



Notes on Corea and its People

Author(s): H. S. Saunderson

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courage ; and secondly, because human flesh is relished. Cannibalism, originating apparently from stress of adverse circumstances, has become an acquired taste, the indulgence of which has created a peculiar form of mental disorder ; with lack of feeling, love of fighting, cruelty and general human degeneracy as prominent attributes. All parts of the human body are eaten, with the sole exception of the generative organs, which are respected by superstition. An organised traffic in human flesh still exists in many parts of the Upper Congo ; men, women, and children, being continually purchased and sold expressly for cannibal purposes.

NOVEMBER 13TH, 1894.

Prof. A. MACALISTER, F.R.S., *President, in the Chair.*

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and signed.

The elections of Col. C. K. BUSHE, Rev. J. G. JENKINSON, Messrs. VICTOR HORSLEY, J. S. KRAUSS, B.A., R. C. BROOK, J. GRAY, B.Sc., J. KENNEDY, A. P. MAUDSLAY, and Miss H. PENGELLY, were announced.

NOTES *on* COREA *and its* PEOPLE. By H. S. SAUNDERSON.

Race.

THERE is little doubt but that the Coreans are of Mongolian extraction, but the frequency with which features, almost European in refinement and Caucasian in cast, are met with seems to point conclusively to the fact that the natives are not all of the same family, a fact which greatly adds to the difficulty of tracing the race to its source. To increase the difficulty, the Coreans themselves have very vague ideas on the subject, and, though the antiquity of their race is the one point on which *par excellence* they pride themselves, their early records have been so scattered and destroyed in the course of their numerous wars with China and Japan that little if any information has been obtained from them. In the early Chinese records, however, we have a tolerably complete account of the events which led to the conquest of the country by one of the wandering tribes of Mongolia. I trust I shall be excused if I give the merest outline of this story.

In the year B.C. 1122 Ki-tzu, one of the principal ministers of the last Emperor of the Shang dynasty, left China with some 5,000 followers after the assassination of his master, and proceeded to the somewhat mythical kingdom of Fuyu which is supposed to have been situated in Manchuria on the South bank of the Sungari River, and which was an offshoot from the larger kingdom of Korai situated on the north bank of the river. Here Ki-tzu settled down with his followers and became king of the country. In the course of years the population increased to such an extent that a large portion led by one Kao (or Ko) migrated southwards and formed the kingdom of Ko-Korai, so called by Ko in order to perpetuate his own name and that of the nation from which his race had originally sprung. In the third century of our era this nation, then having become very powerful, pursued its way southwards into Northern Corea driving out the aborigines as it marched and eventually founded a kingdom with Ping-yang as capital. Dropping the first Ko of Ko-Korai they re-named their nation Korai—in Chinese, Kao-li—whence its modern appellation, Corea. In the eleventh century A.D. this nation absorbed the two States which occupied the south of the Peninsula, and in A.D. 1392 the capital was fixed at Han-yang or Seoul (which means *capital*). Thus, if we accept this story, we see that the race is a mixture of the Chinese of the Shang dynasty, the Fuyuans, and the aboriginal tribes, which will account for the presence of the different types among the Coreans of to-day. The country is also known as Chao-hsien (or, in Japanese, Chosen), which was the name of an ancient nation inhabiting what is now the Chinese province of Shing-king.

Physique.

The Coreans are a tall finely-built race. The average height of the men I should put down as about 5 ft. 6 in., but the women are remarkably small, averaging little above 5 ft.

In features the men are more pleasing than either the Chinese or Japanese and approach more nearly to the European cast of countenance than do either of those races; while the women on the other hand are far plainer than their Chinese and Japanese sisters.

The cheek bones of both sexes are high and prominent, and the eyes small and set widely apart: but the latter are far less oblique than those of the Chinese and are usually black or dark brown in colour. The eyelids droop heavily over the eyes so as to almost conceal them. The nose is broad at the base and is more prominent than with most Asiatics. It is impossible, however, to lay down any hard and fast rules about their fea-

tures, for one frequently encounters eyes that are hazel or even blue in colour, and which are not in the least oblique.

Their hair is almost invariably black; sometimes, however, shading to a brown tint. Before marriage boys and girls alike part their hair in the middle and plait it into queues behind. After marriage the men cut off their queues and tie up what remains of their hair into upright columns on the top of their heads. It may here be remarked that the Corean manner of dressing the hair is the same as that of the Chinese before their conquest by the Manchus. The women part their hair in the middle and make it into chignons at the back of their heads, where it is secured with enormous hair-pins made of wood, silver, or jade, according to their rank.

