

[page 1]

## **THE OLD PEOPLE AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT.**

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As a rule the ancient history of every nation is shrouded in mystery and nothing definite can be known ; and the ancient history of Japan, Korea or China is no exception. According to tradition, Korea was founded by Tangun, who descended to earth from heaven and was found by the wild men beneath a paktal tree ; hence his name Paktal Prince. He was then made the king of the country, which he called Chosen. The legend, is as mythical as legends of other countries, but it seems to show that even in very remote days Chosen formed a united though imperfect state. Some time later Kija, a Prince of the Yin dynasty of China, which fell before King Wu of the Chu dynasty, was appointed by the latter as King of Chosen. This legend undoubtedly had its origin in Chinese history. In a suburb of Pyongyang city, there still exists a temple dedicated to Kija and the legend is authentically recorded in early Korean history. Inasmuch, however, as the temple of Kija was built and a Korean history written during the time when Chinese influence predominated in the peninsula, the story in question cannot be readily accepted. If it is true, the Chosen over which Kija was appointed as ruler must have been only a northern portion of the peninsula lying at that time on both sides of or beyond the Yalu river.

On the other hand, according to the early history of Japan, Amaterasu Omikami, the Great Goddess of Heavenly Light, appointed her son, called Ameno Oshihomi, ruler of Japan, and sent her younger brother, Susano-O by name, to Chosen to give rule to the peninsula. Some scholars are of the opinion that this Susano O was no other than Tangun, the traditional founder of [page 2] Chosen. But this view appears to me to be too imaginary and to lack substantial evidence. Some time after, a son of Ugaya Fukiayezu, descendant of the Great Goddess went over to Chosen, while another son remained in Japan and became the founder of the Imperial dynasty as Emperor Jimmu.

There is reason to believe that this story is more trustworthy than the one that says a Chinese King appointed Kija, the son of a conquered dynasty, to be the Ruler of Chosen. For, if Japanese historians had not been perfectly disinterested in their motives, they would have recorded the story after Chinese fashion. They would have mentioned that some one inferior in rank either to the brother of the Great Goddess or to that of the first Imperial ruler of Japan took up the rule of Chosen. In point of fact, however, they left it recorded that the Great Goddess sent her own brother to Chosen, while she caused her son to rule Japan ; and that afterward an elder brother of the founder of the Imperial dynasty of Japan crossed over to Chosen to govern the country. It will thus be seen that the Japanese historians had little motive to serve the interests of Japan in recording the legend under discussion. Judging from this point of view, the ancient history of Japan may be said to have treated the question in a fair way.

A theory has been advanced by some scholars of history that Hyokkose, founder of the Kingdom of Sinla, was identical with Ina Hi, the elder brother of Emperor Jimmu, above referred to. The theory may be open to doubt. However his Prime Minister, Ho Kong, is recognized as having been a Japanese in Korean history itself ; and moreover Kyongju in South Kyong-sang Province, once the capital of the Kingdom of Sinla, is in close proximity to Japan. There is no doubt: under these circumstances that intercourse between Silla and Japan was intimate as well as frequent. Especially would we infer this from the records given in Japanese history which state that Ame no Hiboko, a prince of Silla, emigrated to Japan and his descendants were given high official positions and proved themselves loyal subjects of Japanese Emperors, and that a princess [page 3] of Silla also crossed over to Japan to become the consort of a Japanese prince, proving the intimacy of the relations which existed between the two countries in those remote days.

It is a well-known fact that Empress Jingo, the fifteenth Imperial ruler of Japan conquered the three Han Kingdoms in the Korean peninsula in the third Christian Century. In fact the three Han Kingdoms after being conquered by Empress Jingo were made Japanese territory, and for a long time after continued to pay annual tributes to the Imperial Court of Japan. About two centuries prior to Empress Jingo's conquest of the three Kingdoms, in the reign of Emperor Suinin, there existed a

country called Tai Kala in the peninsula. It was hard pressed by its neighbouring states and asked Japan for reinforcements. Emperor Suinin complied with its appeal and changing the name of the country to Mimana, established there a Japanese Residency General. From this fact it is evident that even before the conquest of the three Hans by the Empress Jingo, that is about eighteen centuries ago, the influence of Japan extended to the Korean peninsula.

In Korean history the establishment of the Japanese Residency General in Mimana, and the Empress Jingo's conquest of the three Hans are omitted for obvious reasons ; and the authenticity of these events might reasonably be doubted, if these records were confined to Japanese history only. A study of Chinese history, written when China entertained no good feeling towards Japan but rather looked askance at her, will help us in arriving at a fair and correct conclusion about the point in question.

