

KOREA, WITH THE MIND'S EYE.

BY L'INCONNU.



YOU are about to take your first view of Korea. You must picture it yourselves as we describe it, for the camera fiend has never yet reached such a point of vantage as to "snap" a whole country. It is only with the mind's eye that we have such visions. And we want you to picture for yourselves this land of white dresses and idle men, a land of ill-kept homes for the living and well-kept graves for the dead.

It is a mountainous country you see; the coast-line before you is rocky and bold, with great cliffs that stand like outposts of Asia. The sun is just rising; the tide is out, and all along the coast are miles of mud where the crabs and turtles and octopus are at play. But it is inland, past the sentinel cliffs, that the real picturesqueness of the country is seen. The mountains roll on in unceasing undulations; far up their sides and in their recesses green patches of crop glisten in the early sun. There is the lush, rank green of rice fields, the occasional gold of patches of sesame; there are ridges of birch, beech and pine, and again fields of millet. But it is not a heavily timbered country.

There are several things that add to the picturesqueness of the scene. One is the houses, or huts, as you are tempted to call them. You see little spots all over the country where are clustered together these little oval-shaped structures of mud with thatched roofs. These are villages; we will look at them later.

Our attention is attracted now by



THE EMPEROR OF KOREA.

the white, ghost-like figures we see gliding everywhere, alone and in groups, for white is the prevailing fashion in Korea. The ploughman wears white in the fields; the officials in the villages are clad in snowy raiment. You see people everywhere coming out of low mud huts clad in white, wide-flowing garments. If we were nearer we should see that these white garments often bear various marks of contact with this mundane sphere; there are even various shades of so-called white, but at a distance such defects are not noticeable.

The third element that gives picturesqueness to the scene before us is, as you see, the birds that dot the land everywhere in great squawking, flapping flocks. "Gunning" is not a common recreation in Korea, and in consequence the wild birds thrive and become almost as tame as the domestic fowls of our own land. There are the tall, stately blue heron; the egret; the