Both sexes have extremely small hands which they are very careful to keep clean and soft. Their feet are also very small, but the women do not follow the Chinese custom of rendering them additionally so by cramping them in bandages. In complexion they are not so dark as the Chinese, nor are they so yellow. Their foreheads are remarkably high, a feature which would seem to denote a considerable amount of intelligence, and their voices are low and well-modulated.

Character.

The Corean is a very genial person if you treat him properly. Always ready to laugh at a good joke and to throw himself heart and soul into the fun of the moment, he presents an agreeable contrast to his more reserved relation, the Chinaman. He is intensely proud, but though he undoubtedly despises the foreigner, he does not allow his contempt to interfere with his good breeding. Foreigners are never cursed in the streets as they are in China, but in spite of their good manners I have not the least doubt but that the people, taken as a whole, would willingly kill every stranger in the country. They are arrant thieves, and in their utter disregard for truth, morality, and decency, they exceed both Chinese and Japanese.

For centuries their chief idea has been to be completely isolated from the outside world. To show the lengths to which they were willing to go to attain this end, it may be mentioned that they devastated a fair tract of country on their northern border, a proceeding which involved the destruction of three large towns and several villages, in order to keep the Chinese out of the country. They strove to restrict commerce to the holding of annual fairs, lasting half a day only, at Hunchun on the Tumen River and Ki-yu-wan near the Yalu, and remorselessly slew every foreigner who set foot in the country. They certainly had every excuse for this wish for isolation. Those

who have studied their history know the miseries they suffered from their innumerable wars with China and Japan, and will understand how they came to dread and distrust all foreigners. They adopted the only possible remedy which lay to their hands, but this protracted isolation has told heavily on them. From being a race of energetic warlike people, they have become a nation of loafers. Long years of stagnation have made them incorrigibly idle; no man ever dreams of doing any work unless he is forced to, or cannot make his wife do it for him. They have been aptly described as a nation of Micawbers. The sloth of the people shows itself in the institutions of the country. Everything is at a standstill: government, art, manufactures, and customs, have degenerated or remained stationary for centuries, and the people are quite contented that this state of things should continue. This exclusiveness, however, is in individuals counteracted by their curiosity, and the Corean is ever ready to avail himself of a foreigner's hospitality—too ready indeed, for after the first invitation he will come again and again on the slightest pretext, until the employment of a strong hint that he is not wanted becomes necessary.

Vanity is one of their weak points. Every Corean down to the commonest coolie carries about with him a piece of looking-glass and a comb, and during the intervals in his desultory occupation he will squat down on his heels, whip out his comb and looking-glass, and proceed to beautify and admire himself. He is exceedingly proud of his beard, and you have but to express your admiration of it to rise immensely in his estimation.

The Coreans by no means lack intelligence, as is shown by the extraordinary rapidity with which they will pick up a foreign language, but unfortunately, like most Asiatics, they assimilate with avidity all that is bad in European civilization, and either utterly disregard the good or turn it to an evil use.

Dress.

The sumptuary laws in Corea are very strict. The actual design of the dress is the same for all classes; but it is the material of which it is made and its colour that is affected by the law. The lower and middle classes may wear none but garments of cotton or hemp; while silk is the prerogative of the officials, who have the right also of wearing violet, which is a sign of good birth or officialdom. In design the dress, which is usually white, is simplicity itself, and consists of an enormous pair of trousers, which are tied on under the armpits, and two or more outer coats (or robes) reaching to the ankles. To these robes are attached strings of the same material, which are tied

high up on the right side of the chest. The socks are of thickly wadded cotton; and the foot-gear consists of straw sandals, in the case of the lower classes, and shoes lined with leather, with string soles and cloth uppers, in the case of the gentry. In wet weather the lower classes wear wooden clogs almost identical in shape with the French *sabots*. No man is allowed to wear the long outer robe till he is married; while single he has to don a much shorter garment, and when he is engaged to be married he sports a red jacket. The sleeves of the long robe are very large, and resemble greatly those of the Japanese *kimono*. The garments of both sexes are wadded in the winter, while the upper classes line theirs with fur—generally with sable.

The women's costume consists of a pair of white cotton trousers, so full as to be almost a divided skirt, which narrow considerably towards the ankles where they meet the socks. Over these is worn a very full skirt, generally white, kilted at the top into a band about 8 inches wide. This band it is considered correct to bind tightly round the chest under the arms, but the practice causes so much discomfort that the common women, who have to work hard, often tie their skirts lower down and leave the body between the jacket and skirt exposed. The jacket is not more than 6 inches long. It is sometimes yellow, green, or blue, and at other times white. The socks are similar to the men's.

