KOREA LOOKS AHEAD

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KOREA LOOKS AHEAD

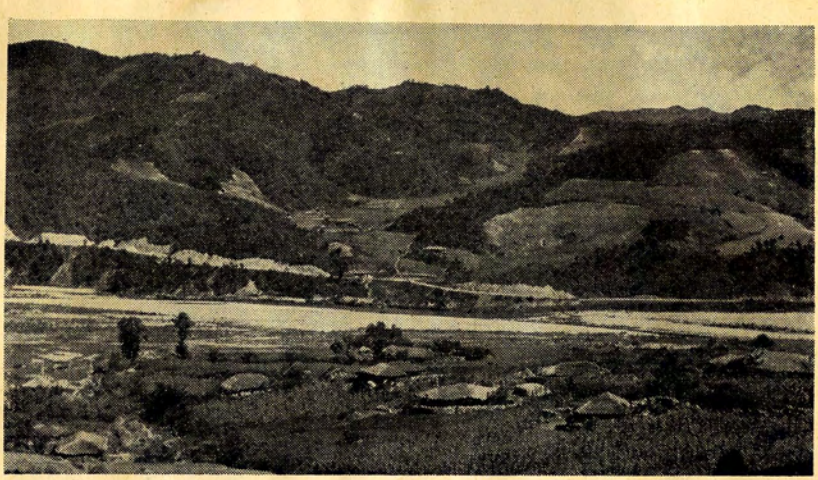
FIFTY YEARS AGO the people and rulers of Korea looked upon the United States as a friend in need. American missionaries, business men and advisers were active in the country. Article I of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the kingdom of Korea and the United States, concluded on May 22, 1882, proclaimed:

> There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the President of the United States and the King of Chosen [Korea] and the citizens and subjects of their respective governments. If other Powers deal unjustly or oppressively with either government, the other will exert its good offices, on being informed of the case, to bring about an amicable arrangement, thus showing their friendly feelings.

The Koreans hoped that the aid and friendship of America would enable them to preserve their independence against the encroachments of Japan. Although this hope was not fulfilled, a friendly feeling toward the United States and hope for help in the future still persist among Koreans.

But on this side of the Pacific, Korea was almost completely forgotten after her annexation by Japan in 1910, until the Cairo Declaration of December 1, 1943 again placed the problem of Korea before the world. It stated that:

> The aforesaid three great powers [the United States, Great Britain and China], mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.



A village in central Korea, seen from the road to the Diamond Mountains.

The defeat of Japan will remove the main obstacle to Korea's national development. She will again become an independent country, with pride in her heritage and with hope for the future. Her close ties with the United States, which were never completely severed by the Japanese intervention—largely owing to the efforts of missionaries—will undoubtedly be resumed and strengthened. In this pamphlet American readers will find answers to some of their questions concerning Korea—her people and resources, the story of her past, her present difficulties and future possibilities. It is the story of a peaceful people whose development was arrested by a ruthless conqueror. It is the story of a friendly but forgotten and neglected nation which we must rediscover.

OVER THE MOUNTAINS

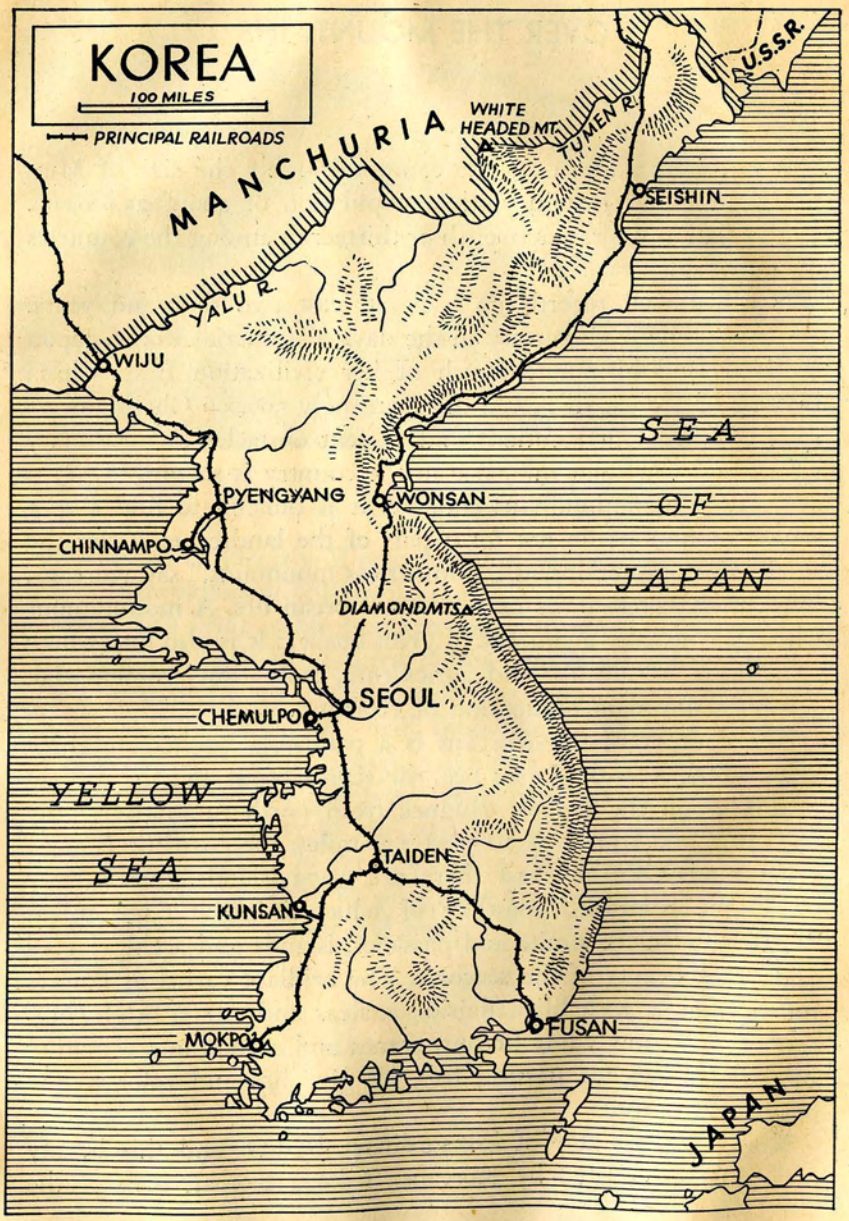
Korea is an eastern Asiatic country roughly the size of Minnesota or Great Britain, with a population of about 25,000,000. In population she ranks twelfth or thirteenth among the countries of the world.

Her historical records go back at least two thousand years. She was a civilized country in the days of Imperial Rome. Japan received Buddhism and much of her civilization from China by way of Korea. In Korea there are now 500,000 Christians, in spite of former persecutions and present obstacles to missionary effort, and Christian influence in the country is strong.

Korea is a mountainous country. It is difficult to find a spot where mountains do not form part of the landscape. "Over the mountains, mountains still, numberless mountains," say Koreans. This immediately gives us a clue to Korean life. A mountainous country is usually a country of great beauty; it is also one where agriculture is difficult, and agriculture, from time immemorial, has been the main occupation of Koreans.

The country of the Koreans is a peninsula washed on three sides by the sea—the Japan Sea, the Korea Strait and the Yellow Sea. Though the longest distance from north to south is only 463 miles and from east to west 170 miles, the coastline is 5,400 miles long. Off the coast there are 3,479 islands, mostly very small, the combined coastline of which is about 6,000 miles. Many bays, inlets, straits and passages, islands and archipelagoes add to the beauty of the seacoast. The brilliant carpet of flowers on the islands with lilies, daisies, azaleas and asters, bright butterflies, and snow-white herons, cranes and cormorants watching in the shallows for passing fish, all give life and color to the coastal landscape.

Korea is a country of extraordinary beauty, and this beauty is keenly appreciated by Koreans. Take a Korean map of the


KOREA
100 MILES
PRINCIPAL RAILROADS
MANCHURIA
WHITE HEADED MT.
TUMEN R.
U.S.S.R.
SEISHIN
YALU R.
WIJU
SEA
OF
JAPAN
PYENGYANG
WONSAN
CHINNAMPO
DIAMOND MTS.
SEOUL
CHEMULPO
YELLOW
SEA
TAIDEN
KUNSAN
FUSAN
MOKPO
JAPAN

country. You will find on it the Hill of White Clouds, the Great White Mountain, the Hill of Joy, Heaven-Reaching Summit, the Mountain of Lasting Peace and hundreds of other poetic names. The imagination of the villagers peoples the mountains and seas with dragons. The waterspouts are dragons, the typhoons are caused by dragons, and many wonderful stories are told about mountains which walk, fight or help the man in danger and otherwise behave as living creatures. Along the wayside and in the mountain passes one finds shrines at which the wayfarer may tender his offerings to the spirits that live in the mountain, in a brook or in a tree. Despite the influence of Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity, primitive animistic beliefs are still strong among the village folk.

In some parts of the country the mountains and hills are now bare of trees, and afforestation is one of Korea's problems. But in the north there are still great forests where one can meet mighty tigers, leopards, wild boar, deer, lynxes and wolves. Spruce, larch, birch, juniper and maple in the north give place to pine, oak, maple and alder in the south. Among the birds, one may meet in Korea such old friends as the crow, magpie, heron, crane, lark, oriole, sparrow, robin, quail and pheasant, and such migratory birds as the goose, duck and swan.

A MONSOON COUNTRY

The climate of Korea is moderate, reminding one of the Atlantic coast of the United States between North Carolina and Massachusetts, with the difference that, being a monsoon country, Korea receives most of its rainfall in the summer. In a country where two crops are often raised from the same field this concentration of rain in a few months makes irrigation imperative. Moreover, in some years the summer monsoons fail to come, resulting in a disastrous failure of crops and in famine, while in others the country suffers from an overabundance of rain. There have been days when in one place the amount of precipitation in a day, or perhaps in a few hours, would be

14 inches (i.e. as much as in Montana or South Dakota during an entire year). The result of this, naturally, is frequent floods, made more severe by the absence of large forests in central and southern Korea.

Being a narrow peninsula, Korea has few large rivers. The length of the Yalu, the longest, is only 491 miles. "Yalu," by the way, is the Chinese name for this river. Most Korean names are written in Chinese characters. In Korea these characters are pronounced in a Korean way, while the same character is pronounced by Chinese in a Chinese way and by Japanese in a Japanese way. Thus any Korean name (or any Chinese or Japanese name) is read differently by Koreans, Chinese and Japanese. The river called "Yalu" by the Chinese is called "Amnok" by Koreans and "Oryoku" by Japanese, but the character is the same and means "duck-green."

RIVERS AND WATER POWER

The Yalu river forms the frontier between Korea and Chinese Manchuria. It begins at the highest mountain of Korea and Manchuria—Paik Tu San, in Chinese Pai T'ou Shan, or White-headed Mountain, 9,008 feet high. Falling from this great elevation to sea level within 500 miles, the Yalu offers several locations for the construction of dams and the establishment of electric power stations. As we shall see later, water power is among the chief resources of Korea. The Tumen, the third largest river of Korea, 324 miles long, begins on the northern side of the same mountain and again forms the frontier of Korea, first with Manchuria and then for a short distance of twenty miles with Russia.

The main mountain range passes close to the eastern shore of the country. On the western side of the mountains the slopes descend gradually and make room for rivers; but in the east the mountains are steep and rugged and often fall abruptly to the sea. Coming from the sea one sees a beautiful but inaccessible barrier of forest-covered ranges, with summits covered with

snow or wrapped in clouds, and beautiful valleys through which rivers fall in cascades of silver.

