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ARTICLE II.

COREA.*

Extracts from Mr. F. SCHERZER'S French translation of the *Chao-hsien-chih*, and Bibliographical Notice. Translated into English by CHARLES GOULD.

I.—BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTICE.

The Coreans possess two kinds of writing: the one, devoted to literary works and reserved for editing certain official documents, is in the Chinese character; the other, that is to say the Korean writing properly so called, is alphabetic, and permits of the exact representation of the sounds of the spoken language; this is especially employed by the lower orders and in printing popular editions.

The memoir on Corea of which I offer a translation is written in Chinese, and bears the title Tchao-sien-tehe 朝鮮志 with the intimation 不著才人名 denoting an anonymous author; it figures in the vast collection known as Y-hai-tchou-tchen 藝海球塵 which comprises no less than 165 different works. This important collection was compiled in the middle of the last century by Ou-chen-lan 吳省蘭 and corrected by Shu-y-yuen 徐以垣. This work was described for the first time by Mr. A. Wylie in his valuable "Notes on Chinese literature" as follows—"Chao-sien-che is an account of Corea including Geography and Customs, by a native of that country, whose name has not been preserved; but it appears to have been written in the latter part of the Ming dynasty." All that I myself can affirm is that this memoir is subsequent in point of age to the first year of Shuen-te 宣德 that is to say, to 1465, and prior to the conquest of China by the Tartar Manchus in 1616.

* Read before the Society on the 27th February, 1883.

My translation has been made from a manuscript which I had copied from the original text during my stay in Peking, its accuracy being verified by a collation, (for which I am indebted to the kindness of the much lamented Archimandrite Palladius.) with the example of the Y-hai-tchou-tchen existing among the treasures of the fine library of the Russian mission in Peking.

II.—CUSTOMS.

The Coreans profess a profound reverence for virtue; they hold literary studies in honor, and show a great inclination for them. An amiable urbanity is common, and they preserve the traditions of an exquisite politeness. At the death of one of the literati or of a functionary his relatives conform to the family rites of "Tchou-ouen-koiung" in the carrying out of the obsequies, mourning and sacrifices. Most of the Coreans, upon the death of their father, or mother, construct over the tomb a small house which they inhabit for three years. Those who fail in the duties of filial piety, lose all consideration in the eyes of the educated (literati) who cease to regard them as belonging to their order. During the whole time of mourning, some take only boiled rice, and abstain entirely from salt and cooked meats, others prepare with their own hands their food as well as the sacrifices offered on their relative's tombs. Marriages are arranged through the medium of a go-between, and sending presents. No alliance can be contracted between two persons of the same family. All the literati and functionaries have in their houses altars where they sacrifice in honour of their ancestors at the four periods of the year. Sons and grandsons abstain from rich food on the anniversary of their parent's death. They offer sacrifices before their tablets placed in the centre of a kind of altar in the form of niche.

Functionaries of the sixth rank and upwards sacrifice to their ancestors up to the third generation.

Those of the seventh rank and below it sacrifice to theirs up to the second generation.

Ordinary people only sacrifice to their defunct fathers and mothers.

If the oldest son of the principal wife has no male children, she adopts one of her other sons, and in case none of these has male posterity she adopts one of the sons which her husband may have by a secondary wife, whom she makes heir to the name in place of the eldest son.

The Coreans also offer sacrifices in honour of those of their relatives who may have died without posterity.

In case neither the principal wife, nor either of the second ones have born male children, they register an act of adoption of one of the younger sons of some member of their family.

Among the families of the literati, the wives upon the death of their husband take a vow of perpetual widowhood.

One of the literati or a functionary, on losing his principal wife, must wait three years before he can marry again, unless he has exceeded forty years in age without having a male child. In which case he can, on the order of his parents, contract a second marriage, after a year has elapsed from the death of his first wife.

The king annually offers a sacrifice in honour of Sien-nong, and proceeds in person to the ploughing of a consecrated field, whose products are destined to serve as offerings at the time of the principal sacrifices.

The Queen also offers a sacrifice in honour of Tien-tsan, she raises silkworms in the gardens situated at the end of the palace. She presides at the labours of the women who live in the Royal residence.

Annually, at the end of the autumn, the king invites the old men to a banquet, and profits by the occasion to raise, by one step, the rank of each of the functionaries charged with overlooking its preparation.

The king also gives a banquet, of which he personally does the honours to the sons and grandsons who have distinguished themselves by filial piety.

The Queen, on her part, offers a banquet, in the inner palace, to which are invited widows faithful to the memory of their husbands, and on the occasion makes a general distribution of presents.

Once a year the king sends rice as a present to centenarian old men.

