Translations of the prose texts included in Gale's *History*

pages 101-6

From the *P'alsang-nok*

Chapter 3 of Gale's History consists largely of extracts from his translation of the P'alsang-nok *which he had made in 1914-15.*

The second great master of Korea's fortunes was the marvellous man of India whom these people call Sŏkkamoni (558-479 BC). The story of his birth as told in the *P'alsang-nok* runs thus:

On the eighth day of the fourth moon, Queen Maya came into the Lumbini Gardens with five hundred of her maids to see the *mandarava* flowers. As she looked about, pains suddenly came upon her and a sense of fear and mystery enveloped the world; flowers sprang forth at her feet and the light of glory filled the place. Overborne by the weight of it she sought refuge under the *asoka* ('no care') tree, where she threw herself down to rest. Suddenly a beautiful boy sprang forth from her side and took his seat in the calyx of a lotus flower. A moment later he arose and stepped hither and thither toward the four points of the compass, seven paces in each direction. Then he stood with his left hand raised, and his right turned toward the earth and said with a loud voice, 'In heaven above and earth beneath I alone am to be exalted.' When he had said this, he lay down, and, like any other child, cried himself to sleep.

When he was twelve years of age he obtained permission of his father to go beyond the palace gates and see the world. He paid four visits in all, of great importance in their bearing on his own life and the future of Asia. On the first visit, boy-like and full of glee, he saw only things interesting or beautiful, until suddenly there crossed his path an old man with white hair and bent back, who could barely make his tottering way. He carried a staff and breathed with difficulty.

The Prince asked his attendant who this was that wore such a distressful mien. The reply was, 'He is an old man.' Again he asked, 'What do you mean, by an old man?' The answer was, 'When a man is young his strength is firm; but when his years are many his hair turns white and his flesh and blood dry away his back becomes bowed and his legs weak, so that he walks with difficulty. He needs must carry a staff as he goes forth on his feeble way. This kind of person. we call an old man.'

The Prince again asked, 'Is this man alone thus, or do others grow old as. well?' The reply was, 'In growing old, high and low, rich and poor are all alike.' The prince listened, then sighed and said, 'Though I have all the riches of the palace at my bidding, still I too must grow old, my back be bent, and my years, like others', fade and die.'

He came home from his outing, but joy had departed from his face. The king asked what the trouble was, and in his turn was rendered anxious.

The day following he had an equally unpleasant experience in meeting a sick man 'worn down to skin and bone', who breathed with difficulty and gasped forth his fears and dread .

On the next journey, worse than ever, he came on a dead body, 'wrapped and made ready for burial'. On inquiry he was told that the man was dead. 'Alas,' said he, 'life is a sad and woeful tale.'

On his fourth visit there came to him a new and wonderful experience. A man of religion crossed his path

dressed in green silk robes and a gold-embroidered vestment; he seemed unlike any dweller on the earth. The prince called to him, 'Who are you, so different from all I have ever seen before?' The stranger joined his hands and said, 'I am a *bhikku* (priest).' 'Why a priest?' His reply was, 'The world has nothing that it can give to satisfy the soul, and so I have broken away from it—parents, brothers, and relatives—cut my hair and become a religionist. The hills are my home, where I have fought my battle and passed over the troubled sea of mortal existence to the farther shore. On which attainment there came to me complete cessation from the miseries of birth, growth, decay, death, with all the pains of the endless *kalpas* (ages). Hence I am called a priest.'

When he had so spoken he shook his body and ascended into the upper air, riding on the tinted clouds, and went sailing off toward the western sky. As he went he sang:

'How vain this troubled earth,
  Its pain, its want, its woe!
Set free from life, from death, from birth,
  Upward I go.'

Thus he sang as he disappeared from view among the softly moving clouds. The Prince looked long and eagerly after him. Sorrow filled his heart, and till the day was over he remained in meditation, returning home by moonlight. The king waited anxiously, and when he came, took him by the hand and said, 'How has the day gone, my lad?' The Prince replied, 'I have journeyed forth by all the gates of the city, have seen every phase of human life and have just awakened to the fact that all things are vain.' The king made answer, 'Even though you have awakened to this sad fact, will that in any way help you to live a better life or be of greater benefit to others?' The prince replied: 'If your majesty will but consent to my departure, I am sure I can find a way to escape from earth's sorrow. I would cross to yonder shore where there is no birth and no death.' The king laughed and said, 'Though it would be a blessed experience to reach such a place, how could you think for a moment of leaving a king's throne with its endless delights?'