The wives of soldiers are compelled to wear their husbands' green regimental coats thrown over their heads like shawls. The object of this law was to make sure that the soldiers should have their coats in good order, in case of war suddenly breaking out. The soldiers have long ceased to wear green coats, but the custom is still observed.

Coreans pay great attention to the cleanliness of their outer robes. No one who respects himself will ever appear in a dirty coat. Consequently the women's chief occupation consists of washing the raiment of their "lords and masters," and far into the night can be heard the tapping of the sticks with which the wet clothes are beaten—a most destructive process. As the clothes are but roughly tacked together and are glued at the seams with rice paste, they come to pieces every time they are washed, and have to be re-glued when dry. The starch used consists of a mixture of rice paste and honey, and it gives the surface a peculiarly beautiful gloss. It may be here remarked that Corean rice is much more glutinous than that of China, so much so that the Chinese dislike eating it.

In summer, basket-work frames are worn on the arms, back, and chest, under the robes, in order to keep the latter clean and dry and also for the sake of coolness.

The head-gear of the men is very extraordinary. In shape the hats are not unlike inverted flower-pots with broad straight brims. The brims measure about 2 feet across, and the crowns are about 6 inches high and 3 inches in diameter at the top. The shape is undoubtedly due to the way in which the hair is dressed. These hats are made of horse-hair, or very finely split bamboo, beautifully plaited, and are varnished as a protection against the weather. They are invariably stained black, except for half-mourning, when they are string-colour. They are usually fitted with bands which are tied under the chin, but, in the case of high officials, these bands are replaced by a very long string of beads joined at each end to the hat. This hat does not fit upon the head itself, but rests on a tightly fitting skull-cap held in place by strings tied round the head. The natives are very careful of their hats for they are very expensive, and when it rains they always protect them with little coverings of the oiled paper for which the country is famous, and of which they make their waterproof coats, tobacco pouches, and fans. The officials when on court duty wear even more extraordinary hats than these, but their shapes are so fantastic that it is perfectly impossible to describe them.

In the winter, fur and wadded head-dresses are worn under the hats. The best hats all come from the Island of Quelpart, at the southern extremity of the peninsula. The official servants wear hats made of black or brown camel's-hair felt with small round crowns and large flat brims; while those worn by the soldiers are much the same in shape as the gentry's but are made of black felt, have much smaller brims, and are bound with red. But the most peculiar of all are the mourners' hats, which are in shape not unlike enormous toadstools, and are so large as to completely hide the face. These are made of plaited bamboo strips and are not coloured.

The women wear no head-gear whatever, except in the winter when they don curiously shaped fur caps, which are open at the crown and are adorned in front and behind with red silk tassels.

Social Customs.

Up to the age of eight the boys and girls of the respectable classes are allowed to grow up together, but after that age the girl retires into the women's quarters where she lives in utter seclusion until her marriage. Marriage for her means but the exchange of one prison for another. She is taught that the most disgraceful thing a woman can do is to allow herself to be seen or spoken to by any man outside her own family circle. After

the age of eight she is never allowed to enter the men's quarters of her own home. After her marriage, which takes place usually at the age of 16 or 17, she is allowed to see no man but her husband. The boys in the same way are told that it is unbecoming and undignified to enter the portion of the house set apart for the females. The men and the women have their meals separately, the women waiting on their husbands. Thus, family life as we have it, is utterly unknown in Corea.

The men marry at any age, but usually at about 15 or 16, and it is considered correct for them to marry girls a year or two older than themselves. They never see their brides until the wedding-day, for all preliminaries are arranged by the fathers of the young couple whose inclinations are not consulted at all. Usually the matter is settled through the medium of a go-between, as in China. Very often the marriage is decided on when the future bride and bridegroom are in their early infancy, and it is not uncommon to see a little fellow of four or five wearing the red jacket which signifies his betrothal.

The marriage ceremony is a very simple affair. The bride and bridegroom invite their most intimate friends to assist them in dressing their hair in the manner befitting their new state. Then the bridegroom mounts a white pony, which is led by two servants while two others on either side support the rider in the saddle. Thus he proceeds to the bride's house, accompanied by his relations. At their destination they find a pavilion erected in the courtyard of the house, in which the bride and her relations are awaiting their arrival. A goose (the Korean symbol of fidelity), which the bridegroom brings with him, is then produced. The bride (who has to cover her face with her long sleeves) and the bridegroom then bow to each other until their heads almost touch the ground. This they do three or four times and they are man and wife. A loving cup is passed round and then the bride is taken off to the women's apartments of her husband's home, where she is looked after by her mother and mother-in-law, while the groom entertains his friends. Fidelity is imposed on the wife, but the husband is under no such obligation. He can marry but one wife it is true, but he is allowed as many concubines as he can afford. These however, never inhabit the same house as his principal wife. The husband is forced to maintain his wife properly and treat her with respect.

