1. Introduction

The world-wide enterprise of Christian missions plays a large part in molding the history of the world. The influence of the Christian propaganda on human progress is so extensive that it rightly demands careful investigation of students of the history of the world. The history of missions is, therefore, not a newly added theological discipline, but a branch of the science that the new school of history has developed.

Protestant missions as such aim not only at the intelligent presentation of the essential character of the Christian religion to non-Christian peoples, but also have the purpose of organizing those who accept their message into self-supporting, self-propagating, self-governing, and self-expressing churches. The study of the history of missions, therefore, inquires into the nature of the Christianity that has been propagated; the processes, the agents, and the methods by which Christianity was introduced; political, commercial, and other movements connected with the missionary enterprise; the extent of the alteration of Christianity by its new environment; and the influence upon the changes both in the people and in Christianity thus effected, of the conditions under which Christianity has spread, and particularly the missionary methods which have been employed. In view of the fact that the history of missions deals with such a large field of human interest, it forms an important part in the history of the world.

The success of Christian missions in Korea has been so notable that it has been called “One of the marvels of modern history.” The rapid growth of the Christian communities, the early naturalization of Christianity in the Korean environment, and the far-reaching influence of the religion on the thought and life of the people, have been a marked achievement.

Our present investigation is entirely (that is, as far as materials are available) based on original documents and official reports of the various mission boards and agencies at home, and of missionary groups on the field. It is, therefore, the first attempt to employ the historical method of study in recording the origin and growth of the Protestant Christian movement in Korea. As far as a critical use of the documents will allow, we shall describe and interpret objectively what actually happened.

The present work is confined to the history of the Protestant missions from the time of the sporadic coming of individual missionaries, through the arrival of resident missionaries, the establishment of different missions, the occupation of the field, the growth of the Christian propaganda and the organization of churches, to the year 1910, which marked the termination of the political independence of Korea by its union with Japan. The subsequent developments are left for later treatment.
The Country: In order to understand the environment into which Protestant Christianity was introduced, it is necessary to have an understanding of the physical basis of the life of the people and the religious character of the race. This involves a knowledge of the country itself, its people, its history, and its religious.

Korea is situated at the heart of the Far East. It separates China, Russia, and Japan, and connects them. It is at once a protecting shield to China, Russia’s outlet to the Pacific Ocean, and Japan’s bridge to the Asiatic mainland. In time of war, it is a battle ground. In both the Sino-Japanese war of 1894 and the Russo-Japanese war of 1904, the peninsula was the prize which was fought for. In time for peace in the Orient, it is the highway of civilization and culture. Through Korea, Buddhism found its way to Japan While the Koreans learned much from China Japan drew from them the arts of peace and goodwill.

From time immemorial, the chief industry of the Korean people has been agriculture. The staple crop is rice, which is produced in large quantities. Wheat, barley, millet, beans, and potatoes are also extensively raised.

The census of 1925 gives Korea a total population of 19,519,927. The bulk of it is agricultural, living in small villages which are thickly scattered throughout the country. The Korean people have very little liking for city life. Outside of Seoul, the capital, with a population of about 300,000, there are no really large urban centers.

The People: No one is able to speak of the origin and the character of the Korean race as authoritatively as of the country. The origin and ethnical relationships of the Korean people are as yet an unsolved problem. Ethnologists are baffled by the question and the Koreans themselves are not certain as to the origin of their ancestors. E. T. Hamy, a French anthropologist classified the Korean in three groups: first, the northern type, which resembles their Mongol (Tungus) neighbors; Second, the natives of the southern provinces and descendants of the ancient three Hans, showing Japanese affinities; and third, the inhabitants of the inner provinces who present a transitional form between the northern and southern types.

History: (Skip)

Religion: It has often been said that Korea is a land without a religion. This observation of the early writers on Korea was, perhaps, due to the fact that when Christianity entered the land, all ancient faiths were in a state of decay. There was no one distinct and controlling religion. As in the ancient Roman world, there was a tendency toward syncretism. To all who conceived religion in terms of dogma and ecclesiasticism, it was incomprehensible that the Korean was religious. Yet while the Korean gave few outward indications of being religious, he has never been without a deep-rooted conviction of the presence of spiritual beings.

The religious life of the Korean people manifests itself in three faiths. There is, first of all,
Shamanism, a form of animistic nature worship consisting of a universal worship and fear of spirits; secondly, there is Buddhism; and thirdly, the practice of the teachings of Confucianism.

**Confucianism:** No study as yet been made of the introduction of Confucianism into Korea. The founder of the Chosun dynasty, Kija is said to have brought with him an important section of the Canon of History known as “The Great Plan,” and to have made this the basic law of the state. Intercourse of scholars between China and Korea was frequent through the succeeding centuries. As far as we know, the first Korean scholar who studied abroad was CH’OE CH’I-won, who went to China in 875. CH’OE sojourned in Chang An, now Hsi An Fu, the capital of the T’ang dynasty. He reached Chang An about a century after the erection of the famous Nestorian Monument, and returned to Korea in 885, after having been abroad for ten years. He imported the Chinese classics into Korea and became the father of Korean literature.