Each month he causes wine and meats to be served from his own table, to great dignitaries over seventy years of age, and to the father, mother, and wife of those of his subjects who may have distinguished themselves by service and also to the wives of great dignitaries. In spring and autumn, the king gives a banquet to officials of the highest rank, who having arrived at an advanced age, may enjoy a reputation for unquestionable virtue. This banquet is called the banquet of merit tested by age.

To those of his subjects who have distinguished themselves by filial piety, fraternal affection, fidelity to the memory of a defunct spouse, or by distinguished acts of virtue the king accords, according to the circumstances, a promotion or presents, or even an honorific tablet, or a dispensation from statute labour? [Corvéés.]

The king decrees, during their life time, public eulogies to officials who have made themselves conspicuous by integrity, and on their death, he sees to the employment of their sons and grandsons.

The sons and grandsons of subjects who have died upon the field of battle also receive assistance and are nominated to enter the public service.

On the death of a high dignitary related to the king mourning is general at the court, and the conduct of business is suspended. The king appoints a master of ceremonies, to convey his condolences, to offer sacrifices and preside at the funeral.

The king likewise sends a master of ceremonies to preside at the obsequies of his subjects who may have deceased at a distance from their families and in the fulfilment of their duties.

The king defrays the cost of the obsequies of members of the Royal family of inferior station, but related at least in the second degree.

The king contributes towards the cost of the funerals of members of the Academy, and of censors without distinction

of rank as also to those, upon the occasion of the death whether of father or mother, of one of those functionaries. The king has constructed a magazine called Hœi-hœou-chou which contains coffins for the use of poor families.

The names of individuals of bad reputation, of those possessing ill-acquired wealth, as also of widows who have married a second time, are inscribed on the registers of three tribunals. The children and grandchildren whose names figure on these registers are excluded from the society of the literati.

When five children of any family attain literary grades the king distributes rice to their parents each year, and on the death of these latter sends an officer to assist at their funerals and decrees them an honorific title.

The king invites the civil and military graduates to a banquet called Ngeun-jong-yeu [Banquet of subjects distinguished by the Sovereign] and orders the authorities to give their relatives "aubades" (alms?) and to carry them wine in his name. This ceremony is called Jong-tsin-yeu [Banquet of relatives of subjects distinguished by the Sovereign.] The king likewise sends officer to offer sacrifices on the tombs of their parents (relatives)? This ceremony is called Jong-fenn [Honorable Burial.]

The king makes presents of rice to those of his subjects who are classed first in the examinations.

He grants assistance in money to all people whose poverty prevents them from marrying, or establishing their children opportunely, or from burying their dead within the period demanded by the rites.

The king provides the material for clothes for those of his subjects, who, being deprived of family, have not the wherewithal to cloth and provide for themselves, and for old men who are without means of sustenance.

The members of the Houng-ouen-kouan [College of high literature] go every other day in turn to pass the night at this college. The king goes there daily and assists at the readings. Where the ministers of state and censors are present by turns, it even happens that the conferences are prolonged throughout the night, until all obscure points have been elucidated.

Officers of the first rank who have arrived at the age of seventy, are refused permission to retire when their concurrence is deemed indispensable for the service of the state and the king presents them as a mark of his good will, with books, a table and a baton of old age. (*Note*,—the batons of old age were terminated by a cross ending in a turtle dove head, this has been replaced later on by a dragon's head.)

The king decrees honorific titles to the ancestors up to the third generation of high dignitaries and of officials of the two first classes.

When the father and mother of one of the literati or of a civil or military officer have reached the age of seventy years, one of their sons receives an order to return to the family home to take care of them. When they have reached the age of eighty, two of their sons are sent back, but when they arrive at ninety all the children are ordered to rejoin them, in order that they may surround them with the most careful attention.

Annually, during the summer months, a distribution of ice is made among the members of the Royal family and the high civil or military dignities. This is extended to those high dignitaries who are aged and past work, to the sick in the Houo-jeu-chou and to prisoners. Under the most ancient dynasties, equally with the present, it has been the practice to record in a repertory called San-kang-sin-ché, all fine deeds by which faithful subjects have rendered themselves illustrious, pious sons, and widows who have preferred not to survive their husbands. This book is translated in all tongues [*Note*,—*方言* Fang-yen which signifies local languages or patois, the Corean pronunciation varying exceedingly according to the province], and is universally distributed both within and without the capital; so that from the most tender age the children of both sexes may not be ignorant of the fine traits of virtue which are related in it.

The Government has founded two establishments called Tchang-kun-kouan and Yang-sin-kou where five hundred doctors and batchelors are entertained as boarders, whose sole occupation is the study of literature and morality. Those of them who arrive at the age of fifty without having suc-

ceeded in their examinations, are granted employment by special favour of the king.