We have noted that the eastern slopes of the ranges are abrupt as compared with the more gentle fall to the west. Modern science can make use of this difference: by boring tunnels through the mountains it becomes possible to turn away the mountain rivers from their westerly course, throw them down the precipices in the east, and harness the power thus generated to turn machines. Water power has transformed the quiet north into a region of modern factories, seat of the chemical industry, a mining region, where coal, iron ore, gold and other metals or ores are brought to the surface of the land. The south remains a region of quiet villages lost among the bright green rice fields, of small noisy market towns, of cities with their centuries-old walls and palaces from which life has gone.

RESOURCES, PRESENT AND POTENTIAL

Korea is fairly well endowed with natural resources. Because of its mountainous character, it can never become a great granary of the Far East; but with the possibility of gathering two or more crops from the same field, with improvement and expansion of the irrigation system, with energetic afforestation (which will make floods less destructive), and with greater use of fertilizers, Korea should be able to feed herself.

Her known reserves of coal are estimated at two billion tons, which is far smaller, for her population, than those of the United States but larger than those of Italy and many other European countries. The main reserve is anthracite. With careful use of her reserves Korea can for a long time satisfy her needs in coal. She has, however, no petroleum.

The greatest resource of Korea, which may go far to mitigate her shortage of coal, is her water power. It is estimated that the harnessing of her rivers may bring the total capacity of hydro-electric stations to five million kilowatts. This would mean that Korea could generate more electricity than France did in 1938,

or, on a per capita basis, as much as the United States in the same year. This means that Korea has a fairly good chance to become an industrialized nation. Moreover, the western coast of Korea has a special feature: the difference between its high and low tide is in some places as much as forty feet. Use of this difference for the generation of electricity by construction of dams at the narrow entrances of bays may add several million kilowatts to the capacity of her electric plants.

Korea is also rich in mineral ores. Her known reserves of iron ore are more than one billion tons. Only a small part of these ores have a high iron content, but much of the lower-grade ore can be exploited commercially. Recently new discoveries of high-grade ores have been reported. Korea is also rich in such light metals as magnesium, lithium and aluminum, and in lead, zinc, gold, graphite, mica and other ores and minerals. Although some of these ores are not of the highest grade, they are sufficient to build in Korea a modern industry on a level with many advanced European countries. The sleeping dragons of the Korean mountains may once more help Korea, this time in her struggle to uplift her population. They have been aroused by the present war and should not be permitted to fall asleep again.

AN ANCIENT NATION

Korean legendary history starts with a superhuman being, Tan Gun, the ruler of Korea more than 4,000 years ago. This Tan Gun and later his son ruled Korea for twelve centuries. The next stage in Korean history is more credible. It is said that in 1122 B.C. a Chinese noble, Ki Tse (in Korean, Kys-se), dissatisfied with a change of dynasty, emigrated from China to Korea, with 5,000 followers who brought with them the Chinese arts and crafts. They taught the Koreans the arts of agriculture, the construction of houses and the raising of silkworms. This legend has a historical basis. The Koreans, who in appearance are less Mongolian than the Chinese, yet taller than the Japanese, represent a people distinct from their neighbors, but much of their civilization came from China. Civil wars in China frequently sent to Korea waves of refugees who brought the natives new skills and arts.

We know with certainty that in 108 B.C. the northern part of the peninsula was conquered by the Emperor Wu Ti of the Han dynasty of China. A few decades later we find three kingdoms on the territory of Korea—Koguryu, Paekche and Silla. They frequently engaged in bitter struggles between themselves and with the Japanese. In the first century A.D. the Chinese method of writing came into use in Koguryu and a few centuries later spread to Paekche and Silla. In the fourth century the first two kingdoms embraced Buddhism and a century later Silla followed their example. These innovations greatly helped Korean civilization. Chinese practical sciences, philosophy and art were rapidly mastered by the Koreans. Korea already had a tradition of art, and under Chinese influence her artisans produced original works of great beauty and charm.

In the sixth and seventh centuries the Chinese attempted the conquest of the Korean states, but were repelled. In 660 Silla,

with China's aid, conquered Paekche and later Koguryu, and this northern state came to an end after more than 700 years of independence. Silla absorbed the other two states and, as an ally and tributary of China, reigned supreme in the peninsula.

Korea then enjoyed peace for more than two centuries. During this period many Koreans received their education in China, some were employed in the service of the Chinese Emperor in high positions, the country itself prospered, and there was calm "within the four seas." This was the golden age of Korean art, architecture and literature.

UNIFICATION OF KINGDOM

The decline of the Tang dynasty in China, suzerain of Korea, brought a rebellion in Korea. Wang Kien, a subordinate Korean officer, was its leader and by 919 he became the ruler of northern and central Korea with a capital at Songdo, a few miles from the present Seoul. In 935 Wang Kien defeated the forces of Silla and formed the Korea we know now, except that its territory then extended beyond the Yalu. His realm was named Koryu, from which we get the name "Korea." His descendants ruled Korea until 1392.

This was another brilliant period of Korean history. The country was centrally governed by a board of ministers under the king; it was divided into eight provinces each ruled by a governor, *Kam-sa*. Many young men studied the classics, literature and art in China, and from that time on an educated Korean knew the Chinese classics as the Chinese scholars knew them. Books in Chinese characters were printed from blocks of wood. Beautiful Buddhist temples, pagodas and monasteries were built and Buddhism became the established religion.

In 1218 Korea was devastated by Mongol horsemen and in 1260 the Korean king was compelled to recognize the overlordship of the Mongol Great Khan. Korean princesses were married to Mongol chiefs. In 1274 and 1281 Korea supplied ships and men for Kublai Khan's ill-fated expedition against Japan. The

Mother and child on a Korean farm.

Mongols were expelled from China in 1368 and twenty-four years later the last descendant of Wang Kien lost his throne.

The new king, former General Yi Syeng-kyei, known later as Yi Tai-jo, was the commander of the old king's troops, who revolted because of the decadence and internal corruption of the old regime. Yi reorganized the government; the Buddhist monasteries, which enjoyed great wealth and political influ-

ence, were deprived of their privileges and the cult of Confucius became the official religion. Appointments to office rested on personal merit as shown in competitive literary examinations, and this increased interest in the Confucian classics. The feudal powers of great landholders were curtailed; feudal levies were replaced by a royal army and it is even asserted that taxes were reduced. The new king built a new capital, Hanyang, which became known by the name of Seoul, i.e. simply "capital." The thoroughfares of the new capital were made broad, and a wall, fifteen miles in circumference, was built around it. A large part of this wall still exists. It is not so high and massive as the wall of Peking, but it is more picturesque because it follows the hills, climbing to the summits, dropping to the bottom of the valleys. It is 25 to 40 feet in height, has battlements all along it and eight arched gates with high tiled towers and curving gables.

CHINESE INFLUENCE

Korea's tributary position in relation to China should not be over-emphasized. Many countries at that time recognized Chinese suzerainty; it was an honorable position. Once a year a Korean embassy appeared at the Chinese court with presents and, as the Koreans assert with a smile, this embassy brought home more presents from the Chinese Emperor than were sent! But undoubtedly Chinese influence in Korea was strong. Korea used the Chinese calendar. Their system of examinations, the "complaint box" into which any subject could drop a petition to the king, the cult of Confucius—these and many other institutions came from China. But Koreans also made innovations of their own. They invented and used movable metal type and they invented an alphabet, *on-mun,* not syllabic like the Chinese script but a genuine phonetic alphabet, well adapted to the peculiarities of the Korean language. Under the new dynasty the national costume underwent a change, and white became, as it still is, the characteristic color of Korean dress. The styles of hats and hairdressing have not changed since then.

Korea enjoyed relative prosperity and peace for almost 200 years but her peace was broken by the Japanese. Though the Korean seacoast often suffered from Japanese pirates, the governments somehow would patch up relations, and the Japanese were not molested in Fusan, where they had a trading center. However, in 1590 Hideyoshi, the actual ruler of Japan, informed the Korean king of his plans to conquer China and demanded free passage for his troops on the way to China. The Koreans, faithful to their obligations to China, sent an indignant reply. On May 25, 1592, the first Japanese contingent landed in Fusan.

JAPAN'S FIRST OCCUPATION

War continued for seven years. The Japanese were at first successful, but when Chinese reinforcements arrived they were gradually driven back. Considerable help was rendered by the Korean invention of armored vessels. By the time Hideyoshi died, the Japanese were ready to give up the costly effort, and they withdrew. During their occupation they had taken to Japan many thousands of Korean artisans and scholars, as well as immense riches from palaces, temples, monasteries, libraries and private homes. The country was laid waste by seven years of war, famine, pillage and disease. Probably as many as a million people perished, and hatred of the Japanese remained in Korean hearts for centuries. Twenty-eight years later, in 1627, the Chinese Emperor asked Korean help against the Manchus. Again the Koreans were faithful to their obligations, and again they suffered for it. Their capital was captured and pillaged, their countryside devastated, and their king compelled to recognize the overlordship of the Manchus, who soon became the masters of China. But again, though each year an embassy of Koreans went to Peking with presents, Korea was free from interference in her internal affairs.

In the outer world Korea was forgotten for almost 250 years; it became a hermit kingdom which did not welcome foreigners to its shores. The shores themselves, uncharted and unexplored,

looked inhospitable; many ships were wrecked on their rocks.

During the early nineteenth century, Christianity had made headway in Korea, but the rulers, suspicious of everything foreign, put to death native Christians and missionaries. This act, as well as her unwillingness to open the country to foreigners, soon brought Korea into conflict with other powers. Finally, when the Korean king was unable to secure help from China, he signed a treaty of commerce and friendship with Japan in 1876. This was soon followed by treaties with the United States (1882) and with other powers. In these treaties Korea was dealt with as an independent, sovereign country. But China did not intend to give up her rights over Korea, and this led to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95.

ENTER WESTERN IDEAS

Korea was at that time, like other Asiatic countries, an absolute monarchy where the will of the king was law. The monarchy was weakened by internal decay and by the impact of Western power then sweeping over the Far East. The country was governed by a bureaucracy appointed not so much by examination as through bribes or court influence; the people were oppressed, the army undisciplined, the law out of date and ineffective. Under the influence of Western ideas a movement for sweeping reforms started among the Korean upper classes. The government tried to repress it, and the revolutionary leaders appealed to Japan for help. Soon they discovered, however, that the Japanese government was less interested in reforms than in domination. The Sino-Japanese War was ostensibly fought for the independence of Korea, but by the end of the war the king found himself a virtual prisoner of the Japanese. At this point Russia began to show a special interest in Korea. In 1896 the king of Korea escaped from the Japanese guards to the Russian legation with the seal of state and for a year he ruled the country from there.

The Japanese, who insisted that Korea was an independent

country, could do nothing about this for the time being, but they started preparations for a war with Russia. The Russo-Japanese War was also fought ostensibly for the independence of Korea, yet the Koreans were only involuntary spectators. In 1905 Korea was made a Japanese protectorate in spite of Korean protests and in disregard of all Japanese promises and treaty obligations. Defeated China and Russia could not help her, and other powers welcomed the Japanese protectorate. Several rebellions broke out in Korea, but all of them were suppressed by Japan's superior forces and in 1910 Korea was annexed by Japan. In the Imperial Rescript of Annexation the Koreans were promised by the Japanese Emperor "growing prosperity and welfare" and the annexation was described as "a fresh guarantee of enduring peace in the Orient."