For the last five hundred years Confucianism has had unlimited sway over the mind and heart of the Korean. What Korea might have been without it, nobody can tell. We know, however, that it did not prevent the oppression of the masses, general poverty, the treachery and corruption of officialdom, and degradation of womanhood, which were so characteristic of Korea in the last century. There was much that was splendid and admirable in Confucianism at its best. As practiced in Korea, however, it had many deplorable results: it nourished pride, it taught no higher ideal than that of a superior man, and was agnostic and atheistic in its tendency; it encouraged selfishness, exalted filial piety to the position of the highest virtue and made this hide a multitude of sins; and it imbued every follower with a hunger for office which resulted in simony and sinecure. Religiously, the system taught nothing that goes beyond what is known and seen. Consequently it avoided philosophical speculation; it enfeebled or destroyed the faculty of faith, for its doctrine required no exercise of belief.

2. Early contact with Christianity

The motives that actuated geographical discoveries of the modern age, as expressed in subsequent events, may be classified as economic, political, scientific, and altruistic. Adventurous trader seeking new markets, pirates looting the commerce of all nations, or conquerors seizing new territories and planting colonies were motivated by economic and political purposes. There are also geographical discoveries made for scientific purposes. The daring men who went to unknown shores to chart coasts sailed the seven seas to discover routes, and trod strange lands to investigate the land and the people. Magellan’s discoveries and Captain Cook’s expeditions have added rich scientific knowledge of the world. There went out also noble men and women to far countries and alien peoples to share their religious convictions and to promote the well-being of their fellow men. These are missionaries. Livingstone in Africa and the Egedes in Greenland are well known pioneers in missionary discovery.
The First Jesuit Missionary: Since Korea was a country inferior in size and importance to her neighbors and was surrounded by dangerous seas, until very recent times she failed to attract the attention of the world in an extensive measure. For good or ill, Korea was unmolested by outside contacts and enjoyed some two hundred years of peace and tranquility undisturbed by the experiences which overtook China and Japan. In what we call modern times, the first Westerner to set his foot in Korea was a Jesuit priest, Father Gregorio de Cespedes.

Hendrick Hamel: While the next cycle of sixty years rolled away, Korea was not favored by a European visitor. However, in 1653, the Sparwehr, a trading vessel of the Dutch East India Company, was wrecked on the coast of Quelpart(Cheju) Island. Hendrick Hamel, the supercargo of the ship, together with his crew, were detained in Korea for fourteen years. Hamel and seven others at length returned to Holland in 1668, having escaped through Japan. Hamel published his “quaint and racy account” of his experiences in Korea called the Narraive of an Unlucky Voyage and Shipwreck on the Coast of Korea. This narrative was subsequently translated into French, English, and German. Thus Hamel was the first European to introduce the knowledge of Korea and her people to the nations of Western Europe. His work, however instead of stimulating commercial or missionary undertakings, raised skepticism in some readers.

Catholic Missions: The first great step in the missionary discovery of Korea was the introduction of Roman Catholicism. The French Catholic annalist, Ch. Dallet, has written two large volumes on the history of the Catholic Church in Korea. His work is the only complete and extensive record of the beginning and development of the Papal Church in Korea from its genesis in the seventeenth century to the year 1866. Hurbert, Longford, Gale, and Griffis used it for source material on the subject. We shall merely give a summary of the work of Catholic missions in Korea from their introduction to the last great persecution of 1866.

The Roman church was planted in Korea under very extraordinary, if not romantic, circumstances. The history of the growth through persecution in a new environment, which we have just observed, was nothing short of remarkable. Self-sacrifice, daring adventure, heroic patience and endurance, even the very sacrifice of life on the part of missionaries and their converts, deserve high praise. But even the infallible Roman Church has a great many short comings. Their converts are untaught of the Scripture. From the foundation of the church by Yi Sung-hun in 1784 to 1866, eighty-two years had passed, but no attempt had been made to translate a single Gospel or any portion of the Bible. Their emphasis on ecclesiastical institutionalism occupies such a paramount place that even new converts began the practice of their faith by setting up a hierarchy, rather than by growing in grace and life. Their political activities perhaps are the most undesirable features of the missionary proselyting methods of Roman Catholics. Following the advice of their teachers, the Korean converts played the part of traitors to their country. They not only deceived officers of their government, but also violated the law of the land. In the case of Alexander Hwang, Roman Catholics actually invited an armed
intervention. As in Vietnam, Korea saw the French missionaries as the forerunners of French
imperialism and the priests as the pilots of the gunboat. Was it not natural in the irrational but
patriotic minds of the Korean officers to conceive that Christianity, as they first saw it, was an
emblem of treason and aggression?