The king also nominates to a position in one of the four colleges of the North, South, East, or West, where the sons and brothers of officials are brought up, those of the literati who, having failed in their examinations for Batchelor or Doctor, prove themselves to possess a perfect acquaintance with one of the following works, the Siao-hio or the Tse-chou.

The king has installed the professors of Tong-meung 童蒙, [*note*,—these characters signify children less than twelve years old], whose duties are to instruct common people children more than eight years old, whose parents have insufficient resources to send them to school. In each sub-prefecture and in each district there is established a school having four divisions exactly on the model of Tchang-kun-kouan.

The inspector, [*note*,—*觀察使*, Kouan-tcha-che, an office corresponding with that of Tao Tai 道台], makes a round of these establishments, he inspects both professors and pupils, makes them explain the text in his presence, and gives them subjects of composition, keeps an exact account of their application or work and rewards or punishes them according to their zeal or indolence.

In spring and autumn a sacrifice is offered called Tche-tsai. The Inspector, the prefects and the sub-prefects proceed there in person and invite all the pupils to a great banquet.

Twice a year, in spring and autumn, the high dignitaries of Y-tchang-fou, of the six *ministries* and of the different administrations give out subjects for composition to the pupils of Tchang-kun-kouang—after having corrected the written themes they class them in order of merit. The names of the authors of the three first compositions are transmitted to a commission which proceeds to a new examination of the compositions and verifies the exactitude of the award.

The pupils of Tchang-kun-kouan who have satisfied the examiners occupy public positions.

Those who study in the four colleges are examined on a stated day in the sixth moon of each year. They follow

moreover a daily course where they are questioned, and assist in the explanation of the texts.

At the close of these examinations fifty of the pupils are nominated pupils of the first class and have to compete again to obtain the degree of Bachelor or Doctor.

The same rules are observed in each province. The king's sons go daily to inform themselves of the condition of their father's health, and are present at his meals. Three times a day they assist at conferences where they both read, and discuss the text with their professors and the guests of the palace. They go to meet their professors, and reconduct them to the foot of the steps.

On the fifteenth day of each month they join together for a common reading preceded by a banquet. Each time that they have terminated the reading of one of their canonical books, a great banquet is given, a distribution of presents made.

Functionaries of inferior rank recently promoted ought, within ten days from the time of their nomination, to visit the members of Y-tchang-fou, the minister of officials, and of the administration to which they belong.

There is a palace called Tchong-y-kien, which serves for the residence of the descendants of kings of former dynasties who receive a subsidy consisting of rice and the revenue of certain territories devoted to their maintenance.

There is a formal prohibition to cultivating the area of the sepulchres of the kings of the former dynasties of Sin-lo, of Po-tsi and of Kao-ku-li.

Temples have been erected in honour of the founders of the ancient dynasties, and of persons who have rendered themselves illustrious by lofty actions and virtues. The local authorities repair to these in the spring and autumn of each year to offer sacrifices.

Outside the capital on the north, may be seen an uncovered altar where in the spring and autumn annual sacrifices are offered by the official of Han-tchang-fou for souls without an asylum. The same ceremony is performed in each prefecture, and in each district.

During the winter season, the king causes mat-coverings to be distributed among the prisoners, during the summer, he has their prison cleaned, and their cangue and their irons moistened, so that these wretches may not suffer too much from the rigour of the cold, or from the intensity of the heat.

The king nominates an official expert in the act of healing, to whom he gives supplies of medicine appropriated for the treatment of sick prisoners.

The government distributes clothing and rice among those prisoners whose poverty prevents them from maintaining themselves.

Outside the capital there is a granary called Tchang-ping-tchan, [*note*,—or granary of uniform price, this institution goes back so far as the Han dynasty. It is due to the sagacity of the Emperor Ou Ti.—*Vide* Sze-tche-tong-kien, k. 6. f. 29] where rice can be purchased when the price of cereals has augmented. The directors of this granary buy up rice when it has reached its lowest value, which permits of their reselling it cheaply to poor people during times of scarcity.

There also exists a granary whose directors make loans in the spring to cultivators of the quantity of grain necessary for sowing their fields; this is made good to the granary in autumn, and remains there till the following spring when it is again lent out; by this means the sowing is renewed annually.

When inundations or drought have produced scarcity the king opens establishments throughout the kingdom called Tchen-t'si-tchang, [*note*,—establishments of public assistance like the institutions founded in 1879 in Chantung, Honan, Chan-si and Tchili] where assistance is distributed to the population.

Each year, in spring and autumn, the heads of the district and the sub-prefects proceed, conformably with the rites, to the ceremony of Siang-yu-tsiou [*note*,—literally the libations of the village. This custom dates from the highest antiquity, and recalls the love feasts of the ancients. *Vide*.—The Li-ki, k. 10 f. 45.]