It is stated in two famous Chinese histories, the Wei Chili (魏志 History of Wei) and the Hou Han Shu (後漢書 Book of Later Han) that Korea is bounded on the east and west by sea and borders Japan on the south. If Japanese territory had not extended to the Korean peninsula over the sea in those days, such record would never have been written ; but the sea would have been represented as circumscribing Korea not only on the east and west but also on the south, it is [page 4] thus reasonable to infer that Japanese dominion extended to the Korean peninsula beyond the sea. In the reign of Emperor Ojin, son of Empress Jingo, as well as in the reign of Emperor Yuryaku, who ascended the throne about two hundred years later, envoys were sent by the Japanese Court to China then under the Wu dynasty. These facts are recorded in a contemporary Chinese book, in which it is mentioned that one of the credentials presented by the Japanese envoys bore the signature of "King of Wa (Japan) and Great General giving peace to the seven countries of Wa (Japan), Packche, Silla, Mimana, Kala, Chin-Han and Ma-Han." The latter six are the names of the states in Korea at that time. Further it is mentioned in the same book that Japan subjugated northern countries beyond the sea to the number of ninety-five. The number given is evidently an exaggeration, but the reference seems to confirm the belief that prior to and after the Korean expedition of Empress Jingo, the southern part at least of the peninsula was in Japanese hands.

Judging from the facts so far pointed out in general : outline, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the Japanese and Korean peoples formed for a long time one and the same nation. The recent annexation of Korea by Japan is therefore not the incorporation of two different countries inhabited by different races, but, it may rather be said to be the reunion of two sections of the one and same nation after a long period of separation. Indeed it is nothing more nor less than the old state of things restored.

In addition to their racial connection and political relations, Japan and Korea helped each other to a considerable extent in advancing their mutual civilization. In fact Japan benefitted in greater proportion by the introduction of learning and arts from Korea. Thanks to her insular position, Japan has been almost entirely free from foreign invasion, and fortunately has been disturbed little by internal strife. Thus favoured, she has been able to assimilate all that was good in Chinese and Korean civilization ; and also early opened intercourse with Portugal, Holland and other foreign countries. The nation was united [page 5] and with but one object in view strove hard to attain a position as a world Power.

On the other hand, Korea was constantly pressed and frequently attacked by her powerful neighbour, China. While the constant fear of foreign aggression made her retiring and timid ; political corruption and popular degeneration caused the nation to decline and lag behind the progress of the times, until she became an object of pity and sympathy to the world at large. Looking backward, not to say several centuries, but even as recently as fifty or sixty years ago, we find in the Government Of Korea endless intrigues and feuds engaged in by rival factions. There was the party of Easterners and opposed to it was that of the Westerners. There were also the parties of elder and young yangban against each other. Not only did these men constantly plot to oust one another from positions of power, but also those in office bartered official positions for gold ; and far from minding the well-being of the masses, did their utmost to enrich themselves at their expense. There were maintained neither regular troops for the preservation of public peace and order, nor efficient police for the protection of the people's life and property. Bands of ruffians known as fire brigands freely roamed at large,

committing atrocities and robberies. In this way the bulk of a peaceful people, finding themselves between the devil in the form of corrupt officials and the deep sea in that of relentless brigands, were reduced to a state of abject poverty and indolence.

The effect of this long standing evil state of things was discernible even in recent times. All industries perished, and commerce in its true sense did not exist in Chosen. The only branch of human activity remaining in the country was agriculture. But even agriculture itself was of a very primitive sort, as compared with that of civilized countries. Moreover, forests were despoiled of trees to obtain building material and fuel, and no care was taken to replant. In consequence trees became more and more scarce year after year, until it was difficult to obtain sufficient material for the construction of even small [page 6] houses, and the people were obliged to go to dry grass for fuel. As the result of the deforestation of Korean mountains, floods were frequently experienced and extensive arable lands laid waste. The forest lands of Chosen occupied more than 70 per cent of the whole area of the country and were more than double in percentage as compared with the countries in Europe and America, where forest land is about 30 per cent on the average of the entire area. How extensive has been the work of deforestation in Chosen will be inferred from the fact that despite such richness in forest lands, 83 per cent of them were denuded and are devoid of trees.

It was such a country and such a people that the Japanese Empire undertook to relieve by reforming administration and developing natural resources. For five years Japan did her best to bring the task she had undertaken to a successful issue. All admit that she achieved some success in her efforts and the country assumed more or less a new aspect. Japan has now made the country an integral part of her dominion and has set upon herself the work not of improvement but rather rejuvenescence of the territory. It will not be difficult to imagine the stupendousness of her responsibility as well as the immensity of her work.

It will sound strange to most people to hear in these days references made as to the security of life and property. But in point of fact, in Chosen this was one of the most urgent necessities which demanded immediate attention. This is the reason why on assuming the protectorate of the former Korean Empire, Japan stationed troops at important places and distributed police and gendarmerie forces throughout the peninsula, just as at home. By doing this, Japan has succeeded in weeding out all lawless elements of the Korean populace as well as in giving peaceful and law-abiding people security of life and property.

