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The British Salt Trade in the Nineteenth Century

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competition against which many sound bankers have raised a protest. The introduction of means for obtaining business by which the old relationship of bankers to their clients is being reversed, and which has led to banks being asked to tender for accounts, is an evil which must rebound on the community at large, for the ability of banks to satisfy the requirements of the public depends very largely on their capability of earning those profits without which the principles of sound finance cannot be carried into effect. There are many contingencies, both present and future, besides current expenses and dividend payments, to be provided for out of profits. The easier the flow of possible national savings into the hands of those most likely and most capable of placing them to their best uses, the more complete will be the removal of all hindrances to the most beneficial application of the vast machine known as industrial organisation.

EDWARD E. GELLENDER

NOTE.—The calculations are based on figures contained in the *Banker's Magazine* for April, 1901.

THE BRITISH SALT TRADE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

In 1801 the salt tax, which had been raised to 10s. per bushel, was condemned in a report of a Committee of the House of Commons. The financial needs of the country were, however, so urgent that in 1805 the tax was still further increased to 15s. per bushel. In a petition presented to Pitt in that year against the duty on salt when exported, it was stated that the capital invested in the salt works, rock pits and lighters amounted to £436,000 over and above the the capital employed in carrying on the trade, and that 2,950 individuals were engaged in the works exclusive of those dependent on them (Holland's *Cheshire*). During the ten years ended in 1806 the average quantity of white or manufactured salt brought down the river Weaver amounted to 139,017 tons.

On April 3rd 1818 a public meeting was held in Liverpool in favour of the repeal of the excise on salt. According to Pieton's *Memorials of Liverpool* great stress was laid on the frauds on the revenue in connection with the rebate on exported salt. The duty was paid at the Salt Works, but as salt attracts moisture, and was conveyed by water to Liverpool, there was a gain of weight when transshipment took place there, and on such of this increased weight as was exported the manufacturer or his broker was able to claim a drawback at the rate of £30 per ton on duty which had not been paid at the Works. In 1823 the duty was reduced from 15s. to 2s. per bushel, and it was provided that in 1825 the duty should be repealed. There was as might be expected considerable increase in the quantity of salt used. The abolition of the duty permitted the use of salt in the manufacture in this country of chemicals on the Leblanc system. In

1823 the Muspratt works at Liverpool were started. The value of salt exported in 1828 was £154,000.

McCulloch gives the salt export in 1833 as about 12 million bushels, or about 300,000 tons. Of the quantity 98,110 tons went to the United States, 39,271 tons to Holland and Belgium, 41,180 to British North America, 35,326 to Russia, and 26,269 to Prussia. The same authority gives the average annual supply of white salt sent down the river Weaver for the three years ending 1834, both for home consumption and exportation, as 368,594 tons. The average cost per ton in 1839 was 14*s* to 16*s*. At that period the Cheshire salt trade was said to employ about 300 flats or lighters of an average carrying capacity of 70 tons, and employing, inclusive of carpenters and builders, about 1,200 men. It was said that altogether there were about 8,000 individuals employed in the salt trade in Cheshire, and the capital embarked in it was estimated at from £600,000 to £700,000. Steady increase in production followed. In 1844 the East Indian market was opened up. Extension of production was further accelerated by the adoption of the policy of free trade. The increase of supplies imported oversea and the corresponding growth of the mercantile marine afforded opportunities for cheap freights outwards. In some cases shipowners requiring ballast weight for ships on outward voyages, would carry salt at a normal or ballast rate of freight, would carry it free, or purchase it from manufacturers and be content, if on arrival at destination they could sell it at the price they paid for it. In 1853 the quantity of salt exported was 520,000 tons, value £270,000, an average of 10*s*. 4*d*. per ton. In 1860 the quantity had increased to 700,000 tons, value £360,000, or 10*s*. 3*d*. per ton. In 1870 there was a further expansion to 760,000 tons, value £380,000, or 10*s*. per ton.

There had also during this period been great expansion in the chemical and other industrial arts, and a consequent increase in the demand for salt. The average annual production from 1841 to 1860 had been 880,000 tons. In 1870 the quantity of salt produced was 1,540,000 tons.