The prince answered, 'What delight, pray, has a throne for me?' The king's answer was: 'The begemmed palace, the pearly halls, the golden throne, your subject princes with their gifts of tribute, a thousand pretty faces to accompany the harps and pipes that play, fresh wine poured to the full, power and rank and high reward. When life has reached its limit you pass it on to your children to enjoy likewise through the ages to come, while you as a spirit, drink the offered blood and inhale the incense of the sacrifice. Thus may you enjoy life with all created things, and thus may your people look up to you with fear and wonder, ascribing blessings to your name. What can equal such joy as this? Your leaving home for the sake of religion may be praiseworthy, but how can you think of leaving the shrine of your ancestors for such a visionary hope? My desire is that you give your heart to the service of your people and to filial devotion, and remember that all my accumulated hopes are centred in you.'

The prince bowed his thanks and returned to his room where, under the light of the lamp, he meditated on the song the priest had sung. How could he think otherwise? But the wishes of his father disturbed his heart and he passed an anxious night.

(. . . .)

Maudgalyayana, his faithful disciple, came and said, 'Though I claim no special skill to move the hearts of men, yet I feel sure I can bring your brother to repentance.' The buddha gave him full power to act as he thought best, and at once he called Nanda saying, 'You have come here, I know, from mere curiosity and not to learn religion. Come with me, I pray.' Nanda, full of the spirit of adventure, readily acceded. Maudgalyayana, endued with special power, picked him lightly up and went through mid-air till they reached a place that had great iron walls, high as heaven. Inside were keeps and fortresses filled with devils, who scurried about, peering through the gates. Nanda gazed with terror, for such a place he had never seen before. He turned to Maudgalyayana and asked, 'Where are we?' Maudgalyayana replied, 'This is the prison house of Hell.' Then again, crossing other heights and barricades, they came to a horrible place where a great assembly of priests and priestesses, laymen reserved for those who while in life worshipped the buddha, led their parents and brethren away from sin, and with faithful, kindly soul did what was right.' When Nanda heard this, his heart was greatly moved and he turned to look elsewhere. 'Go,' said Maudgalyayana, 'and see for yourself.' He went beholding this and that and saying, 'Wonderful! Wonderful!' He reached a place where a beautifully-decorated pavilion had just been built. A gilded throne stood in the midst of it with many costly pieces of furniture round about, but there was no master to be seen. Nanda asked, 'Is there no master here?' They replied, 'This home was intended for the younger brother of the buddha, whose name is Nanda, but now we hear that he has become an enemy of the faith; has joined the Evil One, and that he will be sent to hell instead.' On hearing this, Nanda hurried back to Maudgalyayana, took him by the sleeve and prayed him to cease from further sightseeing and to take him back at once to the presence of the Highest.

Maudgalyayana, grateful that his heart had changed, took him under his arm and brought him back to the Spirit Hill where the buddha was engaged in teaching the Law, and where, for the time being, he paid no attention to the return of Nanda.

When occasion offered, Nanda, humbly entering the presence of the Highest, shed bitter tears and said, 'I am a dark and ignorant soul, an enemy of the Faith. I indeed deserve endless punishment, but today my heart longs to repent. May the merciful and loving buddha save the soul of Nanda!' When he had said this his hair dropped off and he was found robed as a monk.

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Another extract from the *P'alsang-nok*

In a past existence Ananda and Kasyapa were farmers living in the country ploughing their fields. On the side of the road a great snake had been wounded by a boy who was passing with an ox. Ananda saw it and ran away in fear but Kasyapa left his plough and, seeing the creature dying, scolded the boy, took up the snake and put it where the ants might get it, saying, 'Make haste to rid youself of your ill-fated body and so attain to some better form.' Because of this prayer the snake became a rich man of the world, and all the people of his town were the ants who had befriended him. The farmer who looked at it with disgust and ran away was Ananda, and the one who took pity on it and placed it by the ant-hill was Kasyapa. Because of his dislike, the one was punished; and because of his pity, the other was richly rewarded.

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A ghost story (from the *Kimun chonghwa* ?)

Yi Hangbok (AD 1556-1618) was for a time prime minister of Korea and is known as one of her great national leaders. In ability and uprightness of character he ranks with the highest. When young he had many friends among the gentry, one of whom had been ill for a long time. The friend's father was greatly distressed, as there seemed no hope of his recovery. The best physicians and fortune-tellers alike were help- less in his case. One day hearing of a blind sorcerer who had come by, a man specially skilled in casting lots and foretelling the future, the father had him called.

'Cast your lot now,' said he, 'and tell me about my son. Will he live, or will he die?'

The sorcerer shook his box, repeating a prayer meanwhile, and then finally threw and said, 'Alas, bad luck! He will die this year, in such a moon, on such a day, at such an hour.'