With regard to administrative reform, Japan found it inexpedient to adopt all at once a civilized regime of government without modification. But where general principles were [page 7] concerned she was obliged to effect radical reform, such as, for instance, the judicial system by which district magistrates, ignorant of legal principles, were allowed to pronounce judgment in an arbitrary way, swayed either by personal feeling or under the influence of bribery. It was the necessity of doing away with this evil practice that induced Japan to separate the executive from the judiciary soon after the inauguration of the protectorate; and by instituting a modern judicial system, deprive executive officials of their judicial power. This reform would be no new thing for most countries in these days of advanced political ideals, but in Chosen it was one of the most important tasks accomplished for administrative reform. On the other hand, in order to remove the evil practice of the arbitrary imposition of taxes by provincial governors, district magistrates and other officials, it was decreed that none of them could take even a single sen from the people unless in compliance with the law. In this way, the old standing evil of official squeezing was eradicated. This measure was really one most urgently needed in Chosen, and people began to realize its inestimable benefit.

The security of life and property assured by the presence of troops and police as well as by the separation of the judiciary from the executive, and the sense that private property would not be taken away by the officials in an arbitrary and lawless way, have caused the Korean people to engage in their work more diligently than ever and to save their income as much as possible. They appear to be awaking, so to speak, from a horrible nightmare of long endurance and to take new interest in life with hope for the future. The day dawn of industrial development is breaking in Chosen, and the time is in sight when the Korean people will devote themselves earnestly to the work of improving their conditions. This is really a matter for sincere congratulation for the sake of humanity.

In developing the industry of an infantile nation, it is advisable to begin the work by undertaking the improvement of its agricultural industry, and this has been diligently carried [page 8]

on since Japan assumed the protectorate of the former Korean Empire. This may be a task easy to accomplish in other countries. In Chosen, however, the improvement of agriculture must be accompanied by afforestation as a preventive against floods as well for facilitating irrigation. But afforestation is not a ; work which can be accomplished within a short time. Moreover, in order that it may be successfully carried out, it is not enough for a government to undertake it of itself, but the general public must be trained to appreciate its benefits and importance. The Governor General issued for that purpose an instruction to fix the anniversary of Emperor Jimmu, April 3, as Arbor-day for Chosen. On that day, all students of schools are to plant young trees. The district magistrates were also enjoined to induce members of public organizations as well as individuals to co-operate in the plantation. Seedling nurseries will be established for the cultivation of young trees ; but for the time being young trees or seedlings are to be distributed by the Provincial administration.

Fortunately there are reasons for entertaining the hope that Korea is quite rich in natural resources. Her climate is temperate, her soil fertile in many places and her seas rich in marine products, while her mountains contain considerable quantities of valuable minerals. In order to exploit these natural resources, means of transportation and communication must first be opened. This is the reason which induced the Governor General to map out, with the inauguration of the new regime, plans for constructing highways and railways as well as for improving harbours in Chosen. It is an axiom established by facts in Oriental and Occidental histories that organs of traffic and communication not only contribute greatly to industrial development but also exercise a powerful influence upon the progress of civilization.

The wonderful new machinery, the command of new powers of steam and electricity, have produced a new era in Japan, bringing about a remarkable change not only in political and material conditions but also in the moral and intellectual spheres. In a territory like Chosen, of great distances, of great [page 9] natural difficulties, high mountain chains, wide spreading forests and waste lands, and therefore of great obstacles to personal travel and the transportation of commodities ; an industrial development of the same kind would be followed by the same results. Now, in Chosen, farmers living in distant places are obliged to resort either to pack horses or human carriers for sending their surplus products to distant markets. This entails much time and expense, and the proceeds raised often do not cover the expense so incurred. Under these circumstances farmers cannot be blamed for their reluctance to raise abundant crops by adopting imposed agricultural methods. Such a state of things however is not confined to agricultural products alone. The same or rather more difficulty would be experienced in the trade of not a few manufactured articles as well as of heavy minerals such as coal, copper, iron and graphite. This accounts for the inactivity of not only agriculture but also of industry and commerce, except in places along the existing railways and the sea coast.