JAPAN TAKES OVER

These promises were not kept. As will be shown later, during the forty years of Japanese domination, Korea has had no increase in either prosperity or welfare. Moreover, the Japanese ruled Korea with a heavy hand. The governors-general were selected from among the most ardent imperialists; the military police were all-powerful. Korean organizations were dissolved, and the partisans of reform were imprisoned or escaped abroad.

The Korean people did not become reconciled to their loss of freedom. In 1919 the funeral of the former Emperor was made the occasion for a tremendous demonstration. Korean representatives prepared a declaration of independence which was read in every city and village; huge demonstrations were held and Korean flags were waved amid shouts of "Long live Korea!" It was a peaceful demonstration, but it was drowned in blood by the Japanese administration, which was taken completely by surprise. Disturbed by the events of 1919, the Japanese attempted to win over the upper groups of Koreans by some concessions, but the attempt on the whole was unsuccessful, and the country continued to be ruled by force. The number of policemen was

larger than the number of teachers. Liberals, socialists, Communists and, in general, all persons suspected of harboring "dangerous thoughts" were hunted down, arrested by scores and hundreds and tortured by Japanese police. Yet their places were soon taken by others, and again and again the police were compelled to make wholesale arrests.

During the "liberal" rule of Admiral Saito men of property were given the right to participate in the election of advisory bodies in cities and provinces and the official propaganda line was that the Koreans were "junior brothers" of the Japanese. But the realities of life were stronger than official propaganda. All administrative positions of any importance, practically all industry, communications and banks were in Japanese hands. Is it then astonishing that all the arrests could not wipe out dis-

Street scene in Seoul. Main fire station is in background, police booth in front.

satisfaction and that the Koreans still cherished a hope of national independence?

During the Japanese administration almost all traces of foreign influence have been wiped out. The trade of Korea has been almost exclusively with Japan. Foreign entrepreneurs have had no chance to compete with Japanese. Any Korean who studied abroad was looked upon with suspicion, and almost the only channel through which foreign ideas could still reach Koreans was the Christian missions, which in spite of all restrictions succeeded in building up strong church organizations.

This short survey of Korean history shows that various forces took part in shaping the character and culture of the Korean people. The strongest outside influence was that of China, bringing Buddhism and Confucianism. The Mongol invasion also was not without influence; under Mongol rule the power of the kings became stronger, the centralization of government greater, and the treatment of criminals harsher. Japan could not influence Korea much because she herself received much of her culture from or through Korea, though in the last forty years Japan has been a vehicle through which Western knowledge and ideas filtered into Korea. Any new fashion in Japan, whether liberalism, Communism or some new literary school, soon found its followers in Korea.

However, one should not exaggerate all these influences. The masses of the population have been illiterate, tax-burdened, frequently out of touch with the governing groups which followed the new fashions. Buddhism and Confucianism penetrated deeply, but failed to suppress or destroy the animistic beliefs of the people. Official literature could not supplant the rich folklore of the Korean villages, while in art the Korean blended Chinese ideas with native. As a result a Korean is unlike both the Japanese and the Chinese in his language, appearance, dress and habits. Korea is a distinct nation proud of its traditions, its culture and its individuality.

KOREA'S PEOPLE

The latest census of the population in Korea, taken in 1940, reported 24,326,000 persons. The natural increase of population since then must equal about 900,000, and the total population of the country probably has passed the 25,000,000 mark. Of these only 600,000 are Japanese. There are also in Korea several thousand Chinese and a few hundred persons of other nationalities. Japanese residents are chiefly administrators, business managers, soldiers, policemen or merchants. They are the masters for the time being and monopolize the masters' occupations. Only a few thousand of them are connected with the land. The Chinese are chiefly merchants. Their families are in China and they are not permanent settlers. The other foreigners are missionaries, merchants and consular officials. Thus Korea has no minority problem—it is a country populated almost exclusively by Koreans.

Japanese domination brought a very important change in the distribution of the Korean population. More than a million Koreans are now in Japan, where they earn their living as coal miners, as farm hands, and in many other ways. About a million Koreans have settled in neighboring Manchuria, and in one district next to the Korean frontier (Chientao) they form a majority of the population. Two hundred thousand Koreans are found in the Soviet Union, 100,000 in China and 20,000 elsewhere. Thus the total number of Koreans residing outside of Korea is now about 2,500,000, or 10 per cent of the population. These Koreans preserve their language and customs and if conditions of life improve in their country, many will doubtless wish to come back from Japan and Manchuria, where they are at best just permitted to exist.

The natural increase in the population of Korea is about 1.1 per cent annually, which is greater than that of any European country (Russia excluded) and as great as some of the American

republics. But the American republics have a sparse population; they are young countries and a rapid increase of their population may be desirable. Korea, on the other hand, is an old country, densely populated, where there is not much room for newcomers. The density of population in 1940 was 285 persons per square mile as compared with 44 in the United States and 283 in the state of New York (including New York City). Because Korea is a poor country, the rapid growth of her population represents a very serious problem, which must be tackled by her government when she becomes independent.

Administratively Korea is divided into thirteen provinces, of which the southern ones are chiefly agricultural in character and the northern ones industrial. The population is more dense in the south than in the north, chiefly because the terrain and climatic conditions in the north are less favorable for agricultural pursuits.

Korea is a country of villages. As late as 1940 less than 15 per cent of the total population lived in cities with a population of 15,000 or more. But urbanization is growing and the capital of the country, Seoul (in Japanese, Keijo), now has a population of about a million, while the next city, Pyongyang (in Japanese, Heijo) is around 300,000.

CHANGING CUSTOMS

If all peoples of the world dressed alike, ate the same kind of food, professed the same religion, had the same customs, habits and thoughts, there would be no nationalities as we know them. Every nationality has developed certain particular types of dress, special ways of preparing food, certain customs, beliefs and ways of thinking which make a Chinese unlike an Englishman and a Japanese different from a Korean. National customs are now slowly becoming more alike, more cosmopolitan, but this process as yet has only begun to affect Korea.

Old Korea was a country which in spite of nearness and many cultural borrowings was unlike both China and Japan. But new

economic conditions, newspapers, advertisements and one of the greatest leveling forces, moving pictures, are producing the same results in Korea as elsewhere. Old Korea has begun to disappear. Old customs and beliefs are gradually giving way to modern beliefs and prejudices, to modern dress, modern schools and modern ways of life. Old Korea, however, is still strong. Agriculture is still the main occupation, and farmers are usually conservative folk. What one could see in Korea of old, when it was a "hermit kingdom," one can still see today in Korea, though less in the cities than in the villages.

FOOD HABITS

Some travelers assert that Koreans are enormous eaters. It is true that they enjoy their food and like to eat heartily when they can, but they are not always able to gratify this taste. Meat is rare. Few other countries have such a small number of cattle and poultry per head of population. In 1938 there were in Korea 0.56 head of cattle, 0.49 pigs and 2.35 fowls *per farm*. Cattle in Korea are used for work in the fields rather than for food. It is very difficult for the Koreans to be enormous eaters under these conditions. Even rice, the cereal which they like most, they are compelled to export to Japan, so that their own consumption of rice is falling.

The Koreans eat millet, beans, barley, potatoes and vegetables, especially radishes. They season their foods abundantly with mustard, garlic and cayenne pepper, and what a Korean lacks in rice and fish he makes up for with pepper. The main meal of a Korean consists of rice—or if he is poor, millet—cabbage, radishes in salt water, dried fish cut into thin pieces, cayenne pepper soup, all with a very strong odor. A tasty pickle, based on Korean cabbage, is part of the daily diet. Among their dainties are dried seaweed, shrimps, pine seeds, lily bulbs and boiled pork with rice wine. Koreans are the only people in this part of Asia who are not tea-drinkers. They prefer rice-water and infusions of sugar and orange peel.

KOREAN HOMES

The houses of the Korean poor (and this means about 90 per cent of the population) are small and simply built. First wooden posts are planted firmly in the ground; then the beams supporting the roof are placed between them and the cross beams are fitted into notches on top of the posts. The roof is made of straw or reeds. The walls are formed by filling the space between the posts with stone or wattle and plastering it with mud outside and in. The inside walls are often covered with white paper, and the windows are also made of paper. The floor, which serves also as a bed, is covered with thick yellow oil paper. Beneath the floor are flues through which hot air from a wood fire circulates, making the floor not only warm, but at times so hot that you may awake in the morning to find yourself well fried.

In central and southern Korea forests are few and firewood is expensive. And yet no respectable farmer will give his cattle food which is not cooked. The Japanese masters, on the lookout for all possible economies, worked hard to convince the Koreans that their animals did not need the luxury of cooked food. But the Koreans are an obstinate people and continue to hold that even if they themselves were treated as cattle by the Japanese, at least their cattle should be treated as human beings.

The houses of the rich are roofed with tiles and they have special apartments for entertaining friends. But however poor a Korean house and its inhabitants are, a traveler on the road, whether a Korean or a foreigner, is welcomed and given the best food to be found in the house.

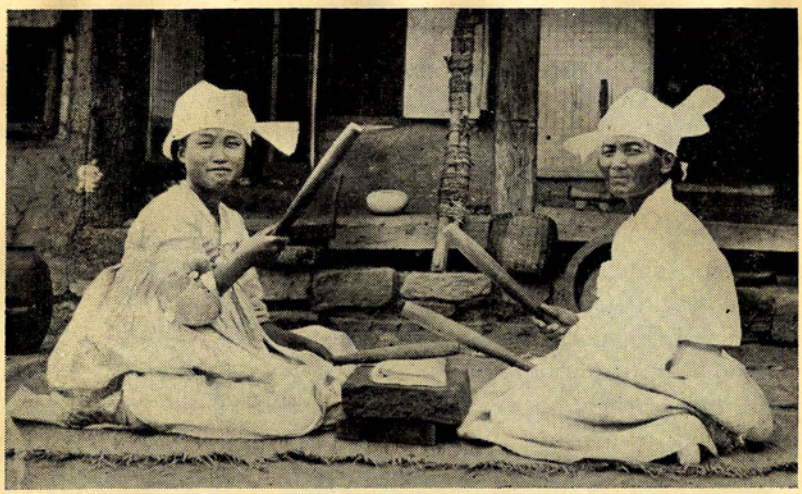
Before the house of a rich man there will be a square with a beautiful fountain and fish pond in which quaint fish of gold and silver and vermilion move slowly before the eyes of the spectator. There will be a garden with shady walks and pensive nooks inviting you to rest and contemplation. The Koreans are masters of this art. There are no chairs in the houses and the host and the guests sit on the floor cross-legged for hours, a practice which is trying for foreigners.

Korean homes, rich and poor alike, are open to everybody, except for the quarters of the women, into which no man from the outside dares to enter—except the investigating Japanese policeman! Everyone is always welcome in Korean homes, and conversation is going on all the time. Korean people do not see any reason to hurry through life—they prefer to enjoy it as they go along. Moreover, there are no newspapers except in the cities, and these are published by the Japanese. But the Koreans have their own time-honored means of spreading information, and news travels quickly through neighborly gossip. There is no doubt that lively discussions have been going on in Korean houses, discussions of what Japanese defeat will mean to Koreans.