In the early seventies the Franco-German War considerably reduced the production of salt in both belligerent countries; and Belgium, Holland, and countries adjacent thereto, drew more largely upon the United Kingdom for their salt supplies. Contemporaneously there was a great increase in the price of commodities generally, particularly in iron, steel, and coal, which enter largely into the cost of production and transport of salt, and in the case of coal to one half the cost of production. Increased price combined with increased trade led to profits being increased not only in proportion to the tonnage, but also in proportion to the higher cost of production.

So great was the apparent prosperity of the trade at this period in Cheshire, that its members bore without flinching or protest the continuance of a tax or toll of 1*s*. per ton on white salt, and 6*d*. per ton on rock salt carried on the Weaver navigation. This toll was imposed

for the maintenance of the navigation, but the receipts on this high basis were much in excess of the expenditure, and the balance, amounting to very substantial sums yearly, went under the Weaver Navigation Acts to the county exchequer for county purposes not connected with the navigation. In Liverpool also Dock and Towns Dues were imposed, which bore a high *ad valorem* ratio to salt. In the quinquennium, 1865 to 1870, the average price of salt exported had been 11s. per ton, in the following quinquennium, 1870 to 1875, the average was 14s. 10d., lowest 10s. in 1871 highest 19s. in 1873.

The exports still continued to increase. The figures for 1860 and 1870 have already been given. In 1875 the quantity had still further increased to 917,514 tons. Under these attractive conditions, production was greatly stimulated; established works were extended, new works were built. The number of pans, as the vessel, in which the brine is boiled are called, had been 752 in 1867, in 1876 they amounted to 1311. This increase in nine years of 76 per cent. in pannage did not, however, fully represent the increase in productive power, for the newly erected pans were larger and therefore of greater capacity than the old. From an average export value of 15s. per ton in 1875, salt fell in 1876 to 12s., and in the following year to 11s., that also being about the price in 1880, whilst for the quinquennium, 1875 to 1880, the export average was 11s. 7d. per ton.

In 1877, according to the governmental return (Mining and Mineral Statistics), [the quantity of white salt and salt in brine used for alkali raised in the United Kingdom was 2,735,000 tons. Production was then at its zenith. Since that date, although there have been some ups and downs in the tonnage, the tendency of the trade has been downwards. In 1899 the quantity was 1,914,893 tons of salt and salt in brine. In 1880 the quantity of boiled salt exported was 1,050,000 tons as against 760,000 in 1870, an increase of 38 per cent. This increase was not proportionate to the increase of pannage before referred to. The power of effective production had now far outstripped the demand. Among the causes of the decreasing export demand were the development of the salt fields of Germany and the United States. Germany, during the decade 1870 to 1880, had increased her export trade $2\frac{1}{2}$ fold, from 40,000 tons to 100,000 tons. The demand for salt for the United States was also being lessened by the development of salt fields there. In 1840 the quantity produced in the States was 150,000 tons, in 1870 it amounted to 400,000, and in 1880 to 670,000 tons.

Reduction in demand with increase in supply, led to lower prices and diminished profits, and this in turn led salt manufacturers to enter into agreements from time to time by which prices were fixed on what the manufacturers considered a remunerative basis. Idle plant would, however, sometimes tempt a manufacturer to terminate his agreement and to apply profits gained thereby to the extension of plant, in the hope that his profits would in the aggregate be increased by a larger tonnage at a smaller rate of profit per ton. The majority of the

members of the salt trade did not seem to clearly recognise that the industry was over built, and that the great increase in demand which they had experienced was in some measure transient and due to accidental causes.

A writer in the *Liverpool Courier*, on April 17th, 1889, some six months after the establishment of the Salt Union, wrote :

“Matters by no means improved between 1881 and the establishment of the Salt Union last year. Several times the proprietors attempted to establish a ‘ring,’ but just as invariably did jealousies and a desire to secure special advantages break up the combination. Considerable fluctuations in prices followed, but as the superiority of the Cheshire salt trade depends upon the natural superiority of the product as well as the fact that in the great salt markets abroad there is no competition, increase of prices was found to have no effect upon the export.”

The writer of the foregoing may by his penultimate sentence have meant to state that in some of the years to which he referred decrease in price did not prevent decrease in tonnage. The qualities exported and their value were in the quinquennium prior to the Salt Union.

	Tonnage.	Value. £	Average price per ton. s. d.
1883	1,004,313	645,009	12 9
1884	947,410	611,537	13 0
1885	924,869	672,427	15 8
1886	804,807	587,962	14 7
1887	818,713	524,860	12 10

Average price for quinquennium 13s. 9d. per ton. It will be observed that in the period the export tonnage had decreased by 185,600 tons, or 18.48 per cent.