All this has been keenly appreciated by the Governor General and has induced His Excellency to undertake, with the inauguration of the new regime, the improvement of the existing Fusan and New Wiju Railway, the Seoul-Chemulpo line, and the constructing the Pyongyang-Chinnampo Railway. His Excellency has further projected the speedy construction of the Seoul-Wonsan and Taiden and Mokpo lines, shortening the period allotted for their construction from ten years to five. It is not railways alone that His Excellency pays attention to, but the improvement of harbours, repairs and construction of highroads, and other factors contributing to industrial development of the territory and at the same time affording work to the idle people as a side benefit, all claim due share of his attention. The fact that the Governor General introduced to the present session of the Imperial Diet a bill for raising a public loan amounting to fifty-six million yen to be applied to public enterprises in Chosen, and that the Legislature passed it without a dissenting voice, goes a long way to show how sincere and [page 10] earnest is the desire of both the Government and people of Japan to develop and civilize Chosen

On the other hand, a study of the present state of things makes one hopeful of the future of the territory. It was but natural that immediately following the annexation there existed some misgivings among certain quarters of the people. It would not have been a cause of surprise if in consequence of such a momentous change, some disturbances should have been incited by men swayed by conservative ideas or personal interests, for history abounds in similar examples. But in point of fact, this great change was effected in the midst of profound peace without seeing any restlessness. This was of course primarily due to the wisdom and virtue of H. M. the Emperor of

Japan as well as to the intelligent course of action taken by the former sovereign of Korea. It is, however, recognized alike at home and abroad that it was also owing to no small extent to the wise and considerate measures taken by the Governor General in carrying out the great task entrusted to him by his Imperial Master, At the time of the annexation, the Governor General issued a Proclamation, announcing to the people at large the outlines of the policy he was going to adopt in Chosen. A section of the people appeared at that time to have taken the Proclamation as nothing more than a mere device for reconciling them to the new government But within less than half a year since the annexation, all that has been promised in the Proclamation,—the cordial treatment of the former Imperial House of Korea, special favours to aged yangban and literati, rewards to filial children and virtuous wives, general amnesty, reduction and exemption of taxes, grant of seventeen million yen as industrial, educational and relief funds, establishment of charity hospitals, spread of education and so forth—all has been carried out strictly even to the letter. In view of this, even those who doubted the sincerity of the Proclamation before, now appreciate the high aim of the new regime, while the peaceful and law-abiding people in general rejoice as if they had seen a new light. All are now at ease in mind and engaged in their work diligently [page 11] gently, presenting a most peaceful condition such as has never been seen before in this peninsula. This may be inferred from the increase so far realized in the taxes paid as well as in the volume of the export and import trade.

In Chosen from early times, the amount of taxes collected was a good basis of judging whether the country was in peace or not. When the country was disturbed and bandits roamed freely plundering peaceful people right and left, and those able to work lost their employment, taxes were not paid in full. On the contrary, in peaceful times, farmers could reap the fruits of their labour and other classes of people could also pursue their business in peace, so that they had sufficient means to pay their dues without delay.

Now the amount of taxes paid within four months from October last to January exceeded that of the corresponding period of the preceding year, by nearly one million yen ; while the amount of export and import during the same period also showed an increase of more than 50 per cent as compared with that of the same period of the preceding year. This may be taken as ample proof of the peaceful condition prevailing in Chosen after annexation.

The difficulty encountered however in the administration of Chosen is such as no Occidental power has experienced in giving rule to its colonies. In the case of Great Britain in India, America in the Philippines, France in Madagascar or Tunis, or Germany in her African colonies, each power deals with a people entirely different in race, as well as in religious belief and greatly inferior in civilization, as compared with the people at home. In consequence they have found scarcely any serious obstacles to the adoption therein of a simple and uniform system. But the case of Japan in Chosen is quite different. The Koreans are not very different from the people at home in race and civilization and the Government has decided to treat them on the same footing as the original subjects of the Emperor. For this reason, no distinction in principle is to be observed in the treatment of the two peoples. On the other hand in view of [page 12] certain differences existing in the manners and customs of both peoples, it would be inexpedient to transplant to Chosen en bloc the legislative and administrative institution in vogue in Japan proper. For, despite the undoubted superiority of such institutions, they would not exactly meet the actual requirements of the people, on the contrary they might produce in some cases unexpected and undesirable effects.

Under the circumstances, it need scarcely be said that serious consideration must be given to the harmonization of the principle of equal treatment of both peoples to the circumstances necessitating special exceptions to such principle. Especially is there this peculiarity that in contrast to the practical nonexistence of white men mixing up with natives in their colonies, there are in Chosen many Japanese living in the interior and engaging in business among Koreans. It is both unjust and impossible to apply different laws to the Koreans and to those Japanese living amidst such Koreans. Nevertheless with regard to the capability to bear national burdens, such as taxes, military services, etc., there exist circumstances which do not allow the authorities to extend indiscriminate treatment to Koreans and Japanese. In short the Government General of Chosen has the task before them of advancing the intellectual and moral character of the new subjects of the Empire, by reforming all their antiquated and evil customs and manners, in order to assimilate them completely to the original people of the Empire. It goes without saying that this task is as great as it is onerous. The success or

failure of the Government General of Chosen in its work will not only mark a new epoch in the history of Japan, but will also exercise no small influence over the colonial history of the world at large.