Marriage is the great event in a Korean's life, for he then attains man's estate. Before marriage, no matter how old he may be, he is treated as a boy, and has to maintain a deferential attitude towards the married men even though they be half his age. Widows are never supposed to re-marry, but

among the common people they frequently do so when they lack means of support.

There is great joy in the family when a son and heir is born. A woman who bears nothing but daughters or has no children is considered a disgrace to her husband, and in such cases she usually adopts a son of one of her husband's concubines. As with the Chinaman the great ambition of the Corean is to have an heir to succeed him and carry on the family.

In Seoul (the capital) they have a curious curfew law called *pem-ya*. A large bell is tolled at about 8 p.m. and 3 a.m. daily, and between these hours only are women supposed to appear in the streets. In the old days men found in the streets during the hours allotted to women were severely punished, but the rule has been greatly relaxed of late years. When a lady wishes to visit her friends, she is carried in a small square sedan chair, which is devoid of windows and is borne by two bearers. The bearers are not allowed to see her get into or out of her chair. So when their destination is reached they push the chair before them along the ground through the door of the women's quarters, and then hastily retire until their mistress succeeds in getting out—an exceedingly difficult feat, as the sides of the sedan are barely a yard long and the lady has to sit cross-legged and on her heels. The women are very graceful in their movements and their method of sitting down is peculiar and must be very difficult of attainment. The right leg is swung round behind the left, so as to form the figure of a cross, and then she very slowly allows her knees to bend until finally she is seated on her feet.

When a Corean servant wishes to enter a room he does not knock at the door, but stands outside and coughs in a peculiar way until bidden to enter.

The mourning colour is that of raw hemp or of string. A man has to mourn three years for his father and the same period for his mother. During the first period of his mourning, which lasts a year, he goes about in the mourner's hat already described, and holds a small screen before his face in such a way as to completely hide it. No man may speak to him nor interfere with him in any way, and during this period he may do no work. The French Jesuits made use of this very convenient disguise when they first came to Corea in 1835. After the first period of his mourning he lays aside this head gear and screen, and wears an ordinary hat of the same colour as his mourning clothes which are very coarse in texture and made of hemp.

It is an unwritten law in Corea never to turn away even the sorriest tramp from the door without giving him a meal; consequently there are very few beggars in the country.

The classes into which the people are divided are as follows. First come the civil and military nobility, named *niang-pan*, by whom the high offices of State are filled. The nobility is hereditary, and, though the king has the power of ennobling persons of the lower classes, such persons are greatly looked down upon by the rest. Then comes a small class of half-nobles who fill the lower official positions. After these come the civic class, which consists of the merchants, manufacturers, and artisans; and the people's class, viz., the villagers, farmers, fishermen, &c. Then follows the despised class, which includes the butchers and leather-workers. Curiously enough the people of this class, though despised, are usually chosen to fill the posts of clerks and secretaries to the prefectural officials. Below this class and on a level with the slaves come the Buddhist priests; the reason of their being placed so low in the social scale will be shown hereafter. There are two classes of slaves—Government slaves and those belonging to the nobility. They are very well treated and rarely evince any desire to become freemen. Indeed Coreans frequently offer themselves and their families as slaves to the richer nobles. Slavery, however, is fast dying out. The *niang-pan* (literally *the two classes*) never dream of doing any work: they are not allowed to. Even if reduced to the utmost poverty nothing will induce a noble to abase himself by working—he would rather die!

In person the Coreans are extremely filthy. They are commonly supposed to be washed only twice in their lives:—when they come into the world and when they leave it. Their ideas of cleanliness are confined to their hands, faces, and outer garments. The state of their bodies and inner clothes is best left to the imagination.

Food, &c.

These people are very coarse feeders. Their staple food consists of dried fish, chickens, beef, pork, venison, turnips, beans, rice, maize, honey, and *kimchi*. *Kimchi* is a dish peculiar to the country and is made of turnips, chilies, and dried fish, soured in native vinegar. This mixture is kept in jars until it ferments and is then eaten. It has a most atrocious smell, so atrocious indeed that I have never heard of a European being so bold as to taste the stuff. The richer classes improve the dish by the addition of *ginseng*—a native medicinal root much valued for its strengthening properties. This root, which is greatly prized by all Easterns, grows wild in Corea. A considerable trade is done with China in it, and it forms part of the annual tribute due to the Emperor of that

