

ABOUT THE NEW KOREA

HOW THE HERMIT KINGDOM WILL BE MODERNIZED BY ITS JAPANESE MASTERS.

New Railroads Throughout the Peninsula—Korea's Great Trunk Line From Japan To the Yalu—Reorganization of the Money System, Telegraphs and Telephones—How Japan Will Gobble Trade—Americans in Korea and Their Valuable Holdings—Gold Mines Worth Millions—Also Water Works and Electric Lights.

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WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 18.—The second article of the Russo-Japanese treaty practically gives Korea to Japan. It stipulates that Russia must keep its hands off, and that the Mikado will do as he pleases without let or hindrance. The king of Korea is already under the thumb of the Japanese emperor, and this treaty means the Japanese of the hermit kingdom. Japanization means westernization, or as we call it, civilization.

The modern movement has already begun. The Japanese have been building railroads during the war. They have completed the line from Fusan, the port at the lower end of the peninsula just across the strait from Japan, to Seoul, and have extended this line on to the Yalu river at Wai. With in a short time a bridge will be put across the Yalu, and the line extended on to Mukden to connect with the new Japanese railroads which have been transferred to them by the Russians. When the Mukden-Yalu line is built there will be a continuous railroad track from St. Petersburg to Fusan, and one can go by land from Paris to Fusan and with only a few hours steamship voyage, on to Japan.

KOREA'S GREAT TRUNK LINE.

The railroad from Fusan to the Yalu will be the great trunk line of Korea. It will tap the largest cities and will open up the whole of the western and southern parts of the island. I understand that the Japanese have bought large tracts of land here and there along it, and that they will establish colonies. There are already thousands of Japanese in Fusan and Seoul and from now on the ships will be full of immigrants.

This railroad will altogether be about 600 miles long. The Seoul-Fusan end is of the standard American gauge. It is largely equipped with American rails and the bridge work is American. It has American locomotives and other American rolling stock.

The line from Seoul to the Yalu was started as a private enterprise, but the Japanese government took charge of it during the war and completed it in a slovenly military way. The result is that the rails are too tight for a trunk line and the bridges are wooden. The track will have to be relaid and it will take some time to put it in commercial working order.

KOREA'S FIRST RAILROAD.

The first railroad in Korea was built by Americans. It runs from the port of Chemulpo on the west coast 29 miles inland to Seoul, the capital. The concession for this was secured in the latter part of the nineties by James R. Morse, and the road was built by Colman and Boston American materials and American rolling stock were used. As soon as the road was completed it was sold to the Japanese, and it is now a part of the Seoul-Fusan system. I understand that a road will be built from Seoul to Gensan, on the opposite side of the peninsula, but whether this will be done by the Seoul-Fusan company I do not know.

I have traveled over it in Korea and know something of its old mode of transportation. When I first visited the country, 16 years ago, there was no way of getting from Fusan to Seoul except by ponies or by porters, and it would have taken two or three weeks to have made the trip. It can now be made in less than a day. I then landed at Fusan and sailed round to Chemulpo. It took a whole day to go from Chemulpo to Seoul, a distance of 26 miles, and it is my remembrance that the cost was \$25. I had my wife with me and we were carried over the mountains in chairs with eight men to each chair, or 16 in all. The trip can now be made at low cost, in a little more than an hour, and that in comfortable cars.

My next trip to Chemulpo was just before the Chinese-Japanese war, when the peninsula was torn by rebellion. I then went to Seoul up the Han river in a little Japanese steam launch, and was carried from the river to the city in a chair. Leaving Seoul I made my way over the mountains of Korea to the port of Gensan, on the east coast, along about the same route that a railroad will have to take in crossing the peninsula. The distance is 175 miles, and it cost me between one and two hundred thousand cash, or, in American money, about one hundred dollars. I had to equip a pack train and carry a guide, a cook and food and bedding. It took about a week to go from one place to the other. With the new railroad the trip will be made in less than a day.

A NEW MONEY SYSTEM.

One of the first things the Japanese



NATIVE KOREAN FREIGHTER Who Will be Superseded by Japanese Railroads.

will do will be to reorganize the money and banking system of Korea. The financial system of Japan will be adopted. A government bank will probably be established at Seoul, and the currency placed on a gold basis.

At present the Korean money is of all kinds. There are silver dollars, nickels, copper coins and copper cash. Many of the nickels were made by the Korean government, but others have been manufactured by private parties, under permits from the government, so that one cannot tell where the coins come from. Counterfeiting is common, and there are altogether about 25 different varieties of nickels in circulation, each supposed to be worth two and one-half cents, and most of them bad. As a result the people are afraid of these coins, and the time has been when it would take one hundred nickels to equal the value of an American dollar. The silver coins are the Japanese yen, the half-dollar, or half yen and the ten and 20-cent pieces.