Protestant Missions, Charles Gutzlaff: Gutzlaff’s visit to Korea was so brief that no
recognizable result was produced. But the first Protestant missionary to visit the peninsula
declared in unshaken faith: “At all events, It[his visit] is the work of God, which I frequently
commended in my prayers to his gracious care. Can the divine truth, disseminated in Korea, be
lost? This I believe not: there will be some fruits in the appointed time of the Lord. In the great
plan of the eternal God, there will be a time of merciful visitation of them, While we look for this,
we ought to be very anxious to hasten its approach, by diffusing the glorious doctrines of the
cross by all means and power… The scripture teaches us to believe that God can bless even these
feeble beginnings, Let us hope that better days will soon dawn for Korea,”

R. J. Thomas: After uneventful visit of Gutzlaff, no other Protestant missionary visited Korea for
thirty-three years. Protestants would, however, inevitably make their way to Korea. Missionary zeal
was increasing in Europe and America and missionaries were multiplying in the newly opened
cities of China and Japan. The courageous man who broke the long silence was a Welshman, the
Reverend R. J. Thomas.

Alexander Williamson: The missionary discovery of the “Hermit Kingdom,” however, did not
stop with the destruction of the General Sherman. Alexander Williamson, who sent Thomas to
Korea in 1865, made an exploring journey to Manchuria, extending his visit as far as the Korean
Gate, in the fall of 1867. Williamson arrived at the ‘Gate’ during one of the seasons when the
Koreans come to trade with the Chinese. He reports:

John Ross: John Ross, a Scotch Presbyterian missionary residing at New Chwang, Manchuria,
made an exploring journey to eastern Manchuria in the autumn of 1873. As his compatriot and
fellow missionary Williamson had done, he, too, went to the Korean Gate and met the Koreans
who came thither to trade with the Chinese. During this visit, Ross could not succeed in getting
much information concerning the country and people, but he found a man who was willing to go
with hum as his Korean teacher. With the assistance of this teacher, Ross and his fellow missionary,
John MacIntyre, translated the Gospel of Luke into Korean. This Korean teacher was Yi Ung-ch'an
who was converted while he was teaching Korean to the missionaries.

Bible Society: However, Ross did not accomplish the work without the assistance an
cooperation of other people and agencies. When he began to translate the Gospel of Luke, his
brother in law and colleague, John MacIntyre, joined with him heart and hand. And the National
Bible Society of Scotland and the British and Foreign Bible Society gave financial assistance for the publication of the results of his toil. The Scotch Society had been the first Bible agency to send the Scriptures to Korea, when Thomas visited there in 1865. In compliance with the request of Ross in 1879, the Society agreed to provide type for the publication of one gospel. In the following year the Scotch Society in cooperation with the British Society, agreed to provide an allowance to Ross and Macintyre for expenses and for the payment of native assistants, and further to furnish type for an edition of three thousand copies of the Gospels of John and Luke. Types for these two Gospels were printed, one-third of the entire edition was sent to the Society’s agent in Japan, that from that country copies might be introduced into Korea.

3. The opening of Korea, 1876-1884

“The Korean peninsula is the strategic point in the mastery of the Far East,” and the pivot of the Orient. The opening of Korea significant developments in the politics of the Far East that Tyler Dennett, a competent authority on Oriental diplomatic history, declares: “the movement to open Korea was by far the most important political action undertaken by the United States until the occupation of the Philippines in 1898.” The diplomatic contest over Korea was so complicated that a recent writer described it under the title of “The Korean Tangle.” With these political developments and with diplomatic relations, we are concerned only is so far as they have direct bearing upon our subject.

Christian missionary activity, in a wide sense, is not confined to the efforts of professional missionaries, but also includes the indirect religious and moral influence of the Christian portion of the world upon the non-Christian. In this sense, Christian influence upon Korea should have begun with the so-called Christian nations of the West. On the contrary, Korea's initiation into the family of nations was through war and destruction. Still, the policy of the open door soon followed the principles of conquest and hostility, and messengers of peace and good-will succeeded soldiers and sailors. In this chapter, we shall discuss events leading to the opening of the long-closed ports and cities of Korea to the nations of the world, and the developments which culminated in the dispatch of Protestant missionaries to the Korean people.

Missionary Movement in America: In the history of the religious life of the American people, there have been marked fluctuations which have, as a rule begun with a revival. There was a series of revivals that not only revivified the spiritual life of the people, but also reinvigorated the moral sense of responsibility toward the peoples of non-Christian cultures. The Great Awakening of the eighteenth century, under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards, led to David Brainerd, Eleazar Wheelock, and the Mayhews-outstanding missionaries of the colonial church. During the Revolutionary War the revival spirit died out. However, from the beginning of the nineteenth century a series of revivals took place which continued unbroken to 1840. One of the outstanding features of the series was the missionary zeal implanted among college students in America. The
"Society of Brethren" was formed in 1806. As a result of the organization of this

**Missionary Appeals from Japan and China:** When the treaty between the United States and Korea was made public some interest was aroused among those who hoped that one of the resulted would be the opening of the land to missionary endeavor, and there appeared in missionary periodicals a few scattered notices on Korea. The plea for beginning religious activities in Korea, however, came forcefully to American churches later through their representatives in Japan and China. A Korean student migration to Japan began in the late eighties. The Protestant missionaries in Japan became acquainted with these liberal-minded students. Robert S. Maclay, of the Methodist Mission, Henry Loomis of the American Bible Society, and George W. Knox of the Presbyterian Mission, had early contacts with them. These missionaries befriended the Korean political refugees, who were progressive but inexperienced patriots and eager students. They taught them the English language, led them to Christian schools, and preached to them as best they could. In order to put the Scripture into the Korean language, one of the senior and leading converts was employed to translate the New Testament. The missionaries wrote to the mission boards and the Bible Society they represented and pleaded with their superiors to open missionary work in Korea itself.