HOW KOREANS DRESS

Throughout Korea after nightfall you may hear a low tapping sound—tap-tap-tap, tap-tap-tap. It is not the sound of a modern machine—it is gentler, less regular, more human. This sound means that Korean women are at work. Their husbands wear snow-white clothes and every Korean woman tries her best not to be behind other women in keeping them clean and white. These clothes have been washed in the stream which passes somewhere through or near the village, and now the woman is squatting on the ground before a large board and beating the man's dress with two pieces of wood, one in each hand. It is the Korean way of ironing. How much additional work these white garments involve for every Korean woman! Japanese officials have tried to persuade the Koreans to change from the impractical white to other colors, and Japanese textile manufacturers have been especially interested because dyed materials are more expensive. But again we see that the Koreans are a stubborn people and the Japanese arguments do not move them.

A Korean man wears baggy trousers and one or more short or long coats, with perhaps an extra coat for ceremonial occasions, depending on the means of the owner. All this is crowned with a hat, under which one will find an inner cap and then a



Ironing in Korea is done with wooden beaters on a stone block.

headband. The shoes are made of cloth with leather soles. The women wear one or more skirts, usually white or pale blue, with short bodices, which may also be colored. In the winter men and women wear padded coats.

Not all Korean clothes are white or blue. Korea is a country of chubby, smiling children, who are liked by everyone and who know that they are liked. On gala occasions the children are dressed in the brightest colors imaginable, so that a crowd of them reminds one of a carpet of wild flowers where crimson and blue and orange and violet are brilliantly mingled. Moreover, every man, woman or child in Korea in summer time has a fan made of colored paper, which has been soaked in oil so that when held against the sun it looks like the stained glass in a cathedral. Korean women understand how to make themselves beautiful with silks, ribbons, lipstick and rouge. They have an inborn charm and grace, and a feeling for the good things of this world. Korean shops in Seoul display a profusion of corals,

stones, ribbons, lacquered boxes inlaid with mother-of-pearl and exquisite embroideries. The owner of the store, smoking a pipe with a yard-long stem, will sit quietly in a corner while you admire all his beautiful wares: high-pressure salesmanship is beneath his dignity.

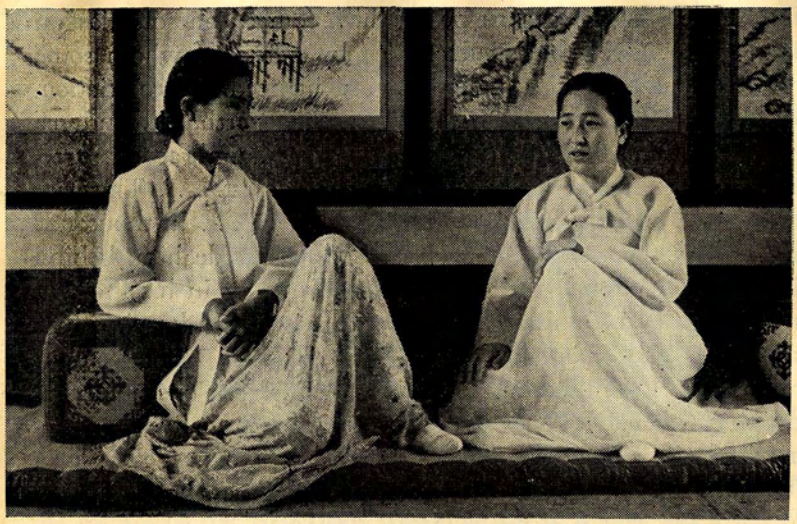
STATUS OF WOMEN

Here something may be said about the position of women in Korea. Although not high, it is somewhat higher than in most Oriental countries. In the Confucian scheme of things a woman occupies an inferior position. She cannot sacrifice to the gods, she cannot carry on the family line—although she can and does keep her own name after marriage. No special joy is expressed when a girl is born except when there are already boys in the family who will continue the family name. In the old days upper-class women were kept in seclusion and seldom appeared on the streets, but with the spread of education this custom is breaking down. Among the lower classes it has never been in vogue because working women must go out to work in the fields and to wash clothes in the streams.

The fact that wives do not share the social life of their husbands has created a special class of women, *keesang,* who sing, dance, and in other ways entertain their rich patrons. The concubines about whom one hears so much in stories of the Orient are also a privilege in which only the rich can indulge. The masses of Korean men are monogamists.

The man occupies a dominant position in the Korean family. In the middle and upper groups of Korean society his word is law for his wife and children, and he may spend his time in idleness smoking his long pipe and chattering with other men at the corner, while his wife is at home busy with the household. In the farming communities the position of the woman is somewhat better simply because there is more scope for her activities.

The average Korean family has five or six members. Thus it



Two hostesses, keesangs, in a restaurant show the proper way for women to sit.

is larger than the average American family of today, but about the same size as the American family of the frontier seventy or eighty years ago. Rich Korean families, however, often include several generations, with fifteen or twenty members, living together in one household.

Sons are welcome in the family because it is they who continue the family name, and the birth of a girl is not an occasion for congratulations. A wife who does not bear sons is held in contempt. On the whole the position of women in the old Korea is not a particularly happy one. This situation is rapidly changing, especially in the cities; but still the old customs and ideas are strong.

RELIGIONS MINGLE

Korea is unique among Oriental countries in that she has no dominant religion though according to the census Christianity has more adherents than any other faith. Probably the original native religion was shamanism, which is still strong. Near the

villages one often sees spirit posts which remind one of Alaskan totem poles. A Korean is surrounded by spirits, of whom some are kind, but many are malignant and in need of propitiation. Dr. G. H. Jones writes: "In Korean belief, earth, air, and sea are peopled by demons. They haunt every umbrageous tree, shady ravine, crystal spring, and mountain crest. . . . They are on the roof, ceiling, fireplace, kang, and beam. . . . In thousands they waylay the traveler as he leaves home, beside him, behind him. . . . They touch the Korean at every point in his life . . . they avenge every omission with merciless severity, keeping him under the yoke of bondage from birth to death." The demons are probably less numerous and their influence less overpowering now than when Dr. Jones wrote, yet they are still alive in popular belief. On many occasions a shaman's help is needed to propitiate them, and the shaman's services are apt to be expensive.

CHINA'S RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

From China Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism have come to Korea. Buddhism at one time was the state religion, but it was disestablished by the end of the fourteenth century and declined in influence, though in the number of its registered followers it ranks next to Christianity. Buddhist monks are vegetarians, because they are forbidden to take life, and, in theory at least, they observe celibacy. Their heads are shaved and so they are easily recognizable in a Korean crowd. Buddhist temples are usually found in picturesque, secluded spots in the mountains, from which a delightful view opens on the valley below. The temples are surrounded by beautiful gardens and in the shade of centuries-old trees pilgrims enjoy the cool air and quiet of the mountans. The monks of such temples are great philosophers and connoisseurs of good wine, and a visit to a temple in Korea may be compared with a visit to a mountain resort in the United States, though the architecture of the modern resorts cannot stand comparison with the beauty and exquisite workmanship of these Buddhist temples.

Confucianism is still strong in Korea, but as it is a philosophical system rather than a religion, its practice is often combined with propitiation of demons.

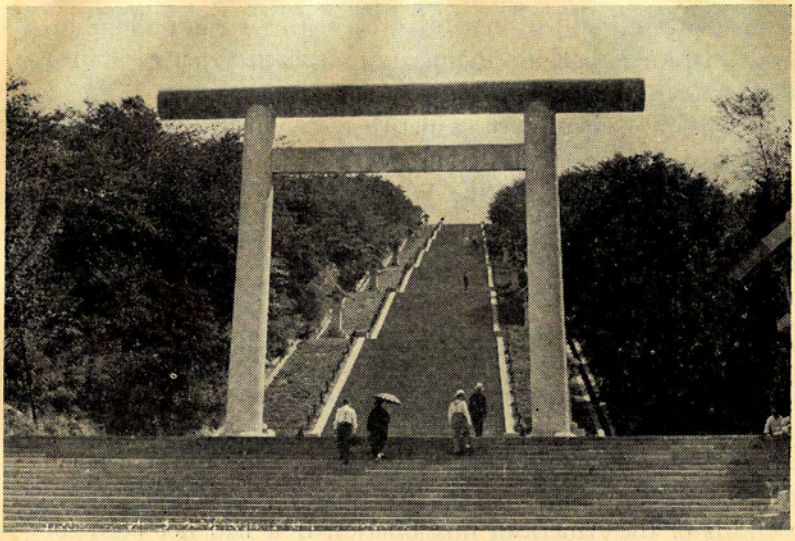
Korea has also a number of native sects which combine elements of the imported religions with some original features. Among these are Tendo ("the Way of Heaven," in Japanese), Jindo, and others. The strongest of them, Tendo, is credited with less than 100,000 followers. It has some social and political elements and has played a part in several rebellions.

CHRISTIANITY A STRONG FORCE

Christianity first appeared in Korea at the end of the eighteenth century and gradually spread despite persecution. Now there are more than half a million members of various Christian churches, and a considerable part of this achievement is due to the efforts of the American missionaries. If it had not been for the repressive measures of the Japanese who, fearful of foreign influence, curtailed many non-religious activities of the Christian churches, the number might be greater. The Christians have built many churches and schools, and were pioneers of modern education in Korea. Before the start of the present war they had strong organizations which may weather the present storm.

The Japanese have had a definite religious policy in Korea. This policy has been (1) the support and revival of all ancient creeds and beliefs; (2) opposition to modern Western influences; (3) propagation of the Japanese religion, Shinto. They restored and supported 106 memorial halls and mausoleums of the founders and rulers of Korea and performed sacrificial ceremonies at them, just as they supported the annual sacrifices at 44 shrines of ancient sages and scholars. They restored many Buddhist temples and supported them and made many efforts to spread in Korea Japanese sects of Buddhism. They also encouraged Confucianism—a conservative force in Korean society.

They discouraged Christianity and Christian organizations had to contend with numerous obstacles. The Japanese sneered at



Gate and steps leading to a Japanese Shinto shrine in Korea.

what they called "ten-cent Christians," meaning that the Korean converts turned to Christianity for the sake of material advantages. However, efforts to convert the Koreans to Shintoism were not particularly successful. In 1939 only 21,000 Koreans were registered as Shintoists, though certainly a Korean had a better chance to derive material advantages from embracing Shintoism than from embracing Christianity.

As mentioned above, no one religion predominates in Korea. The official figures on followers of all religions total only one million, the remaining twenty-four million are unclassified. In fact, like other Oriental peoples, Koreans find it quite possible to practice two or even three religions at once, now paying their respects at one temple, now at another. When a Korean villager is in trouble he may apply first to his own village gods, because this is the least expensive course. If this does not help, he may give alms at a Buddhist temple or ask a Buddhist priest to intervene for him. In case of sickness in the family a modern physi-

cian may be consulted; but if none is available, or if the patient fails to respond to his treatment, then some shaman may be brought in to enlist the aid of the invisible forces. Probably the new converts to Christianity also from time to time apply for the help of the old gods and demons. Religious tolerance and flexibility have on the whole been characteristic of Korea, and this was a great help to Western missionaries, for they did not have to meet the opposition of an established church.

BURIAL TRADITIONS

A few words should be said about Korean graves because in this case one may see how shamanistic, Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian ideas have been fused. Like China, Korea is a country where great respect is paid to ancestors, and ancestral graves form a prominent part of the landscape. Selection of the proper place for a grave is in the hands of a special profession known as geomancy. Many persons during their lifetime give much thought to selecting the proper place for their own graves and spend large sums on geomancers. When the head of the family dies, he is not carried at once to the grave—such haste would be improper. His corpse may remain for quite a few days in the house, the time depending upon the financial status of the family: the poorer the family, the less time for the propitiation of spirits. Then the funeral procession starts with lanterns and loud wailings. The son mourns for three years. White is the color of mourning and it has been suggested that Koreans always dress in white because their periods of mourning were so long that no sooner had one ended than another began.