Copper cash is still in use in out of the way places. It takes one or two thousand of these to equal a dollar of silver money, the value rising and falling. During my stay in the country all accounts for small things had to be paid in these cash. When I went out shopping I took a servant with me to carry my money, and on my trip through the interior we had a porter who was loaded down with such stuff. Indeed \$50 worth of cash is a good-sized burden for a mule. Each cash has a hole in it, in order that it may be strung with its fellows upon strings for ease in counting and carrying.

PAPER MONEY AND BANKING.

There is now considerable Japanese paper money in circulation in Korea. The notes of the chief Japanese banks are worth par, and about 3,000,000 paper yen are scattered over the country. They are generally used by the foreigners, and are the chief currency for large transactions. Banking in Korea is practically confined to the Japanese. The Ichi-Ginko or First Bank of Japan has an establishment in Seoul and branches at all the treaty ports, and so has the Nippon Ginko or Bank of Japan. The First Bank has had its branches on the peninsula for more than 40 years. I remember there was one at Gensan when I reached there after my trip across the mountains from Seoul in 1894. I was out of money and asked them to cash a draft on my letter of credit. They refused. The result was that I had to wait until I reached Vladivostok, Siberia, the Japanese Steamship Company kindly trusting me for my passage from Gensan to that port.

NEW TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES.

The postal and telegraph systems of Korea will probably be under the management of the Japanese. Indeed, I believe it is practically so now. During the war the telegraph system has been rapidly pushed and there are now more than 2,000 miles of line. There

are cables from Fusan to Japan, and all the open ports and mines are in telegraphic communication with Seoul. The different Korean lines connect with the different Chinese telegraph systems, so that one can send messages to Korea from any part of the world. Telegrams are received in Chinese, Japanese or Korean. They are sent by the Morse code. There are now telephones from Seoul to Chemulpo, and a telephone system will probably be extended to all the large cities.

JAPANESE SHIPPING.

The Japanese expect to improve the shipping facilities. The shores of the peninsula are dangerous, there being many sunken rocks. It is planned to build a string of lighthouses about the coast, and this work will probably be begun at once. As it is now, the Japanese Shosen Kaisha has frequent steamers between Korea and Japan, and the Nippon Yusen Kaisha has a regular service between China and Japan and Korea. There is an American in Korea who owns a fine little vessel which sails from Kobe and Osaka in Japan to the various ports of Korea. His ship flies the American flag. It is called the Ohio, and is noted for its excellent passenger accommodations. The American Gold Mining company has also some small ships at Chemulpo which sail under the American flag. The Hamburg-American line runs German steamers between Chemulpo and Shanghai.

JAPAN WILL GOBBLE THE TRADE.

Japan has already the bulk of the Korean trade, and under the new regime she will have more than ever. Korea's foreign commerce amounts to about \$12,000,000 a year. It is steadily increasing and will probably double and triple within a decade or so. Much of the goods that we send to Korea goes through Japanese hands, and two or three million gallons of oil to them every year. Our chief competitors in this line are the Russians, but their oil consals in the winter, and although they undersell us, we do the most business. Our cottons are popular in Korea. They are stronger and heavier than the goods made by the Japanese or British; and, although more costly, are in general demand. Every man, woman and child of Korea wears cotton. The men have long gowns, and the amount of clothes per capita is greater perhaps than that of any other country.

AMERICANS IN KOREA.

We ought to have a monopoly of most

things in the hermit kingdom. Americans have done more for it than the people of any other nation. It was our naval vessels which first unlocked its doors to the world, and our missionaries gave it the first taste of western civilization and of the Christian religion. Our traders were among the first importers, and our capitalists built the first railroad. Americans now own most of the valuable gold mines and are developing them. The electric railway of Seoul belongs to Americans, and its electric light company is an American institution. It is the same with the Seoul waterworks, and also with the national bank, the charter of which was given to an American. There are now 30 Americans in Korea. Of these 100 live in Seoul, 85 are working in the gold mines at Unsan, 24 live in Ping-yang and 10 are associated with the railroad. Five Americans are in the service of the Korean government, and the confidential foreign adviser of the king on the part of the Japanese is also an American. The man who has done more than any other for western civilization in Korea, more to render the life of foreigners safe there and more to advance the interests of the United States is Dr. Horace N. Allen, our former minister to Seoul, who has, I regret to say, recently given up his work there and returned to the United States.

WE OWN THE GOLD MINES.