The father, in tears, exclaimed, 'Can't you do something for him? Save him, I beg of you.'

The sorcerer then shrugged his shoulders and said, 'There is only one way. I could tell you, but it would cost a life.'

'Help me, please!' cried the father.

'Help?' exclaimed the sorcerer, 'You would have others die, would you?'

'No! No!'

Just then out of the kitchen bounded a buxom young woman with knife in hand. 'I am the sick man's wife,' said she; 'had you not told us, we should never have known, but now that you admit that there is a way to save him, I am determined to have it. I demand that you tell us fully, otherwise I shall drive this knife into you and then run it through my own neck.'

The sorcerer, alarmed, thought for a moment and said, 'What the ancients remarked concerning unguarded speech is true. Swifter than galloping horses does it overtake you.' He then added, 'There is a man in the city named Yi Hangbok; have him come at once and remain with your son till such and such a time. If you do this he will live; but I myself shall be called upon to die. Please look after my wife and family when I am gone.'

He then took his departure and Yi Hangbok was called. The father told his story and Yi consented to remain.

On the night mentioned by the sorcerer he was sleeping at the side of the sick man, when suddenly, about the third watch, there came an eerie cry and a wild burst of wind. Yi suddenly awoke and lo, a spirit stood with drawn sword just before the door. He called, 'Yi Hangbok! Give that sick man over to me.'

'Why, pray?' asked Yi.

The spirit answered, 'He and I were enemies in a former existence, and now the time has come for me to square accounts. Hand him over at once.'

'Never,' said Yi. 'The master of this house has put his son in my charge and I shall die rather than give him up.'·

'Then die,' said the spirit as he rushed on Yi with uplifted sword; but thrice he bounded back. Then he threw down his sword and bowing humbly said, 'Please, Your Excellency, take pity on my case and hand me over this young man.'

Hangbok asked, 'Why do you not kill me instead?'

The spirit answered, 'I dare not; you are an upright man whose name will be recorded in history. You will live as a pillar of the state.' The spirit then gave a bitter cry, 'Alas, r shall never again have a chance to take vengeance. You were warned by a certain sorcerer who lives in such and such a village. I shall certainly settle accounts with him!'

He then picked up his sword and was gone. The sick man at once passed out of his swoon. They gave him warm water to drink and in a little he awoke to consciousness.

On the following day word came that the blind sorcerer had died that night and so the father at once took his family under his care.

Page 124
From texts by Kwŏn Kŭn

When Confucius edited the Books of History and Songs he cut out all the mythical parts that lay before the days of Yao and Shun, because in those elementary times the earth was untutored and every sort of wild story gained credence. From Yao and Shun down, however, these extravagances disappeared and a reasonable world came into being. Our history, beginning so recently, with the Han Kingdom of China, should have known better, but it too has similar absurdities to relate Not only in regard to the founder of the state does it speak thus, but it has all sorts of queer things to say in regard to the Kim, the Ko, and the Pak clans. It was assuredly an age of ignorance, and any man gifted with a little more than ordinary sense was accounted a wonder. Hence came these absurd stories.

Page 150
Buddhism reaches Silla

While buddhism had won right of way in the north, there had been many a tussle over its place in the southern kingdom, and only now, in 528, was it finally adopted as the state religion. *The History of the Three Kingdoms* gives this account of how buddhism became established in Silla

The king had long desired to promote buddhism to a place of honour, but his ministers were opposed to it. While his Majesty was in these straits a courtier named Ich'adon came forward to say, 'I have a plan by which buddhism may succeed. Behead me, please, and you will dispose of the matter for ever.' The king said in reply: 'To begin a religion by beheading an innocent man would be a most contradictory act.' 'But', said Ich'adon, 'if you wish a right way for the buddha, my death is necessary.' The king then consented so far as to call his ministers. They said, 'As we see these buddhists, they are a most peculiar folk: their heads are smooth like children's heads, their speech is most obscure- and difficult to follow. Assuredly if your Majesty makes this the state religion, you will repent of it later. We shall never consent, no matter what you say.' Ich'adon then made his own reply: 'You ministers are quite mistaken. Only in the wake of a wonderful man does a wonderful religion appear. This religion is deep beyond words, one that we are compelled to follow.' The king, seeing it was impossible to move his ministers, said, 'You are the only one who speaks thus. I cannot follow you both, so we will have your head off and see.' Just before the knife struck, Ich'adon said,'I die for religion's sake. If the buddha has spiritual powers he will manifest them now.' Then they took off his head and the blood that spouted forth was white as milk. The onlookers wondered at this and regarded it as a miracle. No further opposition was made to the buddha.