In the provinces, the village people elect a chief to whom each one must remit a contribution of rice and cloth.

In the spring and autumn, the inhabitants assemble at a banquet prepared at the common cost with a view to strengthening the bonds of mutual affection, and of affirming the concord uniting them.

When an illness or unforeseen catastrophe happens the people assist one another, and when one of them happens to die they assess themselves to provide the cost of the funeral, and of a double coffin, and ground for a grave. Upon the death of an official belonging to the third class or who may have exercised the functions of censor or of academician his sons and grandsons receive promotions, and in the first month of each year submit to examinations which permit of their attaining employment proportionate to their talents.

If the children of the defunct have not yet obtained any step, the officials of the third rank, and upwards, are authorized to interest themselves for the most studious of them, and to recommend them to the minister of public employment who examines them in the canonical books, and gives them employment proportionate to their talents. In the event of their giving, after their promotion, proofs of incapacity, the official who has recommended them incurs severe blame.

The competition for the degree of licentiate takes place every third year. The examination is divided into three trials: the first consists of two dissertations upon the books of Confucius; the second in a poetic composition and the historical resumé of a reign; the last comprises a series of questions to which the candidate must reply in writing.

The competition for the degree of doctor is divided into three parts: first the candidate must present a dissertation upon the Sse-chou and the Ou-king.

When this trial has been undergone in a satisfactory fashion the candidate is admissible for the second examination, consisting in a poetic composition and the historical resumé of a reign.

To satisfy the last trial the candidate must answer in writing questions based on all possible matters.

The king personally interrogates the candidates who have fulfilled this series of examinations and proceeds to definitively class them.

An extraordinary examination session can be held on the anniversary of the king's birth.

At the time of great fêtes, the king proceeds to Hio-kouan, assists at the lessons which are given there and finds the opportunity of granting extraordinary promotions, and of making an exceptional examination of those whom he judges worthy of a literary degree.

The king is in the habit of offering frequent sacrifices in honour of Confucius, and of visiting different colleges to assist at lessons and conferences, where the professors and pupils are admitted or even to examine these latter in the rendering of difficult passages of the classics, as to their skill in shooting with the bow, or to give them subjects for composition.

At the close of the examination, the list of successful candidates is proclaimed in the Throne Chamber.

The king makes them presents consisting of wine, gilded flowers, and a parasol of honour, makes them assist at a theatrical representation, and then has them reconducted to the sound of music which escorts them for three days as a mark of honour.

Those pupils who have distinguished themselves upon the occasion of a visit of the king to the royal college see their names proclaimed on the very day itself in the throne chamber. They receive by order of the king a saddled horse, a court robe, and an ivory tablet. This distinction is of a degree more elevated than that granted in the preceding case.

At the commencement of the year, as well as of that of the great cold, and at the principal anniversaries, the king accompanied by the Princes, his sons, and by the body of officials, proceeds to the ceremony of the Ouang-kúe-li [*note*,—that of the three kneelings and nine prostrations]. On each of these occasions he sends an embassy to carry a letter of homage to the Emperor of China. The king, always followed by the princes, his sons, and by the body of officials, makes the

salutation of the four prostrations in honour of the Imperial throne.

The king kneeling takes the letter which he places in the hands of his envoy, then makes three salutations, and accompanies outside the chamber the letter addressed to the throne, enclosed in a yellow box and preceded by bearers of emblems.

The king observes the same ceremonial when he goes to meet ambassadors returning from China; he receives them beneath a tent decorated with silks of five colours.

The king presides personally over the choice of presents to form the tribute destined for the Emperor of China.

The members of the royal family, as soon as they have arrived at the age of fifteen years, go to study at the college Tsong-hio. They daily decide by lot the duties which they should complete in order to merit a note (mark?) of satisfaction.

The minister of rites has the pupils of the four colleges interrogated monthly upon the matters which have formed the subject of their studies.

The names of pupils from the Capital, and from the province, the works which they have studied day by day, the names, titles, and qualities of their professors are registered in the archives of this minister.

Promotion is granted the Professor, if three among his pupils have been classed first in the competition for the degree of Doctor, or even if more than ten have obtained the degree of Batchelor or of licentiate.

The costume worn at the celebration of sacrifices, the costumes of the court, the official costumes are in all points similar to the Chinese costumes, [*note*,—this passage clearly shows us that the memoir was written before the Manchu conquerors had modified the Chinese costume, *i.e.* before 1616.] At the four great epochs of the year, at the eight great festivals, and at the end of each quarter, the people renew the hearth fire.

When a child is abandoned by its parents, the Han-tchang-fou or local authority, takes it, feeds it, clothes it, receives it under its protection, and charges itself henceforward with its maintenance.