible island, and insulate her from the shock of change. She has built not a Great Wall of masonry, but a barrier of sea and river-flood, of mountain and devastated land, of palisades and cordons of armed sentinels. Frost and snow, storm and winter, she hails as her allies. Not content with the sea-border she desolates her shores lest they tempt the mariner to land. Between her Chinese neighbor and herself, she has placed a neutral space of unplanted, unoccupied land. This strip of forests and desolated plains, twenty leagues wide, stretches between Corea and Manchuria. To form it, four cities and many villages were suppressed three centuries ago, and left in ruins. The soil of these solitudes is very good, the roads easy, and the hills not high.

For centuries, only the wild beasts, fugitives from justice, and outlaws from both countries, have inhabited this fertile but forbidden territory. Occasionally, borderers would cultivate portions of it, but gather the produce by night or stealthily by day, venturing on it as prisoners would step over the "dead line." Of late years, the Chinese Government has respected the neutrality of this barrier less and less. One of those recurring historical phenomena peculiar to Manchuria—the increase and pressure of population—has within a generation caused the occupation of large portions of this neutral strip. Parts of it have been surveyed and staked out by Chinese surveyors, and the Korean Government has been too feeble to prevent the occupation. Though no towns or villages are marked on the map of this "No-man's land," yet already, a considerable number of small settlements exist upon it.

As this once neutral territory is being gradually obliterated, so the former lines of palisades and stone walls on the

northern border which, two centuries and more ago, were strong, high, guarded and kept in repair, have year by year, during a long era of peace, been suffered to fall into decay. They exist no longer, and should be erased from the maps.

The pressure of population in Manchuria upon the Korean border is a portentous phenomenon. For Manchuria, which for ages past has, like a prolific hive, swarmed off masses of humanity into other lands, seems again preparing to send off a fresh cloud. Already her millions press upon her neighbors for room.

The clock of history seems once more about to strike, perhaps to order again another dynasty on the oft-changed throne of China.

From mysterious Mongolia, have gone out in the past the various hordes called Tartars, or Tatars, Huns, Turks, Kitans, Mongols, Manchius. Perhaps her loins also are already swelling with a new progeny. This marvellous region gave forth the man-children who destroyed the Roman Empire; who extinguished Christianity in Asia and Africa, and nearly in Europe; who, after conquering India and China threatened Christendom, and holding Russia for two centuries, created the largest empire ever known on earth; and finally reared "the most improvable race in Asia" that now holds the throne and empire of China.

Chō-sen since acting the hermit policy of ancient Egypt and mediæval China, has preserved two loopholes at Fusan and Ai-chiu, the former on the sea toward Japan, and the latter in the northwest, on the Chinese border. What in time of peace is a needle's eye, is in time of war a flood-gate for enemies. From the west, the invading armies of China have again and again marched around over the Gulf of Liao Tung and entered the peninsula to plunder and to conquer, while

Chinese fleets from Shan-tung have over and over again arched their sails in the Yellow Sea to furl them again in Korean Rivers. From the east, the Japanese have pushed across the sea to invade Corea as enemies, to help as allies against China, to levy tribute and go away enriched, or anon to send their grain-laden ships to their starving neighbors.

From a political point of view the geographical position of this country is most unfortunate. Placed between two rival nations, aliens in blood, temper, and policy, Chō-sen has been the rich grist between the upper and nether millstones of China and Japan. Out of the north, rising from the vast plains at Manchuria, the conquering hordes, on their way to the prize lying south of the Great Wall, have over and over again descended on Korean soil to make it their granary. From the pre-historic forays of the tribes beyond the Sungari, to the last new actors on the scene, the Russians, who stand with their feet on the Tumen, looking over the border on her helpless neighbor, Corea has been threatened or devastated by her eager enemies.

Nevertheless Corea has always remained Corea, a separate country; and the people are Coreans, more allied to the Japanese than the Chinese, yet in language, politics, and social customs, different from either. As Ireland is not England or Scotland, neither is Chō-sen China nor Japan.

In her boasted history of "four thousand years," the little kingdom has too often been the Ireland of China, so far as misgovernment on the one side, and fretful and spasmodic resistance on the other, are considered. Yet ancient Corea has also been an Ireland to Japan, in the better sense of giving to her the art, letters, science, and ethics of continental civilization. As of old, went forth from Tara's halls to the British Isles and the continent, the bard and the

monk to elevate and civilize Europe with the culture of Rome and the religion of Christianity, so for centuries there crossed the sea from the peninsula a stream of scholars, artists, and missionaries who brought to Japan the social culture of Chō-sen, the literature of China, and the religion of India. A grateful bonze of Japan has well told the story of Corea's part in the civilization of his native country in a book entitled "Precious Jewels from a Neighbor Country."

Corea fulfils one of the first conditions of national safety in having "scientific frontiers," or adequate natural boundaries of river, mountain, and sea. But now what was once barrier is highway. What was once the safety of isolation, is now the weakness of the recluse. Steam has made the water a surer path than land, and Japan, once the pupil and anon the conqueror of the little kingdom, has in these last days become the helpful friend of Corea's people, and the opener of the long-sealed peninsula.

Already the friendly whistle of Japanese steamers is heard in the harbors of two ports in which are trading settlements. At Fusan and Gensan, the mikado's subjects hold commercial rivalry with the Coreans, and through these two loopholes the hermits of the peninsula catch glimpses of the outer world that must waken thought and create a desire to enter the family of nations. The ill fame of the native character for inhospitality and hatred of foreigners belongs not to the people, nor is truly characteristic of them. It inheres in the government which curses country and people, and in the ruling classes who, like those in Old Japan, do not wish the peasantry to see the inferiority of those who govern them.

Corea cannot long remain a hermit nation. The near future will see her open to the world. Commerce and pure Christianity will enter to elevate her people, and the