country. The beef is very good, the cattle, though small, being fine sturdy animals. The meat is almost invariably grilled. Mutton is unknown—except such as is imported for the use of foreigners—for sheep will not live in Corea; and, as in China, milk is not used as an article of food. Fish are usually split open and dried in the sun, but some kinds are eaten raw after being dipped in soy. Chilies are grown in vast quantities and are an invariable adjunct to their meals. In the autumn the roofs of the houses will be seen covered with them drying in the sun, and these vivid red patches produce a peculiar and picturesque effect on the landscape. Eggs are largely eaten—usually hard boiled—and the Coreans appear to be perfectly indifferent as to whether they are fresh or stale. Game of all kinds abounds and is eaten largely. Although fertile, the country is very deficient in fruits—persimmons and mulberries being the most common. Gourds, pumpkins and egg-plants, are extensively grown, and of the former they make their water-bottles, ladles, &c.

The foregoing comprise the principal articles of food, but the natives will really eat anything: dogs, rats, weasels, crows, magpies—none of these come amiss to them.

The Coreans squat on their heels when eating, and each person has a small low table to himself, though occasionally a friend will be invited to share his host's table. Chairs are used only on ceremonial occasions and by the officials. They eat with spoons and knives; chopsticks also are used but not so largely as in China.

The native spirits are made from rice or millet, and vary in colour from that of beer to that of pale sherry. Coreans are great drunkards, and the spirits, which are full of fusel oil and are drunk immediately after distillation, produce a tremendous effect on them. The blood mounts rapidly to the head and excessive drinking often causes the natives to run amuck. Drunkenness is considered no disgrace; indeed at dinner a certain amount of inebriety is a compliment to the host. Their wine cups are of brass and the spirits are often warmed.

Tobacco was introduced into the country by the Japanese, and the Chinese in their turn obtained the plant from Corea. The native tobacco is very good and is smoked all over the country by men and women alike. The men will squat for hours in front of their houses stolidly smoking their long pipes, while their wives work like slaves. The pipes are nearly a yard long, and are made with young-bamboo stems and metal bowls and mouthpieces. The Coreans have a characteristic method of doing work. Half of those engaged smoke while the other half attend to business; as soon as the first lot have

finished their pipes they take their turn at the work while the others have their smoke, and so on. Hence the Corean custom of counting time by pipes. If asked how long a piece of work will take, they will answer "Between two pipes" or "Between five pipes," and so on according to the length of time required. The Coreans do not smoke opium, nor do they take snuff as a rule. Fire is produced by flint and steel, which they always carry about with them, but of late years matches imported from abroad have come into use to a large extent.

Diseases.

The natives suffer greatly from small-pox, but have no dread of the disease, and it is an everyday experience to see men, women, and children, walking about unconcernedly with the eruption out all over their bodies. They are so anxious that their children should get over the malady early, that, when one member of the family catches it, those who have not had it are placed in the same bed as the sufferer. Children who have not had small-pox are not counted. Thus a father of five children, two of whom have not had the disease, will tell you he has but three. In Seoul, the bodies of those who have died of this disease are swathed in several layers of matting and placed on scaffolds, one above the other, against the N.E. wall of the city. There they are allowed to remain, apparently for ever, in order (it is said) to frighten the small-pox devil away from the city. Of late years the people have taken very kindly to vaccination.

The disease they most dread is peculiar to the country and is called *Impiong*. It is a virulent fever resembling typhus, and is very infectious. In Seoul, the patients are placed on the west wall of the city under very low mat sheds with a jar of water and some food. There they remain, visited occasionally by their relations, until they recover, which is seldom the case, or die. Although this treatment sounds barbarous it is really not so, as plenty of fresh air is the best remedy for the disease. If the patient dies, he is left on the wall until his family can get together enough money to bury him.

Almost the entire nation suffer from scrofula in one form or another. Usually its effect is to weaken the lungs and the result is consumption, to which they are very subject. To the same cause may be attributed their tendency to contract ophthalmia. The art of healing being in its infancy, unless the sufferer can manage to throw off the disease by himself, he gets gradually worse until at length he goes stone blind, and blind men are only too common in Corea. In the summer they are subject to cholera. This disease, however, comes in waves;

some years there will be very little of it about, while, in others, the people will die of it in thousands.

They are great fatalists and if a sick native makes up his mind that he is going to die, die he will and that too in spite of the best of treatment.

Religion.

It is hard to discover what religion the Koreans now profess. Confucianism supplanted Buddhism in 1400 A.D., but Confucianism can hardly be called a religion and the worship of the Sage is limited to the erection of tablets to his memory at the public expense. Ancestor-worship is universal, but neither can that be termed a religion; it is rather a form of filial piety. The worship of ancestors is confined to the burning of incense before tablets inscribed with the names of the departed.