The best of the gold mines of Korea are owned by Americans. The concession for them was gotten by Mr. James R. Morse some years ago and transferred by him to Mr. Leigh Hunt, formerly of Seattle, who organized a company for their development. This company is now known as the Oriental Consolidated Mining company, and it has been one of the profitable gold properties of the world. Its concession embraces a district just about half as large as the state of Rhode Island, in the mountains of northwestern Korea. Gold is scattered throughout this district, and there is now more than 26,000,000 worth of ore in sight. The company is taking about \$1,500,000 annually out of its mines, producing this from something like 200,000 tons of ore. It has the best institution in Korea, and that which is most up-to-date in all its workings. It uses the best of modern machinery and is now operating five mills, with 200 stamps. It employs altogether about 70 white men and several thousand Asiatics. The work is of the most satisfactory. They work for 20 or 30 cents a day, and are easily managed.

SEUL'S OLD WATERWORKS.

A New System is Being Put In By Americans.

A REAL SWINDLER. "Contend you, you are no more blind than I am." "The beggar at these words looked at the placard on his breast, and gave a start of surprise. "Right you are, boss," he said, "I am blind if they haven't put the wrong card on me. I'm deaf and dumb."

ENTIRELY TOO NARROW.

At the International Peace Congress in Boston Mrs. Belys A. Lockwood pointed out the selfishness of those who would not help to right the wrongs of foreigners, on the ground that charity begins at home.

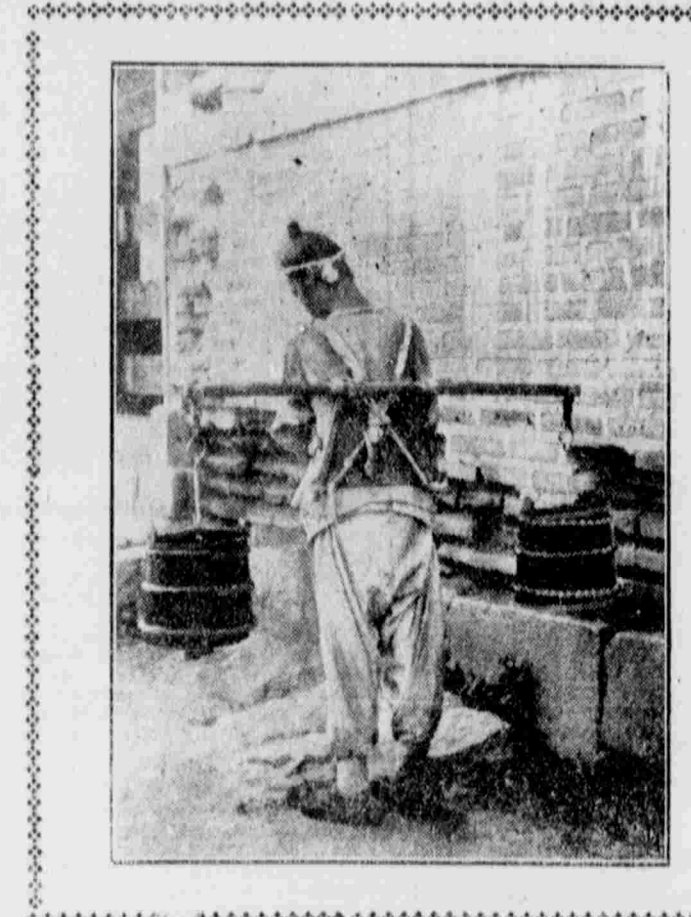
SEUL'S NEW WATERWORKS.

Americans are doing much to modernize Seoul. The city has about 300,000 people, who live inside walls 40 or 50 feet high. Most of the houses are thatched huts. There are a few wide streets, most are narrow and winding. The water until now has come from wells sunk here and there in the midst of the city, and one of the chief businesses has been that of the water carrier, who trots about from house to house with two buckets fastened to a pole on his back. The sewage flows through the streets in drains or over ditches, and everything is unsanitary to an extreme.

ROCKSLAND SYSTEM.

The American-Korean Electric company has also a capital of \$1,000,000. It has now 33 miles of street car tracks and 25 cars, and it is largely increasing its mileage. The light plant is in operation, furnishing more than 2,000 electric lights.

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SEUL'S OLD WATERWORKS. A New System is Being Put In By Americans.

A REAL SWINDLER.

Miss Mary Richmond of the Philadelphia Society for Organizing Charity, almsman professional beggars, and has innumerable stories in proof of the worthlessness of these men.

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and an expression of amazement over her face. "She got up. She hurried from the table, she overtook the man with the collection basket. "I'm in the wrong church," she whispered, and, taking out the coin she had put in, she hurried forth."

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