In 1888, there was an increased competition among the manufacturers with consequent reduction in price. There were rumours of the formation of a combine or trust, whilst in view of a possibly higher range of price, extensive contracts were entered into at the old rates. In 1888, there was an increase of 80,000 tons in the exports, the quantity being 898,671 tons, value £485,915 or 11s. per ton. A large number of members of the salt trade, as well as the public, doubtless shared the view of the writer in the *Courier*, that “in the great salt markets abroad there is no competition.” More careful consideration of the position would have shown that continental production had also increased largely, that the 1,700,000 tons estimated to have been produced on the Continent in 1830 had become over 4,000,000 tons in 1885, that Germany was still increasing its export trade from 40,000 tons in 1870 to 100,000 in 1880, and to 155,000 in 1887; and that from South-West Europe of special kinds and qualities there were exported 400,000 tons yearly. In Asia and America salt fields were being developed. India was producing 500,000 tons yearly, and the United States was in 1888 producing 1,050,000

tons as compared with 670,000 in 1880, 400,000 in 1870, and 150,000 tons in 1840.

It was under such circumstances that the Salt Union was incorporated on October 6th, 1888, with a share Capital of £3,000,000, in 100,000 7 per cent. Preference shares of £10 each, and 200,000 Ordinary shares of £10 each, and a 4½ per cent. Debenture issue of £1,000,000. The object of the company was stated to be the consolidation of

“the undertakings of the salt proprietors of the United Kingdom, with a view to ending reckless competition, which injuriously affects the salt industry without conferring any adequate advantage on the public.”

Agreements with some sixty-five persons or firms were scheduled in the prospectus, in which it was stated that

“some of the salt firms have been established upwards of a century, their salt brands are known throughout the civilised world, and the benefit of their personal business connections will, for the most part, be preserved.”

The gentleman who reported on most of the properties, and who is on the present Board of the Union, stated in a report quoted in the prospectus:

“It has long been evident to all conversant with the salt trade, that the only bar to its great success has been disunion amongst its members. During the intervals that associations have prevailed, large fortunes have been made. The company, by uniting practically all the Union’s works, will secure that unity which has been lacking, and will, by preventing reckless competition, secure prices for salt, which, whilst most amply paying all the shareholders, will not be felt burdensome by the purchasers. Few trades in the country are capable of being so easily united and worked, and no trade can earn such good dividends without raising prices to a prohibitory or injurious point.”

Competition amongst the salt manufacturers had, it was stated, so reduced prices that in some cases some qualities of salt were being sold at less than cost of production. The advances in price made by the Union were very substantial, particularly in the home market, and in a proportionate degree also in foreign markets. Buyers, anticipating this increase, had in many cases covered their requirements by contracts, so that the increase in price did not become immediately operative.

The *Economist* of October 13th, 1888, in criticising the prospectus, said:

“We are not, of course, denying the right of the salt proprietors to combine if they see fit. In our opinion, they are using the wrong remedy. The natural cure for such headlong competition as that which is alleged to prevail in the salt trade is the gradual elimination of the weakest producers. Any other remedy is, we are certain, predestined to ultimate failure.

If, however, the Syndicate believes otherwise, let them try their experiment. . . . It is to be remembered, however, that the competition has avowedly

been the result of over production, and if that be the case, the combination can work upon prices only by reducing the supply into nearer accordance with requirements."

An immediate consequence of the formation of the Union, and of the increase in price, was that the Salt Makers' Association, which had previously been almost entirely a friendly society, became a federated Trades Union. Its membership was largely increased, its administration became more effective, and it was able to obtain largely increased rates of pay for its members.

Shortly after the Union was formed complaint was made through the columns of the newspapers by wholesale purchasers of salt, that the price charged for their supplies was higher than the prices which it had been reported had been fixed by the Union. It then appeared that the majority of the vendors had, in selling their businesses, stipulated under various and varying covenants and conditions, that they should act as purchasers, selling agents, or brokers for the Union, and in one case a certain area had been reserved by a vendor as a district in which he was to have the sole right of selling rail-borne Union salt. The vendors who had these covenants were called distributors, and as it soon became evident to the directorate of the Union that they could not fix a universal price for the same quality of salt, irrespective of quantity, time, place, or other circumstances without creating trade irritation and inviting competition additional to that which had already begun to manifest itself, difficulties soon arose between the distributors and the Union.