Buddhism, in former times, was the established religion of Korea. It was introduced from China and flourished from A.D. 905 to A.D. 1392. Towards the close of that period, however, the Buddhist priests took to interfering in the Government of the country and headed numerous insurrections, until they were put down with a firm hand. The Bonzes were not allowed to enter the cities under pain of death, and as a finishing stroke Confucianism was universally adopted. The religion went from bad to worse; the temples became, and are to this day, sinks of iniquity; while the priesthood is a byword and a reproach, because of its evil practices. Its ranks are recruited solely from the lower classes, and, in consequence of the contempt with which they are regarded, their position in society is on a level with the slaves. In their palmy days the Buddhists did good service to the country. They were the chief, if not the only, disseminators of learning and to them the Koreans owe their language, which is said to have been invented in the eighth or ninth century by a learned Bonze named *Pi-tsung*. From Korea the religion spread to Japan and many of the special features of the great Buddhist Temples at Kioto and Kamakura are of Korean origin. Owing to the ravages of the Japanese, there are few temples now remaining, and these are almost identical in appearance with those of China.

Shamanism is rampant. The people are grossly superstitious and believe firmly in the continual presence among them of malign spirits. Every disease has a special devil of its own, and part of the cure invariably consists in propitiating it or striving to drive it out of the patient. Then there are the spirits of hills, water, air, trees, tigers, leopards, and so on *ad infinitum*. Soothsayers abound, and these are always consulted when important events, such as marriages, are about to take

place. Before burial, geomancers are called in to determine whether the place of interment is propitiously situated: if not, another is selected. If the *pung-sui*¹ (literally *wind and water*) of the burial ground is not good, they believe great disasters will befall the family. In order to propitiate the spirits of *pung-sui* curious bells with brass fish attached to the clappers are hung to the temple roofs, where they tinkle in the wind.

Graveyards are usually situated on hills and face the south, whence the good influences are supposed to come. In the case of the upper classes the family graveyards are protected from the north, whence come the evil influences, by horse-shoe shaped mounds. This is also the custom in China.

Devils are supposed to inhabit certain withered trees, and the natives are careful never to pass a devil-tree without throwing a stone at it or tying a piece of cloth to one of its branches. If they omit to do this, evil, they believe, is sure to come to them and their families. Often they erect little huts at the feet of these trees for the accommodation of the devils. When trouble befalls a Corean he will place an offering of rice and wine in one of these huts, and, should it have disappeared when he next passes, he believes the devils have forgiven him and that his troubles will pass away. When a death occurs, the family of the dead person gather round the body and beat gongs, kettles, and cans, with all their might for three days and nights, keeping up a monotonous dirge the while and never stopping for an instant. They believe that unless they do this, a devil will enter into the dead person, who will then come to life, try to kill them, and do as much damage as possible to the property. There are numerous witches and wise women, who are greatly respected.

The women usually wear bunches of charms, which include a pair of mandarin ducks,—an emblem of conjugal happiness,—and curious little twin Josses which are supposed to insure the wearer becoming a mother of sons. Cash inscribed with lucky characters are great favourites. They also wear images of butterflies and Buddha's fingers (a species of citron one end of which is shaped like a hand), and small round coin-shaped charms, but I am ignorant of the signification of any of these. Brass is the material most generally employed in their manufacture; but they are also made of silver, and decorated with enamel of different colours.

Arts and Manufactures.

As has been already stated, no progress has been made in either arts or manufactures for centuries. Worse than that,

¹ In Chinese *feng-shui*.

they have lost some arts for which they were formerly famous, and their skill in others has deteriorated. The art of making porcelain, for instance, seems to have entirely gone from them. Their pottery of to-day is of the crudest possible kind and has no artistic value whatever. It is strange to think that the Japanese learnt the art of making porcelain from the Coreans. In 1597, at the conclusion of Hideyoshi's second invasion of the country, the Daimio Nabeshima brought to Satsuma a colony of Corean potters, in order that his countrymen might be taught the art. Thus the famous Satsuma ware is nothing more or less than the ancient pottery of Corea, doubtless with improvements. It is a curious fact too that the Japanese should also in their turn have lost the art of making this wonderful porcelain. Since this invasion of the Japanese, they have ceased to bury pottery with the dead as was formerly their invariable custom. This pottery consists of flasks and bowls, in which were placed the wine and rice supposed to be required by the dead person on his road to heaven. Now-a-days, the wine and rice are placed on the graves, but are no longer buried in them. As it is a capital offence to dig up this pottery, it is very hard to obtain specimens.