But Korea is now in a period of transition and many old customs and beliefs are being discarded or weakened. The sites of the graves, for instance have always been considered sacred and the quiet of the graves could not be disturbed for any reason. Mining operations in the hills and mountains were often impossible because they would disturb the peace of the gods and spirits. But since 1933 the Korean landowners, forgetting about

the gods, spirits and the graves of their forefathers, have rushed to mine gold in the hills and mountains of Korea. The gold fever happened to be stronger than the hand of the dead.

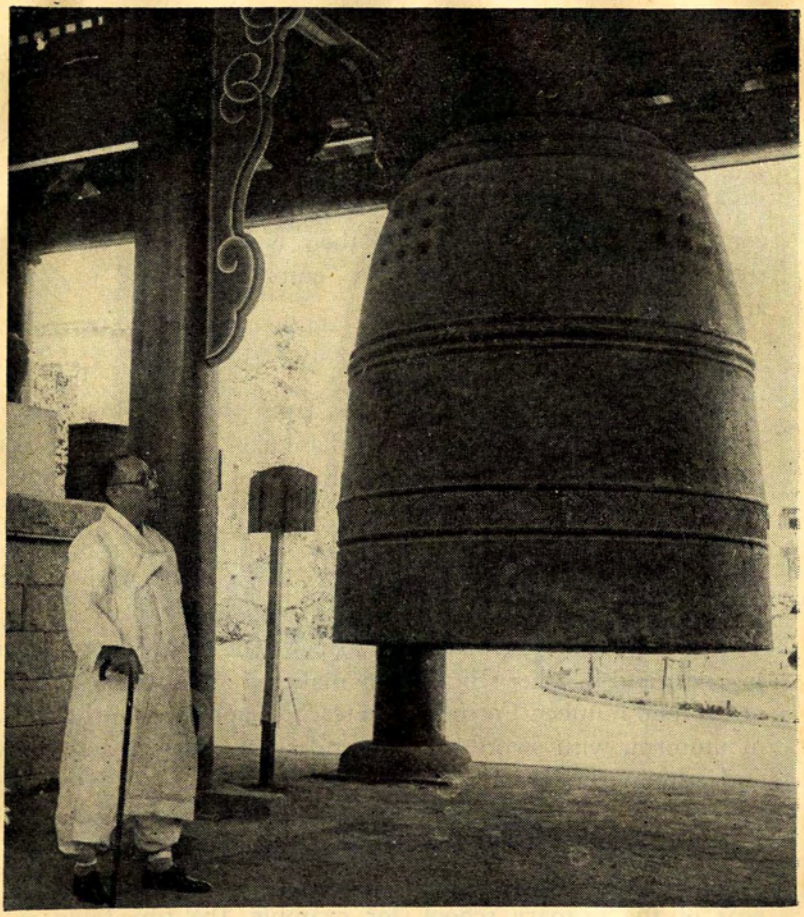
Another example of the crumbling of old customs is that today girls and boys who study together sometimes fall in love and marry in spite of all family protests. Traditionally, marriages are arranged by the elders. Again, a Korean working in a factory cannot wear mourning dress with a hat four feet wide which covers his face. The new economic conditions brought by the Japanese to Korea are breaking down old customs, beliefs and superstitions. Korea is entering modern history. Much of the old will be saved in this process, much will be lost irrevocably. Let us hope that the customs preserved will be those which were the most beautiful.

CHANGES IN EDUCATION

Korea has always been a country of scholars. Nothing in Chinese culture made so great and deep an impression upon the Koreans as the respect for learning which Confucianism brought to Korea. Before the advent of the Japanese, however, the Korean system of education, like that of China, had changed little for centuries. It could not satisfy modern needs. Modern education, before the Japanese annexation, had made only a modest beginning.

Japan set up a modern school system which, however, was founded on the principles of uniformity and control. All schools, whether public or private, must correspond to certain standards established by the Japanese government. These standards cover not only sanitary conditions, wages and similar details, but they also establish how many teachers should be Japanese, what subjects they should teach, and what should be taught in every subject. Deviations from the regulations are not permitted.

What have been the aims of Japan's educational policy in Korea? "Hitherto," Governor General Terauchi announced in 1910, "many young men of this country have been led by the



Bronze bell from an ancient Buddhist monastery.

erroneous method pursued, to dislike work and indulge in useless and empty talk. In future, attention should be paid to the removal of this evil as well as to instilling in the minds of the young men detestation of idleness, and love of real work, thrift and diligence."

Later ordinances advised students not to indulge in "vain arguments." They insisted also that "the fostering of loyalty

and filial piety shall be made the basic principle of education, and the cultivation of moral sentiments shall be given special attention. . . . It is only what may be expected of a loyal and dutiful man, who knows what is demanded of a subject and a son, that he should be faithful to his duties." Thus the picture is clear: the Japanese government wanted the Koreans to become diligent workers, loyal to their new masters, faithful to their duties, and not inclined to "empty" talk and to "vain" arguments.

JAPANESE LANGUAGE TAUGHT

All instruction of Korean pupils, from the very first day of school, is conducted in the Japanese language, which few Korean children know or understand. The difference between the Korean and Japanese languages is greater than the difference between French and German, so that about half of the total number of lessons in the primary school must be given to study of the Japanese language.

In the primary schools about 40 per cent of the teachers are Japanese and in other schools they make up almost three-quarters of the total number. Formerly the teachers appeared in the classes in uniform, with swords at their sides—in order to instill awe and admiration into their students. This comedy was stopped after the Korean rebellion of 1919, but the general spirit prevailing in the schools was not changed.

Let us look at the teaching schedule of the schools. In the third year of the primary school, for example, the time-table is as follows: out of a total of 30 hours a week, 12 hours were given to the Japanese language, 3 hours to Korean (the teaching of Korean was stopped completely during the war, according to some reports), 6 hours to arithmetic (taught in the Japanese language), one hour to morals (see below), one hour to drawing, one hour to singing of Japanese hymns and other songs, 2 hours to gymnastics and 2 hours to sewing for the girls and manual work for the boys. A majority of the students in a

Korean school do not go beyond the third grade: education is not compulsory and parents are in need of their children's work. The Japanese authorities planned to introduce compulsory general education after 1946.

Let us take the sixth grade—the highest in the primary school. Out of 30 hours a week, the students of this grade had in 1936 9 hours of the Japanese language, 3 hours of Korean, 2 hours of Japanese history, 2 hours of Japanese and Manchurian geography, 4 hours of arithmetic (fractions, percentages and use of the abacus), 2 hours of natural science and one hour of morals, plus drawing, singing, manual work and gymnastics, which now consists entirely of military drill.

Altogether there were 138 lessons in "morals" in such a school curriculum. Of these, 58 were occupied with exhortations to be patient, diligent, honest, orderly, faithful and to have good manners. Another 27 hours were given to Emperor-worship, the duty of paying taxes and similar subjects. This was theoretical preparation for the daily practice of Emperor-worship in every school throughout the length and breadth of the Japanese Empire. Fourteen lessons were given to exhortations to remember the duty of filial piety—the old Confucian principle. Nineteen lessons implanted the feeling of friendliness to one's neighbors and the proper way to greet them. And in one lesson the children were taught that everyone should have a trade and earn his living.

HIGH RATIO OF JAPANESE STUDENTS

Every Japanese boy of school age in Korea attended school, but only about one out of every four Korean children of school age was in school. But this is not the end of the story. In 1937, there were almost a million students in the primary schools of all types. In all other kinds of schools, except colleges and universities, there were only 70,000 students, and of this number about half were Japanese. The higher we ascend the ladder of education, the smaller are the opportunities for Koreans. In the colleges there were in the same year only 4,000 students and

the majority of the colleges were supported not by the Japanese government, but by American and British missionaries. In the only government university in Korea, in Seoul, there were 350 Japanese students and 206 Korean students, though the Japanese in Korea form less than 3 per cent of the total population.

Very few Korean students had enough money or could obtain passports to go to the United States to study in American universities, but thousands of them have gone to Japan. Most of them studied law and medicine, not because they necessarily preferred these subjects, but because the professions of lawyer and doctor in Korea permit a graduate to start his own business without capital. If you are an engineer, you must either seek employment in a Japanese factory, or open your own factory. Before this war very few Koreans could get positions in Japanese factories or could afford to start their own.

The war brought important changes in that respect, as will be shown below, but the main features of the Japanese system remained. Japan's educational record in Korea has not been bad, measured by the standards usually applied in colonial countries. But it has done little to prepare the people to run their own industries and their own government in a democratic manner. The new, free Korea will face the tremendous task of overhauling the whole Japanese system of education, and expanding and improving it to meet the needs of the country.

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY

From time immemorial the Koreans have been famous throughout the Far East as rice growers. In Manchuria, where the Chinese for years raised only soy beans and sorghum, the Koreans succeeded in raising rice. In the Russian Maritime Province it was the Koreans who raised rice, and they raised it so well that the Russians moved many of them from this province to Soviet Middle Asia, where there are many fields suitable for rice-growing.

The Koreans are expert rice producers. But as a rule they themselves see little or no rice on their tables. Some people have asserted that the Koreans prefer the taste of Manchurian millet to that of Korean rice. But actually they see even less Manchurian millet on their tables than Korean rice.

The cultivated area of Korea is 11,000,000 acres, and there are in Korea over 3,000,000 farms. Thus the *average* size of a farm is less than four acres. In the United States the number of farms is only twice as large as in Korea, but the acreage is almost one hundred times as large; this means that an average American farm has an acreage forty-eight times as large as an average farm in Korea.

It sounds impossible to make a living on such a tiny farm. The Koreans can, it is true, raise two or sometimes even three crops a year (although in the north the winters are too cold for more than one). But according to a Japanese official publication the *representative* farmer in Korea has a shortage of foodstuffs every year. Spring is known in Korea as a "poverty season" because by that time the grain bins of the farmers are empty.

Very few animals are used on Korean farms either as draft animals or as sources of meat and dairy products. Animals compete with man for the scanty supply of food. The number of horses in Korea is 50,000 and the number of cattle is 1,700,000.

On the whole, we may say that only one farm out of four has a horse or an ox. This saves fodder but it also means that Koreans must be their own beasts of burden. Rice, especially when grown on irrigated land, yields more per acre than either wheat or barley, and rice is the predominant crop in Korea. Finally, the American farmer cultivates only about one-third of the land in his possession, the rest being either pasture, forest or fallow land. In Korea every bit of available land is used for crops.

But in the United States the farmers form less than 20 per cent of the total population, while in Korea they make up about two-thirds of the population. Thus even if the average farmer in the United States were very poor, the general picture would still remain good; but in Korea the farmers *are* very poor, and they form a majority of the whole population. This is the fundamental fact of Korean economy. Korea is a poor country and for a number of years will remain a poor country.

SOCIAL CURBS ON AGRICULTURE

Unfortunately, the situation is worse than the average figures suggest. There is a grave social cleavage in the Korean villages. About two-thirds of the land in Korea is in the hands of landowners, who make up only about 2 per cent of the population. Independent farmers as we know them in the United States form only one-sixth of the total number of farmers and own less than a quarter of the total cultivated area. What does this mean in human terms? It means that the majority of Korean farmers, who are tenants, from their very modest crop must give to the landowners at least 40 per cent of the crop, and in a great many cases as much as 50 or 60 per cent. If the average gross value of production per farm in Korea is about $150, and the tenant pays nearly half for the use of the land, one can see how little he has left to live on, and to pay his taxes. Taxes are high in Korea, and taxes on rented land are paid by the tenant, not the landowner. After the farmer has paid his rent and his taxes, so little remains for the farmer that in order to make both ends meet he must

This farmer near Seikan is one of few to have an ox for the ploughing.

borrow from his landlord, or, more rarely, from an outsider. In Korea the interest on such debts is so high that once you get into debt it is very difficult if not impossible to get out of it.