**Conversion of the Korean Students in Japan:** While the churches in America held the policy of "watchful waiting" Protestant missionaries in Japan preached to the Korean students with whom they came in contact. Some of these students entered mission schools, while others professed the Christian faith. Among these sojourners, Rijutei was a senior and a leader. He was a man of high rank on Korea. In order to save his head during the restoration of the Taewongun in 1882, he had fled to Japan. On his way to the Sunrise Kingdom, he secured at a Korean port a Bible in Chinese, a Commentary on Mark, and A. P. W. Martin's book on the evidence of Christianity. By studying these books, Rijutei learned the essential articles of the Christianity faith. Through a Japanese Christian minister, he was brought into contact with the Rev. George W. Knox and the Rev. Robert S. Maclay, and received baptism.

While Rijutei was in Japan, he engaged in various Christian activities and applied his time diligently to increasing his knowledge of the new faith. As he met his fellow countrymen, he bore testimony of his faith and brought them to Christian services. The number of those whom he interested became so large that there was talk of holding separate services for Koreans. Then Rijutei, with the aid of the Bible in the Chinese and Japanese language, undertook to translate the Scriptures into Korean for the American Bible Society. He translated many Christian tracts from Chinese into his mother tongue, and wrote magazine articles on the customs and habits of his people, with the hope that Western nations would be enabled better to understand the Korean people. His translation of the Gospel of Mark was published in 1884 and as a result the first ordained American missionaries coming to Korea through Japan had in their hands that Gospel in the Korean language. Rijutei also sent a special petition to “the churches in America” to open
mission work in Korea. Through Rijutei’s influence, a Korean official become interested in missionary work. This man later “obtained the sanction of the Korean King for the establishment not only of a hospital by our (Presbyterian) mission, but also of an English school.”

**Bible societies:** The work of the various Bible societies during the period was the two fold work of translation and circulation. In Manchuria, Hon Ross, of the Scotch missionary, continued his translation of the New Testament under the auspices of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the society set apart a colporteur to circulate the Scriptures in Korea. The National Bible Society of Scotland continued its good work at Pusan through their Japanese colporteur. In 1883, an American missionary serving under the China Inland Mission at Chefoo, A. W. Douthwaite, at the request of Alexander Williamson, the Scotch Bible Society Agent, visited Korean ports in behalf of the Scotch Society and circulated the Scripture.

**Introduction of the Methodist Episcopal Mission:** Dr. Maclay, accomplished by his wife, made the desired visit in June, 1884. Before this time, in Japan, the Maclays had had the acquaintance of KIM Ok-kyun who “was now a member of the Department of Foreign Affairs in the Korean government.” Maclay sent a letters written in Japanese, which he had brought with him, to the king through Kim. In this letter of petition he requested permission to open a school and medical work in Korea. Four days after the presentation of the petition, on July 3, 1884, Maclay called on Kim to receive his reply. “He received me very cordially,” says Maclay “and at once proceeded to inform me that the king had carefully examined my letter the night before, and in accordance with my request had decided to authorize our society to commence hospital and school work in Korea. ‘The details,’ continued, Mr. Kim, ‘have not yet been settled, but you may proceed at once to initiate to work.’” This favorable reply contained no official permission to purchase or to rent property. However, Maclay asked the American Minister, Foote, to purchase a piece of property near the Legation. Upon his return to Japan, Maclay recommended that the Mission Board “begin educational and medical work, using no disguise as to the ultimate object being evangelization,” and added: “schools would be welcome, and hospitals are a necessity.” He further assured the Board that there was no fear of opposition from the Korean government. Thus the veteran missionary to China and Japan was honored with the title of “foster father” of the Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

**Introduction of the Presbyterian Mission:** The Presbyterian Church in the United States of American began its interest in Korea through its missionaries in Japan, especially upon the receipt of Rijutei’s appeal for the establishment of a mission in the peninsular kingdom. Rev. George W. Knox planned to visit Korea in November, 1883, but circumstance beyond his control prevented the trip. Mission board executives were divided on the question of the opening of a mission in Korea. Forward-looking men, like Dr. F. F. Ellinwood favored immediate occupation, while others believed that they should wait some years. The senior secretary of the American Board published
a lengthy article urging delay in entering Korea. Mr. David W. McWilliams, a Christian layman and a member of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, read the article and inquired of Dr. Ellinwood about its merits. Dr. Ellinwood convinced Mr. McWilliams of the advisability of occupying Korea at once. As an executor of the estate of Frederick Marquand, Mr. McWilliams in February, 1884, placed five thousand dollars at the disposal of the Presbyterian Board with which to start the Korea Mission, and other contributions were soon added to the fund. A “young physician of excellent training and devoted spirit,” Dr. John W. Heron, was willing to go, and was appointed in the spring of 1884, the first Presbyterian missionary to Korea.

