

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper.
CARPENTER IN COREA.

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I HAVE taken a run from China to Corea, and it took me three days to go from Tien-Tsin to the harbor of Chemulpo. I was grounded for a time on the Peiho river, and had a rough voyage over the Yellow sea, but I am now in the biggest city of this wonderful kingdom, and I am surrounded by the queerest sights and the strangest people on the face of the globe. I found the harbor of Chemulpo filled with gunboats, and, after sailing up the river Han, I was met about four miles from the city with a chair from the American legation, which was guarded by four Koreans and which was carried by four Koreans and which was guarded by soldiers. It was in this way I came into the city of Seoul. I passed the gates without trouble, and I am now almost at home in this Korean world. I have a most efficient interpreter, whom I call Gen. Pak. He comes of one of the oldest families of this country, and his grandfather was a big magistrate. He has as much cheek as a New York plumber, and he would make a good newspaper reporter. Gen. Greathouse, the American adviser to the king, has loaned him to me during my stay. He is the confidential interpreter of the general, and he will accompany me in my tour over Corea. He is such an aristocratic looking man that I always feel out of place when I ask him to do anything for me. He is far better dressed than I am. His brand new horse-hair hat, I venture, cost \$15, and this is tied on under his chin with ribbons of black gros grain silk. He wears a gown of the most delicate sky blue. This reaches from his neck to his feet. It is tied at the waist with a purple silk cord, and the sleeves of it have pockets in them so large that they would hold a baby. He speaks English well, and he is an invaluable man in these troublous times. With him and a couple of soldiers or kesoes I feel quite safe. I usually ride in a chair borne on the shoulders of four men in uniform, while the soldiers trot along at my side. I sometimes think that Pak is ashamed of me, or that he thinks he ought to be riding too. He generally walks about ten feet in advance or that much in the rear, and swings himself along as though he were a gentleman of leisure. If there are any other Korean nobles about I can't get him to help the photographer or do any sort of manual labor. This would be beneath him. He is very particular about my carrying anything, and

we have to take an extra coolie along for this purpose.

I have also a Korean artist with me, and strange as it may seem I am getting some very fine pictures made of Korean types and scenes by this man. He paints as well as sketches and is considered the finest artist of the kingdom. He is a noble and it is hard to get him to do work quickly, but his pictures are true to life, although they seem strange to American eyes. He sketched one of my soldiers for me today and also made some pictures of the rebels who are making such a trouble here. He gave me a picture of an official on his way to the palace. I saw the fellow going past the door and asked him to sketch him. The official was dressed in a long green gown with official boots of black cloth peeping from under its hem. He had a great belly band decorated with gold sticking out from his waist and his horse-hair cap had huge wings fastened to its back, personifying ears, and denoting that he was always ready to listen to the commands of the king. He sat in a chair upon a leopard skin and two Korean coolies in uniform took him along on the dead run, while his servant ran by his side. Behind him came one of the king's officials, possibly a general of the army from the country. He had amber beads around his neck, a bow in one hand and a quiver of arrows at his back, while other arrows were fastened to the crown of his hat. The Koreans are good shots and they still stick to the bow and arrow, both for amusement and to a certain extent for war. The king's troops are armed with modern guns, but many of the rebels have bows and not a few of them carried tridents.

And this brings me to the rebellion. It is a mighty big story, and it is hard to handle it in a newspaper letter. I am told by those closest to the king that the rebels did not intend to fight against his majesty at all. They only took up arms to oust the officials of their provinces. They have been terribly oppressed. Offices have been sold for years, and of late years the prices of the offices have gone up, and the tenure of office has been shortened. There is one man here who has had this matter in charge who is worth many millions of dollars today. He was a poor man ten years ago, and his fortune has been made by squeezing. The officials have had to pay so much for offices that they have overtaxed the people to get the money back, and they have oppressed them to such an extent that starvation stared them in the face. Had the king let them alone and not come to the support of his officials there would have been no rebellion against him. He sent, however, his troops out to punish them. The rebels defeated the troops, and the king asked the Chinese for some soldiers to help him put down the trouble. The Japanese also sent soldiers, and this walled city of Seoul now swarms with armed men. There are guards everywhere. The law against men going out at night is strictly enforced, and anyone but a foreigner found wandering about the streets is

liable to arrest. The gates are carefully guarded, and the walls are watched. The Japanese have a large camp at the pass of the mountains between here and the port of Chemulpo, and every one is excited and alarmed as to the possibilities of a war, not only between the king and his rebellious subjects, but between China and Japan. The Chinese and Japanese soldiers are by no means friendly to one another, and the Japanese are ready and anxious for a pretext to fight. The "Baltimore" is still in the harbor of Chemulpo, and our marines are ready to march from there at a moment's notice to protect our legation and the missionaries. The Koreans to a large extent look upon the matter as a great joke. They walk about in their fine white gowns, smoking pipes as long as themselves, and laughing under their big black hats at the queer figures which the Chinese and Japanese soldiers make. They go by thousands to the camp, and they do not seem to realize that the very existence of their government is threatened. The king, however, understands it very well. He is terribly alarmed, and he counsels with his officials night after night, under the electric lights of the palace. He does no work whatever in the daytime, and there is a rumor that he fears assassination and that he likes no dark corners in his palace. His troops have shown themselves unable to cope with the rebels among his own people, to say nothing of the Chinese and Japanese. They have been defeated several times, and they are largely outnumbered by the forces of Japan and China which are now on Korean soil. The king's army consists, all told, of not more than eight thousand troops. Some of these are well armed, and a number have been trained by the American officers who came over here to organize the army. Of these all have left except Gen. Wm. McE. Dye, who has been more of an instructor than a commander, but the officers are generally Koreans, and they are not fit to fight the more experienced heads of the foreign troops.

In the meantime the king is under the control of the Chinese, and all information which is sent out from here by the Koreans is dictated by the Chinese. Corea has claimed to be independent for some time, but she is really under China's thumb, and when Li Hung Chang of the Chinese empire pulls the string she is compelled to dance. I can't give in a few words my reason for this statement. I may write of it later. There is no doubt, however, of the fact. The calling in of the Chinese troops without asking the consent of Japan was contrary to the terms of the treaty which exists between China and Japan. The Japanese, naturally, were angry. They have large colonies at the port of Chemulpo on the Yellow sea. Gensan on the west coast, Fusan on the south coast and here in Seoul as well. They own a great deal of property, and they are the leading foreign nation in Corea. They will not permit China to have this peninsula, and it is by no means uncertain that there may not be a war between China and Japan on Korean soil. This land has been the fighting ground of these two nations in times past, and if a war occurs now it will be the bloodiest of Asiatic history. The Koreans have a few gatling guns and some cannons. The Japanese