The result of these conditions is slow but progressive deterioration. In 1918, 40 per cent of the farmers owned their own land, while in 1938, twenty years later, the number was less than 24 per cent. Tenant farmers—owning *none* of the land they cultivate —increased in the same period from 38 to more than 50 per cent of the total. In 1938, out of every hundred families working on the land, only 18 were farmer-owners. All the others were either full tenants, part tenants (owning a little land and renting the rest), laborers or *kadenmin*—squatters who roam around, clear up a patch of land in the forest, harvest one crop and then move again.

The Japanese administration in Korea did nothing to prevent this process; on the contrary, the impoverishment of Korean farmers was in line with their general policy. Korea was looked upon as a supplier of rice for the people of Japan. The fact that

in the spring perhaps a million farmers in Korea were forced to collect the bark of trees and the roots of grasses did not matter. Before the war Korea sent to Japan about 40,000,000 bushels of rice each year, supplying about 10 per cent of Japanese consumption. But if Japan was to get this amount of rice every year from Korea, it was in the interests of Japan to have landownership concentrated in a few hands. A landlord cannot eat all of the rice which he collects from his tenants—he sells it to Japanese firms. The farmer-owner and the tenant farmer have so little rice left after meeting all their obligations that they consume all their rice, and would consume more if they could get it. Parallel with the impoverishment of the farmers and the increase of tenancy, the per capita consumption of rice in Korea has been falling from year to year. Koreans produce rice, but they do not eat it—their per capita consumption of rice is barely one-third of that in Japan.

What are the results of this situation for agriculture? Stagnation, and in same cases retrogression. Just as slavery is not consistent with high productivity of labor, the conditions of Korean agriculture are not conducive to progress. The low productivity of labor in Korean agriculture is not only the result of the scarcity of land—it is also the result of the social conditions in Korean villages, where landlords are all powerful.

LANDLORDS, KOREAN AND JAPANESE

Who are the landlords? Many of them are Japanese. The Japanese tried hard to lay hands on Korean land, especially the irrigated land on which rice is chiefly grown. There are no statistics available, but some authorities estimate that at least one-quarter of the rice fields are in Japanese hands, while the total Japanese-owned area (including forests) must be considerably larger. Unfortunately, the situation is more complicated than that. If the Japanese were the only landlords in Korea, the defeat of Japan would bring an easy solution to many of Korea's agricultural problems. The Japanese landowners would leave Korea together

with the Japanese army, and the problem of tenancy would be solved for the time being. But among the landlords are a number of rich Koreans, many of whom are at the same time usurers; and usually it has been they upon whom the Japanese have relied, in addition to their own policemen, to control the Korean countryside. The number of landlords' families is about 100,000 and this group will present a grave problem in the future democratic Korea.

THE FUTURE OF FARMING

The agricultural problem of Korea is fundamentally the same as that which plagues China and Japan, and there is no need to close one's eyes to its seriousness. The Japanese landlords—let us hope—will go, but the Korean landlords will remain, with their lands, their usury, their influence upon the local population, an influence which, as in Japan, tends to work in the direction of reaction, retarding the democratic development of the nation. The problem may be simplified to some extent by the fact that many of the landowners are now cooperating with the Japanese. They take part in the Japanese administration and receive certain privileges and rewards from the Japanese. If the new Korean government and the Allied forces of occupation should treat these people as Quislings, the agricultural problem of Korea would be several steps nearer solution.

This does not mean of course that overnight Korean farming will become prosperous and Korean farmers opulent. The figures quoted above show that this can hardly take place. Yet if the evils of the old landlordism could be eliminated, if farmers could unite into cooperatives and, wherever possible, use machinery for cultivation, they could save much time on the one hand and increase their yields on the other. Machinery itself does not bring increased yields, but it brings more time for other work on the farm, for education, for experimentation, for application of modern science. Crop yields in Korea can be greatly increased (yields in Japan are double Korea's); large areas can be irrigated; the

cultivated area can be increased by perhaps as much as 20 to 25 per cent; the remaining area may be used for handicraft work or other employment. The Korean farmer may never reach the level of American farmers, or acquire many of the conveniences for which the American farmer works; yet his enjoyment of life can be greatly increased.

It may be mentioned here that very few Japanese engage in actual farming in Korea. The Japanese government encouraged them to settle on the land and supplied them with all kinds of facilities, but the prospects and possibilities in other fields were more attractive.

INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE

Industry in Korea is largely in the hands of the Japanese. There are many small-scale industries owned and managed by Koreans and much simple manufacturing is still done by craftsmen in their homes, but all large industries are owned by Japanese, who employ Koreans as workers. In 1939 the capital investment in Korean-owned corporations was only 12 per cent of the total capital of industrial corporations in the country. Some of the Japanese industries in Korea are huge enterprises capitalized at many millions of yen. During the first quarter of the century the Japanese neglected the development of industry in Korea; but they changed their policy in 1930, when they started preparations for the present war, and in the last ten years the development of industry was rapid.

In general Korean mineral resources are not as good and probably more expensive to exploit than those available in other countries. But Japan, preparing for a war of aggression, wanted to be self-sufficient. For that purpose Korea had much to offer, for many metals and minerals are found there, some of them in fairly large quantities. Their development was probably retarded by the scarcity of coal. Recent dispatches from Japan indicate that important new reserves of coal have been discovered. Because cheap hydroelectric power was available the Japanese

built in Korea large chemical industries especially for the manufacture of sulphate of ammonia, which is used for fertilizer and also for munitions. Production of aluminum and magnesium, important for making airplanes, has also made great progress.

This industrial progress was helped by the existence of a large and cheap labor force. The Koreans driven from their villages by hunger (not unconnected with the economic and financial policy of the Japanese authorities) worked in the factories for wages which were only half the wages in Japan. There is no doubt that before 1930 only administrative measures kept Japanese industrialists out of Korea. At that time the government did not want Korean industries to compete with those of Japan. But preparations for war created an unlimited market in Japan and any addition to the production of Japan proper was welcome. Huge Japanese trusts and cartels moved into Korea, where they could make profits exceeding anything they could expect in Japan.

CHIEF INDUSTRIES

What are Korea's main industries?

Production of coal reached 2.3 million tons in 1936 and is now (1944) probably twice as large. It is not much beside production in the United States, but compares favorably with the output of such countries as Mexico. Oil has not been found in Korea, though some synthetic oil is produced from brown coal. The output of electricity is substantial; the total capacity of Korean electric stations now probably exceeds 2,000,000 kilowatts.

Among manufacturing industries in 1938 the first place, in terms of gross value of production, was occupied by the chemical industry (31 per cent of the total); second place by the food industry (24 per cent); third by the textile industry (14 per cent); fourth by the metal industry (8 per cent). The chemical industry is represented by plants producing sulphate of ammonia (one of which has a capacity of 500,000 tons), using cheap electric energy. There is also production of coke, rubber goods, paper and other commodities.

Despite growth of Korea's manufacturing industries, much labor is still devoted to handicraft and to home industries producing such items as these sandals.

In the food industry (including beverages) should be mentioned the making of wines, sake and beer, production of soy, *miso* (bean paste), flour, candy, starch, and refining of sugar.

The textile industry includes the manufacture of cotton goods, silk reeling, and, recently, the manufacture of rayon and staple fiber.

The metal and machine building industries are the result of the war boom. No recent figures are available, but experts estimate that production of steel in Korea may now be as high as 2,000,000 tons, or as much as in India or Italy. To this should be added a substantial production of aluminum and magnesium. Machine-building production received a great impetus from the mining boom and shipbuilding. Drilling equipment, pneumatic

machinery, electric dynamos, forging equipment, boilers, and even airplanes are now manufactured in Korea.

This development is very encouraging for the future of Korea. Between 1929 and 1942 the value of output in the manufacturing industries increased eight times, from 327,000,000 to 2,700,000,000 yen. It is true that a substantial part of this increase is the result of inflation, yet the increase is beyond any doubt.

Despite the rapid development of Korean industry under the spur of war, we should not exaggerate its dimensions. The number of workers in manufacturing industry (home enterprises excluded) was 230,000 in 1938 and may be estimated as 300,000 to 400,000 in 1944 out of a total population of about 25,000,000, and the total value of output in 1938 was less than 6 per cent of that in Japan. As late as 1938, the household industry of Korea contributed one-quarter of the total value of manufactures—a certain sign of backwardness. It may be said that Korea has taken the first steps in the direction of industrialization, steps which will be very helpful for further progress. But her industry is now completely adjusted to the war needs of Japan and its conversion to peace-time production will not be easy.

COMMUNICATIONS

The network of communications in Korea is relatively well developed. There are 3,500 miles of railway and 15,000 miles of roads, several air lines connecting Japan with the continent, 5,600 miles of telegraph lines, 7,100 miles of telephone lines, 1,031 post offices (all these data are of 1938). But the poverty of the population does not permit the Koreans to enjoy full use of these facilities. In Japan, for example, in 1937 for each thousand of population there were 25,100 railway passengers, while in Korea there were only 2,100. The roads also are little used by the Koreans themselves: official figures show only seven carts per thousand of population! Recently interurban buses have become numerous and carry as many passengers as the railways.

JAPAN'S HEAVY HAND

Though forty years have passed since Japanese troops occupied Korea, the Japanese are still not liked. Japan, has, it is true, done a good deal in Korea, as her spokesmen have never been tired of pointing out. The Japanese have built excellent railways, over which Japanese administrators traveled with great comfort; they built new roads with the help of Korean forced labor; they constructed admirable ports in which big Japanese steamers can anchor; they started afforestation projects, and set up many irrigation dams; they opened many schools. Yet these things were done not to help the Koreans, but to make Korea more useful to Japan.

Of course, the Koreans were prejudiced against the Japanese from the start. They still remembered the stories of how some three hundred years ago the Japanese pillaged and ravaged their country. The Koreans, who had contributed much to the cultural development of Japan, considered this a very bad way of paying a debt. When after 1875 the Koreans again entered into closer contact with the Japanese, the latter's behavior did little to inspire confidence. The new intercourse started with Japanese gunboats firing on peaceful Koreans, and the Koreans thought this a peculiar way of making friends. Subsequent actions of the Japanese did not help to improve the Koreans' opinion of them. A Tokyo envoy took part in the murder of a much-loved Korean queen. After the Russo-Japanese War the Japanese in Korea behaved as conquerors, though Korea was supposed to be Japan's ally. And when the Japanese did not withdraw from Korea after the war, as they had promised, the Koreans began to worry. Later they even tried to rebel, but they were no match in warfare for the Japanese. The great powers acquiesced in the Japanese occupation and the outer world forgot about Korea. Japan's real motive in coming to Korea has always been quite clear to the

Japanese policeman in Seoul pauses to look at the papers of a Korean.

Koreans. Ask any unlettered Korean farmer and his reply will reveal his contempt for the Japanese. "Our country," he will tell you, "is fair and beautiful, and rich, and there are many good things to eat and enjoy in it, and the Japanese, who have nothing at home, came to get these things."