4. The establishment of missions, 2885-1890

The first Protestant missionary societies to begin evangelistic efforts in Korea were the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. These two agencies started their work simultaneously, carried it on side by side, and have organized the majority of the churches existing in Korea today. “Remember the source,” says an old Korean proverb, “when you drink the water.” In this chapter we shall survey the home bases of the societies, and the establishment of these two missions to Korea.

Home Base of Missions: The question “What is the home base of mission?” is variously answered. But the statement made at the World Missionary Conference held at Edinburgh in 1910 will serve out purpose: “The home base is the widely extending organization in Christendom through which foreign missions are supported and directed, and this statement must stand as true until the foreign missions of the church in Christian lands are absorbed into home missions in the countries at present non Christian.” There will always be the home base, so long as there are foreign missions. The home base of missions must provide means by which “the church at home may adequately discharge its responsibility for the evangelization of the world.” It, therefore, includes the great body of Christian people who desire to share the depth and sincerity of their religious experience and the intensity and daring of their faith with non-religious peoples, expressing them through agencies which represent their interests. These agencies are the foreign mission boards and foreign missionary societies.

Missionary Movements in America: In the history of the missionary enterprise in America, the year 1880 marks the birth of a new missionary interest among students in theological seminaries. The students of Princeton Theological Seminary felt that they were “justified in concluding that a genuine missionary revival was needed in the church; and especially among theological students.” They were “led to consider the establishment of some permanent system of inter-Seminary Correspondence on the subject of mission,” and sent out circulars early in January, 1880. “To the students of All Evangelical Seminaries in the U.S.A” to secure their “counsel and cooperation.”
Almost simultaneously the students of the Hartford Theological Seminary, following the “Week of Prayer” at the beginning of 1880, wrote circular letters “To students for the Christian ministry” requesting special prayer for Colleges and Theological Seminaries.” These circulars evidently voiced the ripening sentiment of theological students, for the movement resulted in proposing an Inter-Seminary Convention “to be attended by delegates from all the theological institutions of the county, with a view to extend and deepen interest among all candidates of the ministry.” The first convention was held in October, 1880, at New Brunswick, New Jersey, and the American Inter-Seminary Alliance was formally organized. After that, the Alliance held conventions every year at theological seminary centers until it merged with the Intercollegiate Young Men’s Christian Association in 1897. Among the early missionaries to Korea, as we shall see, many made their decisions for foreign mission work either during or following these conventions.

**Founding of the Presbyterian Mission:** The first Protestant missionary to come with the intention of residing permanently in Korea was Dr. H. N. Allen, of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. It will be recalled that he arrived in September, 1884. The foreign residents in Seoul were glad to welcome him, for they were in great need of a physician. On the day after his arrival at Seoul, September 23, 1884, Dr. Allen called at the American Legation to pay his respects to the American Minister, General Foote. He made the following entry on that day with regard to his visit: “I was gladly received because of the great need of a doctor. He formally appointed me physician to the legation (without salary) and offered me his help.” Subsequently Dr. Allen was appointed to be the physician of the British Legation and the other diplomatic establishments. Therefore, when the king asked General Foote if Allen was a missionary, he was given the answer: “he is physician to the legation.” In his statues as a missionary, he would not have been allowed in the country. The Korean government had fresh in its memory the complications that had arisen out of the presence of French Catholic missionaries. The masses, moreover, had not forgotten the massacre of the Catholics and the anti-foreign edicts. As late as the preceding year a Chinese Christian soldier had been deported for daring to sell Christian scriptures in Seoul. In spite of unfavorable circumstances, the pioneer missionary started at once the lay foundations for future work. Through the American minister, he purchased a piece of property near the American Legation. He remodeled a Korean house for the occupation of this family and added other adjoining properties for his associates. In October, he returned to China to bring his family.

**Founding of the Methodist Episcopal Mission:** When Henry Appenzeller returned from the Hartford Inter Seminary Convention in the winter of 1883. He determined to go to Korea. He had previously been interested in Japan and hope to go to that country as a missionary, but when his friend, J. S. Wadsworth, who had been accepted as a missionary to Korea, was compelled to stay in the United States, Mr. Appenzeller wanted “to be Wadsworth’s substitute” and offered himself for Korea. He received his appointment during Christmas week, 1884, as the first clerical missionary to Korea under the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was ordained elder by Bishop C. H.
Fowler at San Francisco on February 2, 1885, and the next day sailed on the S. S. Arabic.