The only likely reason for their extraordinary decadence in this art would seem to be that the Japanese forced all the best workmen to accompany them to Japan, and that, in the general demoralization that followed the war, no one had the heart or the time to continue the manufacture.

Another art that Japan owes to Corea is that of music, and yet now Corean music is excruciating to Japanese ears. Not that the music is of a debased type: on the contrary, a great deal of their music is very melodious, and, were it not for the running accompaniment they insist on keeping up on cymbals and drums, would be quite charming. Their musical instruments are very numerous, and comprise flutes, fiddles, curious instruments composed of bamboo pipes, zithers, guitars, and drums shaped like dumbbells.

The art of painting too seems to have gone from them, though they once must have possessed considerable skill as is shown by the painting on their ancient screens.

They manufacture a great deal of brass-work, of which metal nearly all their cooking and eating utensils are made, but they make little attempt at decoration. The great brass-fair is held at the New Year, and no brass will be found in the shops at any other season: consequently at that time whole streets are lined with booths where nothing but brass is sold, and an immense amount of business is done. They are very clever at inlaying iron with silver. Their treasure chests are almost always bound

with iron inlaid in this manner. The padlocks, which are curious, are also inlaid in this fashion, and they make highly ornamental tobacco-boxes of the same material. They also make very pretty boxes and cabinets inlaid with mother-o'-pearl, but what they are most famed for is their paper, which is said to be made of cotton wool. Some of it is so strong that, in former times, armour made of ten to fifteen layers of it was worn by the soldiers, and is believed to have been capable of resisting a musket ball. They manufacture very good material of cotton and hemp, but Manchester piece-goods are gradually supplanting the native article. Very little silk is manufactured in the country and most of it is now imported from China.

The houses are for the most part built of mud and wood. The framework of the house, which is constructed of rough beams, is first run up; then the roof—generally thatched but occasionally tiled—is put on; and lastly the interstices in the framework are criss-crossed with straw rope and then filled up with a mixture of mud and chopped straw. The houses are invariably of one storey, and are partitioned off into divisions—or *k'angs*—which are always of the same size, viz., 8 Corean feet square. Thus, a Corean who wishes to build a house will order one of so many *k'ang*, just as a Chinaman would contract for one of so many *chien*, and a Japanese for one of so many mats. The floors of the rooms are raised about a foot from the ground, and into the hollow space thus formed the hot air and smoke from the kitchen fire are conducted by means of a flue, while from it run chimneys half way up the sides of the house at which point they open into the air. A very small amount of fuel will suffice to turn the house into a gigantic oven, and in the winter the fire is kept going day and night. The Chinaman warms his bed only, but the Corean warms his whole house and sleeps on a mat on the floor, which is always covered with oiled paper to keep out the smoke. In the better class of houses special fireplaces are used for warming the *k'angs*, but usually the kitchen fire is made to serve the double purpose of heating the house and cooking.

They make very fine matting in Corea and that which they use for beds is nearly 2 inches thick and very soft. For pillows the upper classes use bolsters filled with rice, with ornamental bosses at each end, and the lower classes content themselves with logs of wood or anything else that comes handy. Some of the houses are built of rough stonework, but mud is the usual material employed. The windows are made of oiled paper, as glass is not manufactured in the country. If, however, a Corean can manage to get hold of a piece of glass, no matter how small, he will at once stick it in his window, thus making a

peep-hole. Ordinarily, when he wishes to look through his window, he puts his finger through the paper and pastes up the hole afterwards.

Amusements.

Among other games they play backgammon, dominoes, cards and chess. Their cards are thin strips of oiled paper divided up into four packs. The game they play is similar to whist, and the cards are cut and shuffled as with us. Card playing is forbidden by law and the amusement is confined to the lower classes. The children are fond of see-saw and have a curious game of jumping off spring-boards. They spring high up in the air off them and alight again on the board in a squatting posture.

As a race they are born gamblers and never lose an opportunity of indulging in the practice. Most of their games are played for money, usually with dice. At times they erect enormous swings with poles some 15 feet high, and swing to immense heights in a standing position. The peculiar thing about the games is that each game has a fixed season of the year allotted to it. Thus, they fly kites in the spring, swing in the summer, see-saw in the winter, and so on.

Their most extraordinary form of amusement, however—if indeed it can be called amusement—is stone-fighting. Every spring, leave is granted to the people to fight with stones, and the men (and even boys) proceed to open spaces where there are plenty of stones. There they form sides—usually town *versus* country—and have regular pitched battles. Every year quite large numbers are killed, and the wounded are legion. I have never been able to discover the origin of this curious practice.