The first Japanese to come to Korea were of two types: they were either of the get-rich-quick type or military men. The duty of the military men was to keep in subjugation a country which had previously been very proud of its traditions. Korea had had very bad rulers and a bureaucracy which could hardly have been worse; but the Koreans felt that this was their own affair. They did not see how Japan or any other nation could claim a right to send soldiers into their country to improve its morals and administration.

The actual job of keeping in subjugation a civilized people is not difficult. But the Koreans' feeling of superiority, their contempt for their barbarian masters made these masters uneasy and nervous, and they made many mistakes. When the Japanese ordered that Japanese teachers should come to classes wearing a ceremonial sword, many Koreans chuckled. Even their babies, apparently, were a terror to the master race! When the Japanese confiscated all arms in Korea including medieval spears, or ordered that the only axe for a whole village should be chained near the village well, Koreans laughed at the fears of their rulers.

JAPANESE CARPET-BAGGERS

As to the get-rich-quick type of Japanese immigrant, this type is more or less common throughout the world. They grabbed Korean lands, they cheated Koreans on every occasion, they used extortion, threats, law and lawlessness. They were noisy, insistent, demanding, so that finally even the Japanese administration was compelled to send some of them back to Japan. All this did not improve Korean opinion of the Japanese. When, in 1919, Wilsonian principles reached forgotten Korea, the Koreans started a peaceful rebellion, one of the few in world history. This rebellion was drowned in blood and even the Tokyo bureaucrats were shocked by the brutality of its suppression.

The Japanese then tried another way. They tried to win the sympathy of the rich Koreans, giving them certain rights and opportunities. To a certain degree the Japanese were successful in this policy, but on the whole it was a failure for a very simple reason: there are relatively few rich people in Korea, and even among these there were patriots who would not sell their country for material advantage. The great majority of the Koreans remained sullen and resigned. An active minority attempted to struggle against the Japanese under great odds. But in both groups there was no love for the conquerors.

Economic developments during the last ten years before the Pacific war did not contribute to reconciliation. In agriculture

more and more Koreans were driven from the land of their fathers and were compelled to seek employment either in Manchuria or in Japan. In industry came the triumphal march of big Japanese enterprises with Korean workers underpaid, overworked and unprotected by factory laws. In offices Koreans could not find any decent employment, even if they had graduated from Japanese universities and mastered the language of the conquerors. Is it then astonishing that the Japanese police every year arrested all the members of the secret parties (according to their own statement), only to be compelled to repeat the same performance over and over again?

JAPANIZATION

There is, it is true, no racial barrier between Japanese and Koreans. A Japanese could marry a Korean and a good many such marriages have taken place. The Japanese included the Korean aristocracy in the ranks of the Japanese aristocracy. They were ready to present a Korean runner at the Berlin Olympiad as a Japanese. But what they refused to recognize was Korean nationality. They wanted to make the Koreans second-rate Japanese. But they did not take them into the army or give them any positions of importance in the government. After the annexation there were a few Korean governors left as puppets, but gradually their number was reduced to zero.

As a result of this the Japanese and Korean communities lived separate lives, with little contact with each other. They had separate schools, separate churches, separate social organizations and even separate newspapers, though the newspapers for Koreans were published by Japanese. (A few independent Korean publishers spent more time in prison than at their desks and finally Korean newspapers disappeared altogether.) For Japan Korea remained a colony, where a Japanese could attain more rapid advancement than at home, but the heart of the colonial administrator remained in Japan.

The war brought certain important changes in Korean life,

for reasons which are easy to understand. A great war demands great production and great expenditure of lives. Every possible means of production must be utilized and every person who can be used as cannon fodder must be mobilized.

Before the war it was hard for educated Koreans to find employment either in Korea or in Japan. But war brought a tremendous shortage of skilled labor, and the Japanese authorities rushed to open industrial training schools. They repented their neglect of education, which resulted in an illiterate population, and decided to introduce compulsory education in Korea in 1946. In various ways they sought to conciliate the Koreans and to persuade them to identify their interests with those of Japan, even to the point of forcing them to adopt Japanese names.

There was plenty of work in Korea, and if one did not want to work in Korea, there was a shortage of labor in Japan. Koreans were formed into special battalions and sent to Japan to till the fields of Japanese families who had members in the Imperial Army or Navy. Such battalions after their return from Japan were addressed in the warmest terms by the Governor-General, General Koiso, who later became Premier of Japan.

The Japanese government still hesitated to admit Koreans to service in the Imperial Navy, but since 1938 Koreans have been permitted to enlist as volunteers in the Imperial Army and given the honor of dying for the Japanese Emperor. When one such volunteer died, his ashes were brought to Korea and he was pictured as a hero whose example the Koreans were to follow. In 1942, according to Japanese reports, not less than 254,000 Koreans offered to enlist. For some reason, however, only 6,000 of these volunteers were accepted. The authorities thought that more time was needed to prepare Koreans for military service by further training of their bodies and especially their minds.

They decided to go slow in drafting Koreans and though conscription was planned to start as early as May 1942, yet action was postponed until March 1944. It was reported from China that when this law was applied in Korea there were many demon-

A group of Koreans who are being given pre-military training by the Japanese, in the hope that they will become "fit" for service with Japan's regular army.

strations of popular protest which had to be suppressed by the police and the army.

MASS REGIMENTATION

At the same time several mass organizations of Koreans were formed, under Japanese supervision. Among these organizations the most important was the People's Mobilization League. After 1942 this League played a great role in (1) forming neighborhood organizations, which permit better supervision and control over the activities and thoughts of each Korean family; (2) in organization of the movement for "self-awakening to the fact that the Emperor is God;" (3) in the economic field; (4) in enlisting the support of the Koreans for the Imperial Army in

every way. The Japanese thought that neighborhood organizations would be excellent for these specific purposes, because under this system every member was responsible for the activities of his neighbor and, it was hoped, would turn into an unpaid spy on his neighbor and thus save money for the Imperial treasury.

In the economic field the duties of this organization were heavy because every Korean farmer was permitted to keep for himself only a limited amount of the grain and other agricultural products which he raised. Everything else he had to surrender to the authorities. Thus the organization had the unpleasant task of convincing the farmers that they must give up their grain at low prices, and of making sure that the farmers did not hide any produce from the Japanese authorities. Japanese official reports claim that the grateful Koreans had voluntarily donated to the Imperial Army 10,000,000 yen and 245 airplanes (up to March 1942).

MORE POWER TO TOKYO

In accordance with this war-time policy toward Korea the Japanese government decided to manage Korean affairs chiefly from Tokyo, reducing the duty of the Governor-General to that of general supervision. Thus, army conscription in Korea was to be managed by the Prime Minister in Tokyo; problems of taxation and currency by the Minister of Finance; education by the Minister of Education; agriculture by the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry; industry and trade by the Minister of Commerce and Industry; and similarly with communications, railways and foreign trade. Thus the unification of Korea with Japan became more complete, and Japanese officials now speak of "100,000,000 Japanese," counting Koreans as Japanese!

This policy of assimilation might have been partially successful had it been introduced before the start of the war in 1937. But economic and political conditions in Korea during the last seven years have been such that these measures could hardly have had the effect desired by the authors.

First let us look at the economic situation. Since Japan itself was on short rations after 1937, and particularly after 1941, we can assume that Korea has fared no better and probably worse. Production of civilian goods in both Japan and Korea has been greatly reduced or ceased entirely. Cotton goods, so important for the Korean farmer, have been hard to get; vegetable oils have been strictly rationed; the supply of fertilizers was cut and metal goods for the civilian population have practically disappeared from the market. To these factors have been added higher taxes, many compulsory services, pressure campaigns for gifts to the Japanese army, for planes and tanks, and campaigns for the collection of gold. (The Korean women, according to Japanese reports, out of loyalty to the Empire, presented all their gold and silver trinkets and ornaments to the Japanese government in Korea.)

All these exactions, regulations and ever stricter police control could not fail to increase the Koreans' resistance to identification with the Japanese. Moreover, between 1939 and 1944 Korea has

Part of government reforestation program to replenish Korea's depleted forests.

had three crop failures. But Koreans have read in Japanese newspapers and heard on the Japanese radio accounts of the war in the Pacific, which could not conceal the mounting tempo of American victories. Each Allied advance has brought new hope and energy to Korean patriots.

We know that many Koreans were arrested in the spring of 1942; we know also that, in September 1942, 72 leaders of a secret Korean Christian Society were arrested in Manchuria in an alleged attempt to "overthrow the Manchurian regime." But the Japanese have not revealed how many arrests were made in Korea of persons who actively struggled against the Japanese government. Such persons were numerous before the war, and there is no reason to think that their activity has decreased during the war. This may well account for the slowness of the Japanese government in introducing compulsory military service in Korea.

"IN DUE COURSE"

The Cairo Declaration of the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the President of the Chinese Republic has brought the problem of Korea to the international scene for the first time in forty years. In Korea, the fight for freedom has never ceased, but in the world of international diplomacy Korea was buried many years ago. Now that the question of Korea's independence has again become a living issue, it is important to examine the general conditions in which Korea will find herself after the war. There are several aspects to this problem.

Restored Korea will have as its neighbors China, Russia and Japan. Korea is separated from Japan by straits which even under modern conditions are an important strategic obstacle. From Russia Korea is separated by the Tumen River; the length of this frontier is only about twenty miles. On both sides the terrain is mountainous, and the Russian frontier is at the end of the long tip that starts from Voroshilov; this region has no railways and in general is inconvenient for offensive operations, unless the war should involve China as well as Korea. The frontier with China is clearly marked by the Yalu and Tumen Rivers, which run through mountainous country. On the Korean side there are no Chinese settlements; the frontier has existed in its present position for more than a thousand years, and unless China becomes an imperialistic nation there is no reason why she should advance claims to any part of Korean territory.

The geographic situation of Korea is such that every neighbor is interested in her independence. Korea in Japanese hands, as the history of the last twenty years clearly shows, is a threat to Russia and China. Korea in Russian hands would be a threat to Japan and to the whole strategic position of China and Manchuria. Korea in the hands of China would be a threat to Japan

and to the Russian position around Vladivostok. It is to the interest of all three countries that Korea should be independent. At the time when she lost her independence, China was too weak to do anything and the other powers wanted to help Japan against Russia in order to check Russian ambitions in the Far East. Korea was therefore sacrificed. With a strong Russia and a strong China, Korea has no need to fear that her independence will be lost.

CHINESE AND RUSSIAN ATTITUDES

China's position in regard to Korea's independence is clear and definite. Chinese representatives at Cairo supported Korea's claim to independence, and a provisional Korean government exists on Chinese soil. There is no reason why friendly relations between China and Korea should not continue after the war. For many centuries China was a protector of Korea and during this long period she never acted high-handedly toward Korea and practically never interfered in Korean affairs.

The only serious problem which may arise between China and Korea is that of the Korean settlers in Manchuria. Their number is about one million and in one district—Chientao, just across the frontier—they form a majority of the population. The position of the Koreans in Manchuria prior to 1931 was not good and Korean tenants suffered at the hands of the Chinese landowners and local authorities. When Korea becomes independent these Koreans may not be able to return home at once, and for many of them Manchuria has been their home for many generations. It would be well if the Chinese would treat them as Chinese citizens, at the same time granting them cultural autonomy. If this is done, there should be no danger of bad feeling between these two countries.

Russia was not a party to the Cairo Declaration because she is neutral in the war between the Allied Powers and Japan. But in the past, whenever the Korean problem has been discussed in the pages of Soviet publications, her cause has always been treated

with sympathy. Panegyrics to Japanese rule in Korea have never appeared in Russian publications. There is no doubt that Russia after this war will welcome Korea's independence.