The Appenzeller did not go alone. In New York, on the night of December 4, 1884, while the revolutionists were at work in the Korean capital, William B. Scranton, M. D. was ordained to the Ministry of the Methodist Church. Dr. Scranton, the latter being appointed by the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, and joined the Appenzellers on the S. S. Arabic. These pioneer missionaries reached Japan in February of the following year. On March 5, the new arrivals met with Robert S. Maclay at his home at Aoyama, Tokyo, “to consider the situation, to arrange for continuing the passage to Korea, to devise business matters, [and] to discuss plans of commencing the mission.” On March 31, Dr. Maclay received notification of the formal organization of the Korea Mission from Bishop C. H. Fowler, who appointed Maclay Superintendent, Appenzeller Assistant Superintendent, and Scranton Mission Treasurer.

Beginning of Modern Education in Korea: The favorable effects of medical work were enhanced by the educational labors of the missionaries. People were eager for Western education. In fact, the Korean government had already taken the first timid steps toward the inauguration of a modern educational program. We have already noted the beginning of the Korean student migration to Japan in the eighties. As early as 1881, the government was sending commissions and student to Japan and China to acquaint themselves with the affairs of the world. Actual instruction under Westerners did not begin until 1883, when T. E. Halifax began to teach in the school of interpreters. In the spring of 1885, the King of Korea through the American Minister at Seoul requested General John Eaton, the Commissioner of Education of the United States, to nominate three competent young men “to undertake the management and teaching” of the government school. Commissioner Eaton’s choice fell upon three students of “sound views and excellent spirit” in Union Theological Seminary, New York City, two of whom were about to graduate—George W. Glimore, Princeton 1883, D, A, Bunker, Oberlin, 1883, and H. B. Hulbert, Dartmouth 1884. The government school was organized in September, 1886. The school did effective work and turned out men useful in government service. However, it did not prosper as it deserved, for the speculating officials connected with it diverted its funds to their private uses. The situation was so disheartening that first Gilmore, then Hulbert, and finally Bunker resigned and returned to America. The last two mentioned, however, later returned to Korea as members of the Methodist mission.

5. Occupation of the field, 1891-1897

Until the close of 1890 only a few missionary bodies had entered Korea, and these had not been able to extend their activities far beyond the capital. Missionaries had, to be sure, gone on many journeys, but as yet they had not attained an effective foothold outside of Seoul. In the eight years, 1890-1897, however, several new boards entered the country, and all the missions, both old and new, established permanent residential centers in provincial cities. The time of
prying open the doors had passed and the day had dawned for the extensive occupation of the land by missionary forces. In this chapter, therefore, we shall narrate the story of the occupation of the commanding centers.

In spite of the fact that the law prohibition Christianity was, by common consent, a dead-letter, in 1889, Christianity was theoretically a forbidden religion. The question naturally arises, what brought about the change? Why was it that between 1889 and 1897 it was possible for missionaries to explore the country and open new stations, and why were new societies able to establish themselves in Korea? In order to understand the situation, a review of the general conditions of the country is necessary. The emeute in December, 1884, was a turning point in the political history of the Far East. The failure of the coup by the Korean revolutionists, under the guidance of the Japanese meant a loss of all hope for progressive reform in Korea, and a disaster to Japanese prestige in the Orient. Japan lost the respect of the Korean people and the long-standing hatred for them was intensified. Whatever panacea Japan might have to offer for the chronic ills of the land, neither the government nor the people would give heed to it. The Chinese were left free to aggrandize themselves in the peninsula. The Peking government had previously disavowed its responsibility toward other nations whenever Korea had gotten into trouble, but now, under the direction of Li Hung Chang, China was making desperate efforts to bolster up her claims and to make good her pretensions. Li recalled von Mullendorff, and adviser of the Korean Foreign Office, on account of his machinations with the Russians at the expense of Chinese interests, and replaced him by Judge O. N. Denny, an exconsul of the United States to China. According to the Tientsin Convention, the Chinese evacuated the Korean capital, but Li's lieutenant, Yuan Shih Kai, took up his residence in Seoul, dubbed himself "resident" in opposition to the Korean claim to independence, and exercised a controlling hand in governmental affairs through the reactionary ministers of the court. Thus the Chinese drove the Japanese from Korea and attempted to reassert Chinese suzerainty over the peninsular kingdom.

6. The rise of the church, 1897-1906

The years from 1897 to 1907 mark the period of the rise of the church, following naturally the impetus gained in the preceding years. In spite of- and because of- the political changes, the Christian community continued to grow, almost without interruption, throughout the country. The period has been summed up by the following remarkable statement:

"The marvelous progress of missionary work, in the sometime Hermit Nation, the activity of the Christians, the zeal for the cause, the self-sacrificing energy in church work, have challenged the attention of all Christendom. For almost the years the story of the work has seemed like a chapter from the Acts of the Apostles."

The note of the entire period is rapid advance and marked progress. From our point of view,
the problem in Korea during these nine years is divided into two categories, political and missionary. The political problems are so closely interrelated with mission work that a summary of them is necessary to an understanding of the situation.