It was considered by those mainly instrumental in forming the company that the whole of the effective rock salt and brine lands in the United Kingdom were being merged in the Union, but the great increase in price, particularly in the home market, gradually brought into cultivation disused and less advantageously placed salt lands, and also districts in which by diligent search brine lands had been found. The quantity produced by competitors was at first small, and being offered at a lower price than Union salt, commanded a ready sale. Competitors came into existence in Cheshire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, Durham, and Antrim, and salt deposits at Fleetwood and Barrow were developed. Writing at the time of the formation of the Salt Union, Professor Thorold Rogers pointed out the probability of additional salt deposits being worked, and in his *England's Industrial and Commercial Supremacy* said :

"It is a rule in production which speculative economists are apt to entirely lose sight of, that existing industries, however they may have originally come into existence, make desperate efforts to survive, and will endure a long period of depressive prices before those who are interested in them are willing to witness a total loss of capital they have invested in the undertaking. I should infer, therefore, that the power of combination as a check to the reputed evils of competition is precarious, temporary and liable to ruinous reversal."

Abroad further impetus was given to the development of German

salt properties for export purposes, and Russian, Asiatic, American, and Australian salt properties for native use. The German Empire Statistics (September number, 1890,) gave as one of the chief reasons for the great increase in the export of rock salt from Germany, the organisation of the English Salt Union. It pointed out that as regards the export to India, the increase had been aided by the import of rice from that quarter to Gestemunde. The same return showed the increase of the salt productive power of Germany as follows:—

	Mines.	Salines.	Factories.
1880.....	9	61	10
1890.....	14	64	4

The rock salt production which had increased to 415,000 tons in 1888, further rose in 1891 to 667,000 tons. France also was increasing her output. This had been 632,000 tons in 1888, and became 811,000 tons in 1891, and 974,000 in 1892.

To Russia a considerable quantity had been exported (even in 1833 it was 35,326 tons), but the quantity was declining. The Russian Consul-General in St. Petersburg in a recent report stated :

“The Russian salt industry began to develop as an important industry in March, 1880, when by an Imperial ukase the excise duty on the same was abolished. Thus, during the ten years 1871 to 1880, whilst the excise was still in force, the production of salt in Russia did not exceed 693,000 tons, whilst from 1888 to 1897, it amounted to nearly double, and the price decreased accordingly.”

The export to the United States was also decreasing. The increase in salt production in that country has already been referred to. In 1885 the British salt exports to the States amounted to 235,291 tons. In 1897 it was 92,862 tons, and in 1900 it was 81,260 tons. As by way of comparison it may be mentioned that the export to the States in 1833 was 98,109 tons. Returns for 1889 showed the total export for that year as 666,757 tons, value £538,513, an average of 16s. 2d. per ton, as compared with 898,671 tons at an average of 11s. per ton in 1888. In 1890 there was a slight rally, the tonnage increasing to 726,021, value £652,671, or 17s. 11d. per ton. In 1891 these figures were not maintained, but the tonnage was slightly higher than that of 1889, it being 671,265 of the value £596,408 an average of 17s. 9d. per ton.

In 1891, there was divergence of opinion on the Board of the Salt Union with regard to the “policy of prices.” The minority retired, and at the extraordinary general meeting on August 8th, 1891, the then Chairman stated the future policy of the Union and *inter alia* said, “The first thing the directors think necessary in foreshadowing the line of their policy, is that there should be a careful revision of prices with a view to reduction when and where necessary. If we are able to come to an agreement with our distributors, which we hope we may, the revision of prices in different districts will be made very much easier.” This policy was endorsed by the share-

holders at that meeting. As Mr. McCrosty pointed out in the *Contemporary Review* for March 1899, in his article on "The Growth of Monopoly in English Industries," the general tendency in all the large combinations has been to secure larger profits for the manufacturers, not only by the barrier created to prevent fall of prices, but also by the elimination of middlemen's profits and the creation of direct relations between producer and consumer. Among the other examples cited by Mr. McCrosty may be mentioned the Cycle and Sewing Machine trades, Breweries in their relations to tied houses, Chemists in relation to the Mineral Water trade and Liptons.