Russia also has a Korean minority of about 200,000 persons. These Koreans have schools in their own language and their villages have the same type of self-government as all other villages; Koreans have the same duties (including military service) and rights as other groups of the population, and there are no problems which might complicate the relations between these two countries.

RELATIONS WITH DEFEATED JAPAN

It may be assumed that after the defeat of Japan all Japanese investments, rights and privileges will be taken over by the Korean government and the majority of the Japanese in Korea will return to Japan. If Japan will reconcile herself to this loss and renounce the idea of conquest, there is no reason why the relations between these two countries should be anything but good. In many respects they may help each other. Even defeated Japan will be ahead of Korea in many technical fields and the services of her specialists will be cheaper than the services of specialists from other countries. But it may be wise for the Koreans, at the time of peace, not to demand any further reparations although some Koreans now insist they should. Confiscation of Japanese investments in Korea is all that Korea can reasonably hope to recover. Defeated Japan, deprived of all her colonies and positions on the continent, with her merchant marine practically gone, her assets abroad gone and her reserves of everything near the end, will hardly be able to make reparations payments. She will be in need of help herself, and for such a small nation as Korea it is better not to create bitter memories in the minds of her neighbors. The task of Korean statesmen is to establish friendly relations with *all* neighbors, to prove to them that a free Korea is the best guarantee of peace in this part of the world.

If Korea can succeed in this, she will not need a large army and navy, and then she can turn appropriations for military purposes into investments in the fields of national economy, education and health. The needs will be many and every dollar may be spent to good advantage.

MANDATE FOR KOREA?

The Cairo Declaration promised freedom and independence to Korea "in due course." Many commentators interpret this enigmatic statement as meaning that after the war Korea will not get independence at once, but will be placed temporarily under some form of international supervision on the ground that she is not yet able to assume the responsibilities of independence.

The experience with mandates after the first World War was not altogether fortunate. Moreover, if Korea is to be supervised, it is going to be difficult to decide who is to do the supervising. International administration has never worked very well in the few cases where it has been tried. Korea might be made a mandate, but what country will be the mandatory power? Neither China nor Russia would wish to see Korea in the other's hands. Some have suggested that Korea be made a ward of the United States, but it seems clear that American public opinion would be against taking on such a responsibility.

The Koreans themselves will not be satisfied with anything less than complete independence. Since the unsuccessful demonstration of 1919, when "national independence" was proclaimed, an active nationalist movement has worked through organization and propaganda for Korean freedom. It has had to operate largely in exile. In 1919 a Provisional Government, under Dr. Syngman Rhee, was organized in Shanghai and adopted a democratic constitution. A Korean People's Delegates Congress in Shanghai in 1924 was attended by 600 persons. The movement has received support from the Korean communities in Manchuria, Siberia and the United States.

Like most revolutionary movements it has been marked by

sharp differences of opinion on aims and tactics. The Koreans living in Manchuria and Siberia, some of whom have carried on guerrilla warfare against the Japanese, tended to look to Russia for outside aid, while those in America, and Christians in Korea, tended to look to the United States. Many shades of opinion from right to left are represented in the movement. Some Korean youths, impatient with the slow progress of events, have resorted to terrorist activities; it was a Korean who threw the bomb by which Admiral Nomura, Japan's last ambassador to the United States, lost an eye. And in 1932 a Korean threw a bomb at the Imperial cortege itself!

UNITED FOR INDEPENDENCE

Whatever their differences, all Korean groups are passionately agreed on the necessity of independence. In 1935 representatives of conservative nationalist, Communist and other left-wing groups met in Shanghai and agreed on a program calling for a democratic republic, national ownership of monopoly enterprises, protection of private property, and various legal and social reforms.

The Provisional Government of Korea, now headed by Kim Koo, is at present functioning in Free China, and a small Korean army operates under the orders of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. The Provisional Government has sought, so far unsuccessfully, for recognition by the United Nations as the temporary custodian of Korea's interests, until Korea is freed and a permanent government can be organized—much as General de Gaulle's organization has claimed recognition as provisional representative of France. Such recognition has so far been denied to the Koreans, partly on the ground that the exiled government does not necessarily represent the people of Korea, partly because the United Nations have not been ready to commit themselves to full and immediate recognition of Korea's independence.

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the March 1, 1919, rebellion in Korea, observed at Chungking in 1944, Kim Koo, President

of the Provisional Government, declared that "nothing short of full and immediate independence" would satisfy Koreans after the war. He assailed opinions that favored placing Korea under a form of international control. "Such opinions," he said, "are insulting to the Koreans. They mark a disgrace for the holy fight against aggression, imperialism and injustice. We insist that all peoples must be free and equal. They all must have a right to govern themselves."

Many Koreans have died for their country's freedom, and their successors will not be satisfied with less than independence. In view of their determination and the necessity of dealing with some Korean representatives after Japan is driven out of the country, to deny them the full and immediate independence which they seek might create problems which would make difficult if not impossible the work of any form of international "trusteeship."

NEEDS OF FREE KOREA

Americans should recognize, however, that merely giving independence to Korea will not dispose of the question. Korea is not strong enough to defend herself against attack, and unless a general security system is organized she will be forced to turn to some more powerful neighbor for protection. Nor can she achieve national prosperity by her own unaided efforts. Like all small countries, Korea has a vital interest in international organization to safeguard her peace and prosperity.

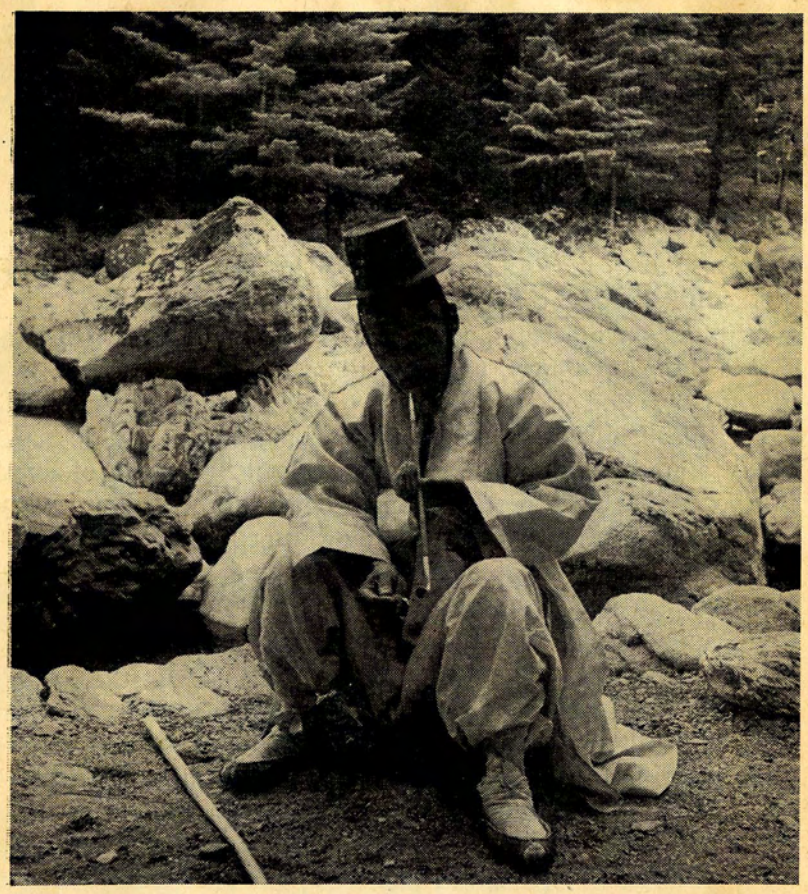
It is true that the Koreans have not enjoyed self-government for the last forty years. Koreans point out, however, that Poland was under foreign rule for 125 years, and yet in 1919 her right to govern herself at once was never doubted. Korea has, they say, many revolutionary leaders steeled in the long and unequal struggle with the Japanese; she has a tradition of village self-government which even the Japanese were not able to destroy in the small villages, simply because there were not enough Japanese administrators and policemen to watch over them; the Koreans

have a well-developed net of cooperatives, whose members now number more than two million; Korea has thousands of university graduates and Korean emigrés in the United States and in Russia have rich experience in many fields. Koreans argue, therefore, that Korea does not lack the ability or the means of self-government.

Koreans have had, however, no experience in democratic government and their first steps are bound to be characterized by trial and error. The country does not have as many trained administrators, technicians and skilled workers as she will need to develop her resources, both social and economic. This is also true of China and of other countries which are now independent. Korea, like China, will need and welcome outside aid in national reconstruction, provided it does not take the form of foreign control. She will need a sympathetic and forbearing attitude on the part of her neighbors. She may want to employ foreign advisers, selected from different countries, and foreign teachers. She may ask and receive aid from international agencies, as China received aid from the League of Nations in combating famine. She will doubtless require foreign loans, which she will be prepared to repay. We may find it easier to give Korea the help she needs by dealing with her as an independent country than by trying to devise some kind of transitional semi-colonial status for her. But it must be emphasized that Korea will need a sympathetic attitude on the part of her neighbors if she is to become a strong and prosperous member of international society rather than a continued sore spot in the Far East.

WAR-TIME DEVELOPMENTS

The tasks which the new government of free Korea will face will not be easy ones. Much depends upon how the war ends and on the nature of the post-war settlement. It may happen for example that Japan will surrender before the war reaches the border of Korea, and in that case Korea's economy will suffer little damage from war action. But it may be that Korea will



Well-to-do Korean farmer, shown resting near a resort in Diamond Mountains.

become a theater of war, and much of her industry and transportation equipment will be destroyed. In that case Korea's post-war difficulties will greatly increase.

Even if Korea does not suffer from the war, she will face urgent and serious problems at its close. Her whole economy is now adjusted for war needs and a radical reorganization will be needed. Probably reserves of raw materials will have run very

low. Many services will need to be organized from the ground up. Foreign trade has been conducted almost exclusively with Japan and her possessions, and this dependence should be lessened.

Yet one should not exaggerate these difficulties. The country is still predominantly agricultural, and should easily be able to feed herself. Korea's territory contains many of the raw materials needed for industry. Her fishing resources are considerable. Thus restoration will not be as difficult as it will be in the case of countries with a too heavy dependence upon foreign imports of foodstuffs and raw materials. Her population is hard-working and is accustomed to privations.

One should remember also that Korea will be passing through a period of cultural renaissance. The restoration of her political independence will undoubtedly bring forth talents and abilities which could not find expression under the Japanese regime. There will be a new enthusiasm, a will to surmount all difficulties. But naturally this enthusiasm will be dampened if full independence is not achieved.

Under conditions of freedom many social forces, which were suppressed or dormant under Japanese rule, will emerge and find expression. Undoubtedly there will be a struggle for economic and political power, for the direction of economic and cultural policy. For those outside of Korea it may at times appear that Korea's independence has brought to the fore passions and partisanships which threaten the stability of the new state. But such difficulties are inevitable in a reconstruction period—witness China—and usually accompany the growth of democratic government. Wise statesmanship will be needed in Korea and in neighboring countries if Korea is to occupy the place among the nations to which her history, her numbers and the talents of her people entitle her.

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Publication: *Korea Economic Digest* (monthly)

Korean Affairs Institute, 1029 Vermont Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.
President: Yongjeung Kim
Publication: *Voice of Korea* (bi-weekly)

Korean Commission, 416 5th St., N.W., Washington, D.C.
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Korean Student Federation, 1923 H St., N.W., Washington, D.C.
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Korean Students' Christian Association, 633 W. 115th St., New York 25, N. Y.
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