7. **The revival and the growth of the church, 1907-1910**

In concluding the survey of the Christian expansion in the momentous four years between 1907 and 1910, we can say that it was a period of many great movements which established the traditions of Korean Christianity and which gave inspiration and example to the coming generations. The passing of the old order and the installation of foreign rule left the Koreans dissatisfied. With this spirit they turned to Christianity for inspiration effort to assert themselves as a self-reliant and respected people. There were cynical criticisms, such as that:

> "The 'purification' of Korea required, and still requires, the firm, strong hand of a civil power. We cannot, then, credit any such sentiment as that expressed in the following statement: 'The influence of Christianity holds out a better prospect of spontaneous reform than the outside, violent interference of a money-grabbing and hated heathen enemy.'"

We have, however, already shown the extensive activities of the Korean Church and the regenerated character of the Korean Christians through these perilous hours of national life. By 1910 Christianity was established and the Church had become the most potent national institution. A contemporary observer, characterizing Christianity in Korea, wrote:

> "From perfect knowledge of the church in Korea, I can bear testimony to the sincerity, zeal, and spirit of self-denial of this body of believers. The proofs of the above abound. It will surprise many to learn that the churches are self-supporting. Self-help, self-reliance, coupled with large liberality, are marker characteristics. In so large a body there are lapses, of course, but relatively they are few."

8. **Conclusion**

In the foregoing survey of the expansion of Christianity in Korea, an attempt has been made to set forth in detail what was accomplished up to 1910. In the midst of this turmoil and change, the new faith made such rapid progress that a missionary writing in 1910 declared: "Politically she is nil, but in the missionary circle she is a first-rate power."

When evangelical Christianity was introduced into the land, the force of unrest was undermining the organized life of the people. Religious, social, educational, and political institutions were disintegrating. After Korea entered the family of nations, feeble attempts were made to correct these conditions and to work out the political salvation of the nation, but the resulted in failure. Disappointment, discontent, and disillusionment made the people responsive to
the presentation of new ways of life.

Christianity had the advantage of entering the ancient kingdom before other forms of modern civilization had taken possession of the thought of the people. Before the Sino-Japanese War, Koreans did not understand the nature of Western civilization and the character of the Christian religion. But when the war came, the Koreans were forced to recognize the superior quality of that Western civilization which had enabled the little Japanese to conquer the mighty Chinese. During the reform era, men became enamored of Western ideas and ideals. The leaders of the people were champions of the West and identified themselves with the Christian religion. The new era not only tended to give the nation a new mental outlook, but also made and opening for the Christian religion. When they once accepted the faith and entered its institutional life, they found social, intellectual, and religious satisfaction. The simple-minded Koreans believed that the Christian religion was the whole of Western civilization, and their new-found spiritual satisfaction convinced them that Christianity was the panacea for the ills from which they were suffering. There was every reason to believe this, for it was Christianity which established the cohesion and unity of the people. It was also the Church that inaugurated a modern educational system, gave the people literature, raised the standard of morality, inaugurated social reforms, and introduced industry. The Christianity movement brought to the Koreans new ideals and new standards of life.

In spite of its early connection with the government, the new religion spread chiefly among the humble and poor. The Koreans believed what was taught them, without raising many questions. They acted as they were told and made earnest efforts to be "doers of the word." Jesus himself was a man of the country, so his personality was vivid to them. The Koreans understood the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles more readily than the subtle theology of the city man, Paul. In their struggle and strife, they found comfort and peace in the simple teachings of the Gospel. They did not hold the knowledge to themselves alone, but told the story to their friends and their neighbors. Thus a typical church in Korea is a village church, and a typical Christian is a sturdy and hard-working and honest farmer. The future strength and weakness of the Church are largely dependent on these humble rural folk.

The rapid development of the Church was not entirely due to the causes which have just been summarized, but is to be attributed in part to the policy and methods of missionary work. The evangelical missions in Korea present an object lesson of the results of emphasizing self-support. The Korean Christians gave their time and means for extension of their new faith, elected their ablest and wisest as their leaders in the Church, and gave of their means and substance for the support of their teachers and institutions.

In regard to self-government, the Korean Church was not organized in the early stage of its expansion. The reason for deferring this has been given in the preceding chapters. Yet it must be born in mind that the Korean's attitude was a factor. It was not because "spiritually they are in advance of many Christian nations, but they lack balance, foresight, the essence of self-government," that they made no aggressive demands for self government. The contrary was the truth. The Korean church leaders realized that the continued of the young church depended upon
the guidance of the missionaries.

Self-support was successfully carried out. Both self-propagation and self-government were the logical consequences of the self-support program. The persistence of the principle gave the Koreans the feeling that the whole enterprise was theirs. The teachers who taught them were their own servants and the churches in which they worshipped were theirs. They established and maintained schools for their children. The Korean Christians, therefore, treated the missionaries as their guests and respected them according to the canons of Oriental courtesy and politeness. As soon as the people caught this conception of the enterprise, they went out to preach to others and to elect elders to govern their congregations. It is the self-support principle that created the self-respect, self-reliance, and independent spirit which are necessary for any successful movement, and that made the Korean Church active and endowed it with resources which sustained it through all its trials.

In 1901, it was estimated that there were over two hundred thousand people who identified themselves with Christianity and that their contribution for all purposes amounted annually to over 200,000 yen.