Page 163
From the inscription on the Emile Bell

True religion lies beyond the realm of visible things; its source is nowhere seen. As a sound heard through the air without giving any clue to its whereabouts, so is religion. Thus we hang up this great bell that it may awaken the call of the buddha. So ponderous is it that it can never be moved: a fitting place on which to inscribe virtues of the king. Great Sŏngdŏk was his name, his deeds eternal as the hills and streams, his glory as the sun and moon. He called the true and noble to aid him in his rule. Fitting ceremonies and music accompanied all his ways. He encouraged the farmer to joy in his work and the merchant to the exercise of honesty. Gold and jewels were counted nothing in his sight, while useful knowledge and skill of hand were treasures above compare. His great aim was the right-ordered life. For this reason people came from afar to seek his counsel and all revered him for his worth.

Page 166
Stone memorial for Great Priest Sŏdang (784)

The religion of the buddha goes not, comes not, loves not, hates not. Like a shadow it follows in silence. Its influence lies in the mind only. How great its power! Such was the master Sodang: a man who cast the world aside that he might give his whole soul to the onward march of the buddha.

Page 169
From the stele of Nanghye
(written by Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn, located in Poryŏng County, Chungchŏng Namdo)

Teacher of two kings of Silla, master of meditation. It was as though the people of the kingdom had lost their eyesight when his light went out. His Majesty said, 'His late Excellency was indeed the reincarnation of the buddha. My father as well as King Mun, my uncle, made him teacher and learned the grace of his guiding hand. I was desirous to make him my chief counsellor but God has taken him away. Alas, how destitute I am! All I can do now is to honour him who was so truly honourable. Hence I enroll his name, Tae Nanghye, Greatly Enlightened One, and call his pagoda *Paegwŏl-pagwang*, "The Pagoda that out-shines the Moon".
(. . . .)
His mother once in dreamland saw a hand reach down from heaven and pass her a lotus flower. On accepting it she was found to be with child.
(. . . .)
He was like the bell that waits but the hammer-stroke to give the sound, or the mirror that needs but to be looked into to tell what manner of man you are.

Page 170
Inscription to Nanggong,
(whose stone was found in North Kyongsang and brought to the National Museum in Seoul. The inscription was written by Ch'oe Inyŏn, a cousin of Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn, and set up in 954. It begins)

I have heard that the true boundary is indistinct and the dark ferry is dim and far away; but I know that it yet is pure as the boundless sea and unalloyed as the immensities of space. Even the boat of wisdom fails to reach its distant bounds; the chariot of knowledge, too, would fail to carry us over. How divinely deep it is, closed away from common mortals. If one does not overcome the monkey in one's soul and drive the horses of thought straight across the sky, one is sure to land where there is no truth, sure to be shipwrecked amid the vain allurements of the day. The man of enlightened soul, however, who bids farewell to earth, and with truth for his guide dips deep into religion, can realize the mysteries of the kalpas and enter the beautiful gates of the buddha. Such an one indeed was the Great Master who knew deep in heart the jewelled ornament for the head, the true stamp to put upon the soul.

His religious name was Haengjŏk, 'Walking in Silence', while his lay name was Ch'oe. His forefathers were distant descendants of the great Chiang T'ai-kung (1100 BC) of the kingdom of Chou. His later forefathers became kings of Chi and finally, when that state disappeared, became dukes of Ting. Such was his family line. In the days of his happy boyhood he played at buddhism; his custom was to gather sand and build pagodas, and to find spices and compound sweet incense. When he attained to youth he used to take great subjects and write essays thereon. While at his studies he fasted and lived with the closest strict- ness till bis spirit was wearied and his flesh worn down. So vehement was he in his labours that his pent-up soul would boil the sea. In his service he passed through all manner of hardships and lived for others with all lowliness of soul.

Page 172
On tea

Hsü Ching, a Chinese, envoy of Sung, who came to Korea in 1124 and wrote a book called *Kao-li t'u-ching*, 'Korean Pictures', says:

The tea of Korea has a slightly bitter and astringent taste, disagreeable to a Chinese. Of late, however, she has become addicted to tea drinking and makes many varieties of beautiful teapots. Her teacups are decorated with gold and flowers. There are black teacups, too, and small pots of green-coloured ware. On occasions of entertainment they provide tea and as they bring it into the room they walk very slowly and say, 'Tea, please.'

Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn, who wrote about the swallow, wrote also about tea.

