

Preface.

I have been honored by Mrs. Bishop with an invitation to preface her book on Korea with a few introductory remarks.

Mrs. Bishop is too well known as a traveler and a writer to require any introduction to the reading public, but I am glad to be afforded an opportunity of indorsing the conclusions she has arrived at after a long and intimate study of a people whose isolation during many centuries renders a description of their character, institutions and peculiarities, especially interesting at the present stage of their history.

Those who, like myself, have known Korea from its first opening to foreign intercourse will thoroughly appreciate the closeness of Mrs. Bishop's observation, the accuracy of her facts, and the correctness of her inferences. The facilities enjoyed by her have been exceptional. She has been honored by the confidence and friendship of the King and the late Queen in a degree that has never before been accorded to any foreign traveler, and has had access to valuable sources of information placed at her disposal by the foreign community of Seoul, official, missionary, and mercantile; while her presence in the country during and subsequent to the war between China and Japan, of which Korea was, in the first instance, the stage, has furnished her the opportunity of recording with accuracy and impartiality many details of an episode in far Eastern history which have hitherto been clouded by misstatement and exaggeration. The hardships and difficulties encountered by Mrs. Bishop during her journeys into the interior of Korea have been lightly touched upon by herself; but those who know