

Min Yong Ik, who is related to both the king and queen, and who was one of the most influential of the progressionists. The foreigners from all the greatest nations established themselves at the capital, and Corea seemed to be on the same road as Japan. Kim had at this time the implicit confidence of his majesty. He was head of the colonization department, was vice president of the foreign office and had undertaken the establishment of a modern postal system for the country. He had begun to build a mint. Electric lights had been ordered from America for the palace, and a body of Korean cadets had been sent from Japan and drilled by the soldiers there. They had come back, and the king had given them important positions in the palace. The Chinese instructors of the troops had been dismissed, and gatling guns were ordered from America.

In the meantime, the anti-foreign spirit began to rise. The Chinese saw that they and their civilization were losing ground every day. They felt that Corea was slipping away from them, and they did all they could to foment trouble. They soon had a party in their favor. Prince Min Yong Ik changed his policy, and leaned toward the Chinese, and the country was in a short time divided upon the lines of progress and anti-progress, or, in other words, upon those of China and Japan. It is divided in the same way today. China represents the old regime, Japan stands in the place of modern progress and civilization. There are two parties now, as there were then, and it may be said that these parties are headed by the families of the king and queen. The queen's family is very strong in Corea. The chief officials who have been squeezing the country to death belong to it, and I am told that they favor the Chinese. They did so ten years ago, and it was through them that a large part of the king's revenues went to the paying of Chinese troops, who traveled about the country acting in the most impudent way. Kim Ok Kiun saw with alarm the growth of this Chinese element. As vice president of the foreign office, he had to pay the bills of many contracts which were made with the Japanese, but there was no money in the treasury. He decided to overthrow the existing government, to seize the king, and, through him, rule Corea after modern methods. He had influential friends to help him, and his conspiracy came to a head just about ten years ago.

It was the night of December 4, 1884. The new postal service had just been opened. The first mail had been sent that day from here to the seacoast at Chemulpo and the new postmaster general was giving a dinner in honor of the event. The leading foreigners had rushed in and taken up their residence in Seoul as soon as the country was opened, and a party of these noble Koreans and generals were at the table doing justice to the feast. The dinner was at its height, when an alarm of fire was raised and it was reported that the house of the crown prince was in flames. Now, according to the customs of this country one of the two generals-in-chief of the army has to go to every fire that occurs in the capital. He organizes the forces for its suppression and reports upon it to the king. General Min Yong

Ik rose from the table and rushed for his horse. A few moments later he was brought back with his body covered with blood. He had a saber cut across his face and a half dozen serious wounds upon his person. Dr. H. N. Allen, an Ohio man, then connected with the Presbyterian Medical Mission here, was called in. He took charge of him, and it was by his skill that an almost miraculous cure was effected. No Korean could have saved him, and it was through this treatment that Dr. Allen became the most influential foreigner in Corea. The king and queen treated him almost as one of their family, and it is through him that the American missions have so prospered, and that the influence of the United States is today superior to that of any other nation in the world—but this is another story.

In the meantime, while this was going on, Kim Ok Kiun and one of his confederates ran to the palace. They stationed the Japanese cadets at the gates and permitted no one but their friends to enter. They told the king that the Chinese soldiers were going to overthrow the government and capture him. They charged some of the officials with being in the plot and urged him to flee with them. General Han was present. He objected to the king's going with Kim, whereupon Kim kicked him and told him he was a traitor to the king. His majesty believed Kim's story and he gave him his royal seat. Kim took this and sent for his most influential enemies. As soon as they arrived at the palace they were told to go to a certain room, where the king was, and as they entered the door Kim's cadets sliced off their heads. The king before this had been taken to another part of the palace, and word was sent to the Japanese legation asking for its troops to come to the palace to protect the king. In the meantime the Chinese legation saw what was going on. They were, I think, under the same man who is now minister at Corea, and who, by the way, is one of the shrewdest diplomats of the world, and who has, I am told, all the arrogance and the impudence that the Chinaman shows whenever he gets the upper hand. With his troops he attempted to take the palace. The Koreans came to his assistance and Kim saw the game was up. He fled first with the king to a temple back of the palace, but the next day he allowed the Chinese to get possession of his majesty, and surrounded by his Japanese guard, fled to Chemulpo and sailed for Japan. Since then he has been under the protection of the Japanese government, and it is only through them that his life has been preserved so long.

The true story of Kim Ok Kiun's taking off has not been told. I get it almost direct from his assassin. He is now nominally in prison and he cannot be brought into the presence of the king until thirty days from the time he has touched a dead body. This is according to Korean custom. He is well treated, however, and when a month has passed every one expects he will be called to court and receive a high official position for his bloody murder. This man's life would make a plot for a dime novel, and his assassination of Kim was done, not because he hated

him, but in order that he might carry out a pet scheme of vengeance, which has, I am told, been the mainspring of his actions for years. The man who gave me my information is a Korean official from the northern part of the country, who is a close friend of the assassin and who was in Seoul at the time of Kim's rebellion. He came to me almost directly after a talk with the assassin, and the man told him just how he had killed Kim at Shanghai and gloated over it as he related why he did it. A more villainous act I never heard described. The assassin's name is Hong Chong Woo. He is a man of about forty years of age. He was born near here, and when he was still young his father moved to the Island of Quelpart. Here Hong got an office. He was a very unjust official and he levied all sorts of unfair taxes. He squeezed the people until they were almost starving, and at last they rose in rebellion and mobbed him. The story of his oppressions getting out Hong saw that he could no longer stay in Quelpart and he went away, vowing vengeance upon the people whom he had oppressed. He told his friends that he was going to Japan and that he proposed to learn all about modern civilization. He would come back in the course of years to Seoul and get an appointment under the king. By the aid of his knowledge he would work his way up to such a position as would eventually give him control of his old tax district at Quelpart and he would then squeeze the life out of the people that killed his mother. This story will sound like a tale of Munchausen's when read in the United States. It does not sound so strange here. At any rate, Hong went to Japan. He studied French and Japanese there until he became a good enough French scholar to translate Korean books into the French and to make money out of them. With this money he went to Paris, and he landed there with only \$12 in his pocket. His knowledge of French and Korean gave him work with the missionary societies of the Catholic church and he also did work and became the friend of Pere Hyacinthe. He accumulated money and after a time returned to Japan. In the meantime the rebellion of Kim Ok Kiun had occurred. Kim was staying in Yokohama, protected by Japanese guards. Hong saw that through killing him he might gain the favor of the king and get the office which would accomplish his scheme of vengeance. He sought Kim out. He wormed his way into his confidence. He pretended to want to overthrow the Korean government. At the same time he privately told the minister from Corea to Tokio that he thought Kim ought to be killed and that he was ready to do it. The legation became convinced of his sincerity and they first attempted with him to take Kim to Corea alive. They gave him a dinner at a tea house in Yokohama, where there were plenty of geishas and plenty of wine. The scheme was to get him drunk, propose a ride to cool off, to capture him during the ride, carry him to a ship and take him to Corea. Everything went well up to the time of getting into jinrikishas for the ride. Here it failed, because the men from the Korean legation were not on time.

Then Hong planned the assassination at Shanghai. He had great trouble in