In the case of the Salt Union, however, an additional race of profit sharers, was created, or, to speak more correctly, vendors were allowed to retain interests for themselves or their sons as privileged distributors. Although, judging from the more recent speeches of the former Chairman of the Company, the covenants of most of the vendors have been acquired, the Company still has some privileged distributors.

The policy of revision of prices, owing partly to the continuance of distributors could not be carried out with great success. Supply in excess of the demand had become the normal rule prior to the Union, and whilst there was a continuously decreasing demand the higher range of prices created competitors who offered additional supplies. About 1880, of the salt produced in the United Kingdom, 45 per cent. was exported, 35 per cent. was used in the industrial arts and for agricultural purposes, and 20 per cent. was used for domestic purposes, such as cooking and condiment.

In each of these spheres causes were operating to reduce the demand.

The diminution in demand for export arose from a variety of causes. In addition to those already referred to may be mentioned the recrudescence of protective ideas and the fiscal regulations increasing, or as in the case of the United States, reimposing, the duty on salt, the development of salt properties in other countries (*inter alia*, Germany, Russia, United States, India, Red Sea ports, South Australia), and the extensive change from Sail to Steam as the motive power in shipping. Many of the new steamers were fitted up for water ballast, and to a fairly large extent cheap ballast (or even free) freights for salt were reduced in number.

The largest quantity of salt used in the industrial arts had been in the manufacture of alkalis.

Up to 1875 solid salt only was used in this manufacture, but since that date there has been a continuously and steadily increasing use under the Solvay process of salt contained in brine for this purpose. In these cases the alkali manufacturers have settled on brine lands and have dealt with the brine direct. The tonnage of ordinary salt manufactured has been correspondingly diminished.

In 1880 the amount of brine decomposed by the soda ammonia pro-

cess was only 270,400 tons. In 1896 it had increased to 428,600 tons. In 1890 the amount of solid salt decomposed for making alkali by the older methods was 602,769 tons. In 1896 it was only 360,929 tons.

In the home markets, owing to change of taste on the part of the public, there was a lessened demand for salt in the curing of bacon and other meats and for cheese and butter making. Not only was less salt being used for these purposes, but the import of provisions prepared abroad was increasing.

Increased sources of supply and considerably decreased demand with intensified competition quickened reductions in price. The legal obligations of the Union and its heavy nominal capital burden was an assurance to other salt manufacturers that its prices would be maintained substantially above cost.

In 1892 and 1893, the exports showed further, but lessened, declines, the tonnage being 654,136 and 636,135 and the values £539,262 and £504,500, the prices per ton being 16s. 6d. and 15s. 10d. respectively. In 1894 owing primarily to some improvement in the Indian market the quantity exported increased to 768,999 tons, value £406,105, or 15s. 9d. per ton. The improvement was not maintained in 1895, when the quantity fell to 740,548 tons, value £546,219, or 14s. 9d. per ton. In both these years, however, there was considerably increased trade with the United States, owing to the duty having been taken off salt under the Wilson Act. The duty has unfortunately since been reimposed.

Protected by the duty, the salt manufacturers of the United States have largely increased their works, and this increased production would largely hold British salt in check should the duty be again abolished. Indeed the position of the salt manufacturer in the United Kingdom and the States seems very similar. Thus a correspondent of the *Financial News*, writing from New York, under date April 4, 1900, says:

“Owing to peculiar natural conditions, the National Salt Company, commonly called the Salt Trust, although it controls 90 per cent. of the American production, and regulates current prices, does not appear to be in a position to protect its industry against extensive competition. . . . The strength of the independents lies in the fact that for several years there has been an over-production of salt, and prices have been maintained at their high level only by restricting the output. . . . Of thirteen blocks in Warsaw district, not more than six are in operation. Thus, it is a question, not of supply and demand, but of putting salt in the market more cheaply than the Trust, which it is said can be done.”

In 1896 the export of salt from the United Kingdom amounted to 660,935 tons of the declared value of £470,330 an average per ton of 14s. 3d. In 1897 the quantity was 668,685 tons, value £466,533, an average of 14s. per ton. Speaking of the trade of the Union at the annual meeting in February, 1898, the then chairman stated that during the last seven years the average price had fallen 3s. 4d. per ton. This

of course included both export and inland salt. At the same meeting the chairman of the company comparing 1891 (when the then Board became responsible) with 1897 pointed out that the policy of his Board as regards distribution and price for Indian salt had been successful in maintaining the export tonnage to that country; for comparing these two years German salt tonnage had decreased 50 per cent. whilst British had increased 10 per cent., although this had involved a decrease of 7s. per ton in price.