The two hundred thousand Christian adherents among the thirteen million of the population were very insignificant as far as numbers go. The statistics, however, do not discredit the success of mission work, nor should they elate us. There is success that cannot be statistically recorded, and this success far exceeds the numerical achievement. It is, of course, impossible to make a statistical record of the quality of these two hundred thousand Christian adherents. Undoubtedly many were rudimentary Christians, not only in their knowledge but also in their lives. In estimating the character of the Korean Christian we cannot depend on the superficial judgment of travelers who never have taken the trouble to concern themselves with the spiritual life of the Korean people. The activities of the Korean Christians bespeak their own character.

In spite of all deficiencies, the Christian community represented an intelligent, moral, and religious power and created an atmosphere which exerted an ennobling influence on the corrupt and degenerating life of the people, and circulated the new blood, the vital force of Christian ideals.

The missionary enterprise, like all other human movements, is affected by the men who are its agents. We have already indicated the fervent evangelistic tone of the missionaries and their convert, and their strongly conservative tendencies. It is interesting to note the following characterization, by a missionary executive, of the typical missionary in Korean

"The typical missionary of the first quarter century after the opening of the country was a man of the Puritan type. He looked upon dancing, smoking, and card playing as sins in which no true followers of Christ should indulge. In theology and Biblical criticism he was strongly conservative, and he held as a vital truth the pre-millenarian view of the second coming of Christ. In most of the evangelical churches of America and Great Britain, conservatives and liberals have learned to live and work together in peace; but in Korea the few men who hold 'the modern view' have a
rough road to travel, particularly in the Presbyterian group of missions."

Under the old political regime they were "squeezed" by corrupt officials; under the new rule they lost their country. There seemed to be no hope in this world. There seemed to be no hope in this world. The Christian people therefore held their hope to be in the future; they preached to others that everybody might share in the blessings of the future. They gave their substance that they might "lay up their treasure in heaven." It is true that churches instituted measures of social reform, dealing, for instances, with spirituous liquors, marriage, and the owning of slaves. But to the average humble Christian:

"To read the Bible daily, to sing hymns, and to go to church, to obey the directions of pastors – this is regarded as the whole duty of man. Even those who do not go to this extreme, look upon other duties as unimportant. Real believers slight unbelieving parents or elders, regard non-believing friends as Gentiles, and treat with contempt all duties toward state and society, as the 'work of the world.'"

This other-worldly attitude may seem inconsistent with what has several times previously been said about one of the motives which led people to become Christians – their despair over the situation in Korea and their hope that in Christianity they might find a force that would regenerate the nation. The fact is that both attitudes were represented. Some Christians, especially the better educated, such as Baron Yun, looked to the Gospel to save the country by injecting into it a new faith and a new moral dynamic. Others, and probably the majority, looked upon the Gospel as a means of escape from this present evil world and as an insurance of a better life beyond the grave. Many, too, despairing of any gradual change for the better and encouraged by the premillennial views of many of the missionaries, expected a better day to dawn for the nation through the cataclysmic intervention of God.

Along with this other-worldly tendency went a neglect of intellectual training. In Christian communities the Bible was the Book of books and theology was the "queen of sciences." The missionaries, at the beginning of the rapid rise of the Christian communities, were so busy in proselyting that they almost totally neglected the training of leaders for the rising church. When the missionaries began to realize their error they founded schools, but the dominating motives was training of pastors.

It must quickly be added that the percentage of literacy and the level of education of the Christians were higher than that of the surrounding non-Christian community and that for years the Christian schools were better than anything else to be found in the country.

These three features, the inherent conservatism of the Church, the want of the social application of Christianity, and the low intellectual standard of the Korean Christians, were not the outstanding characteristics of the Korean Church; they were rather transitory defects. As the people advance toward a higher standard of intellectual attainment, these defects are gradually
eliminated. However, it is safe to assert that when the Korean Church is compared with her sister churches in India, China, and Japan, these three defects still remain.

Francis Bacon once said: “If man does not change things for the better, Time, the great innovator, will change them for the worse.” When Korea was opened to the West, the greatest change wrought in the life of the people was the introduction of Christianity. Evangelical Christianity entered the country when it was still an independent nation, but after twenty-five years of the vigorous prosecution of Christian propaganda the people failed to maintain their national sovereignty. Shall we, as did Gibbon of the fall of the Roman Empire, attribute the cause of the passing of the ancient kingdom to Christianity? Whatever may have been the cause of the fall of the Roman Empire, Christianity was not responsible for the termination of the political independence of Korea, for Annexation in 1910 was only the culmination of the long processes of decay originating before the opening of the country. On the contrary, the intercourse with the West awakened the nation on a new life purpose. The infusion of Christian ideals gave to it a new birth. The national humiliation and foreign oppression were only birth-pangs. The persistently active minority have already made themselves felt among their non-Christian neighbors. The rebirth of a nation in the heart of the Orient, the rousing to new leadership of a people once spiritually leaders in the Far East, who through the fire of a new zeal are impelled to proclaim to others their new faith, is the story of Christian expansion of Korea.