

THE FAILURE OF JAPANESE IMPERIALISM IN KOREA

(Continued from Page 2)

prophecy, is now interpreted as meaning "A Japanese king for three years (referring to the protectorate 1907-1910), "Eight years rule by 'Ka'in'" (Ka'in being the name of the present reigning emperor, and this the eighth year of his reign). Such like oracles are the common possession of the peasant class, and the bible of the old men. Omens and portents are eagerly sought. During these days the hills around Seoul have resounded to shouts of "Mansai" by an unseen host. Strange manoeuvres of Japanese and old Korean flags have been reported and taken as good omens. We may laugh at the superstition; but we are forced to note the fact that a nation-wide revolution could be evoked on such slim evidence. The merest semblance of an opportunity was eagerly grasped which might bring relief from their oppressive rulers.

The immediate reason for the revolt is the idea that Korea may share in the application of the principle of national self-determination. Koreans feel that at last the world is going to be offered another opportunity to revive just national ideals. Times have changed since Japan took over Korea. They feel that it is no longer either justifiable or possible to maintain the peace of the East by a form of government that crushes every legitimate aspiration of a people of twenty million souls. It was in the hope that the world might learn the true state of affairs in Korea—in the hope that even the statesmen gathered in Paris might learn it—that the present movement was launched.

The Revolution was organized by a committee of thirty-three leaders who issued a manifesto calling upon Koreans everywhere to unite, stating their aims, and counselling peaceful methods. The three main clauses read as follows:

- (1) What we as a nation desire is justice, human rights, a fair chance to live, and scope for legitimate ideals.
- (2) We pledge ourselves to the last man and the last hour to see that a fair statement of our people's mind is given to the world.
- (3) Let us look to our conduct that we do all things orderly, molesting no one, and respecting property.

In pursuance of this policy the Korean demonstrators have instituted a passive revolution. With empty hands, save for the carrying of a small Korean flag, with nothing but shouts of "Mansai!" "Long Live Korea!" the movement has been remarkable for its freedom from violence on the part of the Koreans. They possess no arms and would have been at the mercy of the Japanese military had they resorted to force. The marvel is that they were able to endure to the end and refuse to retaliate against the brutal methods which the administration has taken to subdue the disturbances. The Japanese soldiery were let loose in many places and played havoc among the most innocent. Churches have been wrecked and men hurried to jail on the merest pretext. The usual brutal methods of police investigation have been adopted, and men have come out of police stations so bruised and battered as to be unfit for work for days. A strike or two in the capital, the refusal of the storekeepers to open their doors, the closing of schools, and frequent demonstrations in favor of Independence—that has been the extent of the revolt. But it has continued over a month, thousands are in jail, and thousands more are carrying on the work which their organizers began. There seems to be no disposition to give up until some promise of reform is given. The Japanese have unfortunately made up their minds to suppress the revolt by force and intimidation. It remains to be seen who will win out.

The question of the fitness of the Korean people to govern themselves has been much to the fore. Fears have been expressed that if Japan left Korea alone today the result would

be anarchy and Bolshevism. That there would be factions no one will deny—is there any country in this old world where there are not? But that Koreans would go to extremes no one who knows their peace-loving character will grant. It is manifestly unfair to saddle upon new Korea the faults of a former autocratic regime. Times have changed. Koreans of good standing and ability have received their education in Japan and America. They have received American ideals through American missionaries. The Japanese system has not tended to produce big men, but despite it capable men are to be found. The government of a church differs greatly from the administration of a country, but the fundamental faculty is the same. If the ability shown by the Korean Christians in their church courts is any criterion one might even hope for their successful administration of national affairs. The very efficiency and courage which they have shown in the present revolt is no mean proof of their ability, and the unanimity with which all classes throughout the entire land followed the lead of their committees show a remarkable power of organization and a wonderful willingness to be led. The Koreans are divided in their political aims. Some desire a form of self-government under the suzerainty of Japan, along the lines of Britain's self-governing dominions. Others maintain that as Korea and Japan are two distinct races with a different national spirit, absolute autonomy alone will provide the necessary opportunity for national progress. Koreans feel confident that they could make as good a showing as Japan. Korean students in Japan, of whom there are eight hundred this year, claim that they more than hold their own with Japanese students, despite the handicap of the Japanese language. Be that as it may, one thing stands clear: things can never go along as they did before the revolt. Whatever may result, the Korean must be given a greater opportunity to develop along their own national lines. Their national history must be held inviolate, their national language respected. Military rule with its system of gendarmerie must go, and the common rights of man be secured for all. The educational system must give the Korean youth the best possible chance to make good, and the offer of promotion to higher offices must prove the incentive. Ultimately there should be no office in the state which a Korean boy may not one day aspire to. Whether this will mean that Japan must withdraw from the peninsula or not, one cannot predict. It remains to be seen whether Japan, in the present instance, will respond to the reasonable and restrained protest of this people in the spirit of the times. There are not wanting signs that Japan is mustering courage to defy the enemy within her own gates. The world, and little Korea, will await the outcome. In the meantime we content ourselves with knowing that imperial military rule in Korea stands condemned, and that instead of the two nations being perfectly united they are further apart today than ever.

PRINTERS' (T)ERRORS

(Continued from Page 1)

Similarly, of course, the plural noun with the singular verb in the "Concerning Girls" page was a slip of the typesetter.

From all of which our readers will gather that it cannot be too strongly impressed on the linotype operators that they should **check doubly** the lines in which they make corrections.

It should be added that our December issue was passed through the press under somewhat testing conditions, owing to certain important changes having to be made on short notice. We are confident that, under normal conditions, the present printing office will ultimately give this magazine a service second to none.

Forgiveness is thy debt even as thou hopest it to be thy reward.

Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one, have oftentimes no connection.