In the early part of 1898 a Salt Union distributor, who was also a shareholder in that Company, imputed the position of the salt industry in this country to maladministration on the part of the Salt Union, complaining that its power to sell salt was constantly decreasing. Supported by the majority of the shareholders who voted, he nominated as a new Board a number of Liverpool gentlemen of whom he said "their commercial standing and experience will enable them within a reasonable period, to bring about an improvement in the position and prospects of the Company." This prognostication has, however, not been realised, for the power of the Salt Union to sell has still further decreased owing in part to the continued shrinkage of the salt trade. Thus the tonnage of salt sold by the Union, which was 1,014,000 tons in 1897, fell to 967,000 in 1898, to 924,000 in 1899, and to 853,000 tons in 1900. The tonnage and value of the salt exported from the United Kingdom during the last three years has been

	Tons.	Value. £	Average price. s. d.
1898	689,178	460,319	13 6 per ton.
1899	628,445	447,162	14 2 ,,
1900	547,937	457,830	16 9 ,,

The increase in the price of salt during the last three years has been due in some measure to the increase in cost of manufacture consequent upon the increased cost of fuel, but more largely to temporary arrangements or agreements as to price entered into by the salt manufacturers of the country. These increases have naturally decreased the power of the British salt manufacturer to compete in foreign markets. The difficulties with which he has permanently to contend were thus described by a writer in the *Liverpool Journal of Commerce* so recently as October last:

"The source of the troubles in the English salt trade are the seemingly inexhaustible supplies of cheap salt which have been opened up in America, on the Continent, in Arabia, Africa, and Australia. Instead of England being the principal source of supply for these countries, they are not only supplying themselves with salt, but are offering their abundant supplies to consumers in other countries."

It cannot be anticipated that British salt manufacturers will strive to retain the export trade in salt where, owing to the competition of other salt-producing countries, a price cannot be obtained which covers

cost of production, and includes a reasonable ratio of profit. Prices fixed, however, with a view of showing profits on a capital value based on a fictitious monopoly, prevent approximation to foreign competitive prices, and are injurious to the permanent interests of the British salt trade. Revision of export prices, with some increase in export tonnage, may not unnaturally be looked for, if the Salt Union reduces its capital and brings that account more into conformity with present day values.

J. M. FELLOES

“ DESCRIPTION OF COREA ”

SUCH is the title of a Russian work, just issued (in 1900) at St. Petersburg and “ compiled in the *Chancellerie* of the Minister of Finance.” It consists of three volumes of over a thousand pages, beginning with the history and geography of Corea and ending with a list of some seven hundred works on that country in various languages. A map, based on one issued in 1883 by Peterman’s *Geographische Mittheilungen*, but augmented and corrected by the Russian Government, according to the travellers Vebel and Delotkevich, is appended. This production shows that M. de Witte takes a deep interest in the “ Hermit Nation.” As the leading publications on Corea are in English, it may perhaps be opportune to refer rather to those portions of the compilation which are of Russian origin, and possess an economic and financial interest.

We are told that difficulties encountered by all the Powers in concluding commercial treaties were overcome by Japan in 1875. In 1882 America, followed by the principal States of Europe, also made conventions to promote trade. Li Hung-Chang recommended the German Mollendorf as director of Corean Customs. Russia sent Weber with credentials in 1885.

We next come to recitals of hostile intrigues between Conservatives and Radicals, the former evidently backed by Russia and the latter encouraged by Japan. The so-called “ Club of Independence ” formed at Seoul, whose professed object was to spread useful knowledge and advance education, soon took a prominent part in all political events.

The King of Corea, fearing for his personal safety, as the Queen had been murdered, sought shelter in the Russian Consulate on the 11th of February 1896. On the 1st of February 1897, he left the Consulate and occupied his new palace. The Russian compilers state that the king “ begged the Russian Government to send him instructors from Russia to reorganise his army, and also an experienced financier to control the financial and customs administration of Corea.” The Russian Alexeieff therefore superseded the Englishman McLeavy Brown. In 1898 the Russian Government recalled her financial adviser and military instructors, as Corea signified it could dispense with foreign support.