Dancing girls are present at all important functions, and the Coreans will sit for hours watching them. These girls, who are called *ki-sang*, wear enormous head-dresses of false hair and are clothed in silk gauze, one colour over another, which produces a pretty shot effect. Their sleeves fall over their hands about half a yard, and are made of different coloured strips of gauze sewn together. Each girl has her name embroidered on her sash. The dancing consists of a series of graceful gestures and poses, the feet being little used, and the long sleeves are waved backwards and forwards in a very effective manner. They are not great singers, and there are no theatres in the country. Their music, of which they are intensely fond, I have already described.

Miscellaneous.

The children, with the exception of those of the very poor—boys and girls alike—are taught to read and write Corean. After the age of 8 the girls learn to sew, and how to keep house, in the seclusion of the women's apartments. It is a very curious fact that China and Corea, the two countries where women are most despised, should each be virtually governed by a woman, and that neither of these sovereigns should have attempted to ameliorate the condition of her sex.

If the boy is to become an official, he receives the regular Chinese education, for Chinese is the official language. He learns his Classics, and in due course goes up for examination at the capital of his province. If successful he proceeds to Seoul for further examination, after passing which he takes his degree, and is then considered competent to hold an official position.

The Government is an almost exact copy of that of China, and, as in that country, all Palace business is transacted in the small hours of the morning. When the king is in need of money he adopts the expedient of debasing the coinage, which consists of cash similar to that in use in China. At present the cash appears to be made of a mixture of brass and sand, in lieu of copper. Gold and silver coins are not in use, though the Japanese have made several attempts to introduce a coinage similar to their own. Gold exists in large quantities, but it is a monopoly of the king, and mining is forbidden under heavy penalties. A large amount, however, finds its way out of the country, more especially at Yuensan.

Sedan chairs and ponies are the only means of locomotion, the officials having the exclusive privilege of riding on donkeys. The native ponies are very small—seldom exceeding Shetlands in size—but they are very strong and will carry a heavy man with ease. The larger ponies of China and Japan are also seen. Their carts which are drawn by bulls are of a very rude description, and have but two wheels. The body of the cart resembles a huge ladder more than anything else, and in appearance the whole concern is similar to the French *camion*. There are two shafts between which the first bull is harnessed, and the rest of the team are connected by rope traces to the shafts. As the carts are not covered in in any way, they are not adapted for passenger traffic. Farm produce is usually carried on pack-saddles which are very clumsy affairs of wood. The load is first attached to the saddle and then saddle and all is lifted on to the back of the bull or pony. The saddle is not fastened on to the back of the animal, but is maintained in position solely by the weight of the load.

Coreans carry everything on their backs in rough wooden cradles called *chikkies*. The *chikky* is shaped like the letter A with a smaller V-shaped rest joined at right angles to it where the stroke of the A comes. It is from 3 to 5 feet long and is attached to the body by two loops of straw rope, through which the shoulders are passed. When loaded, the coolie bends slightly forward in order to maintain his equilibrium, and when he is tired he simply sits down and withdraws his arms from the loops of the *chikky*, which is so made that it will stand of itself. A strong Corean can carry upwards of 300 lbs. weight in this manner. The majority of the lower classes are engaged in farming or fishing. Their agricultural implements are very crude, and consist of ploughs, hoes, and spades. Bulls are yoked to the ploughs, which are made of wood and only turn up the soil lightly. The spades are made entirely of wood, and are so large and heavy that it takes three men to wield them. Ropes are attached to the handle near the blade, and are held by two men, one on either side of the spade; the third man thrusts the spade into the ground with the assistance of his comrades, who haul at the ropes, and the latter then lift the spadeful which the man at the handle guides to its destination. They use rakes made of bamboo; these are employed for collecting hay and leaves to feed the *k'ang* fires.

As seamen they are not enterprising and seldom sail out of sight of land. This is perhaps due to their vessels, which are similar in shape to those of the Chinese, being all of small size. Their fishing-nets are made of hemp. It may also be noted that geese are largely used as watch-dogs.

In concluding this imperfect sketch of the customs of the Coreans, I trust I may be allowed to express the hope that they will come well out of their present unfortunate position. The experience they are now undergoing is by no means a novel one to them, for on two previous occasions they have suffered in precisely the same way. Let us hope they will emerge this time unharmed from the struggle, and above all with a new and better form of Government.

Notes on the DOLMENS and other ANTIQUITIES of KOREA. By
W. GOWLAND, A.R.S.M., F.C.S., &c., late of the Imperial
Japanese Mint.

[WITH PLATE XVI.]

FOR many years during my residence in Japan, I had been interested in the country of Korea, and especially so, as it