Today a gift of tea comes to me from the general of the forces by the hand of one of his trusty aides. How deep my appreciation! Tea was first grown in Shu and brought to great excellence of culture. It was one of the rareties in the gardens of the Sui Kingdom (AD 589-618). The practice of picking the leaves began then, and its clear and grateful flavours from that time were known. Its specially fine qualities are manifest when its leaves are steeped in a golden kettle. The fragrance of its brew ascends from the white goblets into which it is poured. If it were not to the quiet abode of the genii that I am invited to make my respectful obeisance, or to those high angels whose wings have grown, how could such a gift of the gods ever come to a common man like me? I need not now a sight of the plum forest to quench my thirst nor any day-lilies to drive away my care.

Page 173
Memorials

Under the date 835:

Son Sun was a man of Moryang, sincere and upright by nature. When his father died, he and his wife went out as servants and so fed and clothed his widowed mother. Sun had a son of evil nature who made a habit of stealing his grandmother's dinner. Greatly disturbed by this, Sun said, 'We can easily get another son but not another mother; I propose that we do away with him.' So he took the boy on his back and went to the hills. There he dug the ground to bury his evil offspring out of sight; but in the digging he came on a wonderful stone bell. His wife exclaimed, 'This marvellous thing that you have found just in the nick of time will save my child. He shall not die.' Thus they returned home. The bell was hung up and struck. Its wide encircling vibrations took in the whole city. The king, hearing the sound, inquired and the story was told. Said he, 'In ancient days Kuo Chü intended burying his son, and God gave him a golden bowl that he dug up. Here too, Son Sun would bury his son and a stone bell appears. These are similar marvellous happenings.' So he gave him a house and fifty bags of rice each year.

Page 173
Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn (*Kyewŏn p'ilgyŏng*)

This was written for Hsü Ching on the occasion of his wife Liu-shih's desire to take the field and offer her faithful services as a soldier. I was greatly impressed by it and have failed to find words for all I desired to say by way of appreciation. In the History of Later Wei we read of a General Yang who was given the name of Ta-yen, 'Great Eyes'. His military talents were of the first order. He was a master of the confusions of the battlefield. He had a wife called P'an-shih who was a practised rider and a great shot with the bow. When her husband was called upon to attack, advance, retreat, or pitch camp, she too was on hand, dressed in uniform, keeping pace with his rough life and hard riding. She also sat with him in his tent, a companion of his aides and officers, and laughed and talked with the greatest freedom. Great Eyes used to say concerning his wife: 'She is General P'an sure enough.' I had known of Liu-shih for a long time but had never before been so impressed with the excellence of her behaviour as I am now. This lady who today marches with us I shall call General Liu.

Page 179
Inscription
In Ch'ongju there is a bronze mast with an inscription. It was erected in 962. The writer, a *hallim* doctor named Kim Won, says:

I have heard that such a mast as this, set up before the gates of the buddha, serves as a spiritual guard to the palace of the Master. It suggests the blue crane flying up to heaven, or the dragon winging his way towards the illimitable expanse. Those who set it up did so as an act of faith and from a pure heart. It is an iron staff for the suppression of the devil, a divine arrow from the sky to daunt all rebels. Sixty feet upward it rises to touch the clouds and prop up the sun. It pierces the fogs and rides clear beyond the mists. Master Lu of China failed to make a ladder to the sky, or an umbrella for the gods, but we have done better, we have made a rope of silk to make fast the ship of state, a pillar to which to tie for safety. The mind that reared it is a mind deeply imbued with religion. A glad assurance rests on its being set up. By means of this mast all fears are dispelled and a place of safety is made sure.

Page 185
Inscription
The king had a hospice for travellers built in Sŏnghwan that was completed in the year *sinyu* (1021).. Ch'oe Ch'ung wrote an account of it for the stone that still stands in its memory:

The Master Hyŏnggŭng was the overseer and he never ceased from the task till the work was done. So blessed was it that not a sound of complaint or resentment was heard through all the time of its building. No one was called away from seed-sowing to help, nor was anyone discommoded or pressed into service. The result was that multitudes came, those who made tiles and those who could handle axe and saw to work in wood. Others again, though having no special skill, came to lend a hand.
(….)
A warm and cosy place was prepared for the winter passer and an open and refreshing one for him of the summer season. There were supplies on hand sufficient for all, and forage stored away for the cattle and horses. Aid was given to all in need. Not only were they who wore the robe provided for,

but lay folk as well were given refuge at night and refreshment by day. Here they heard the truths of religion with no fear of robbers to distract their thoughts. His Majesty the King commanded your humble servant to write this memorial and I have not dared to refuse, even though my thoughts resemble dry leaves and my learning a toothless soul. Still, what I have written I offer with a sincere heart.

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Chinese impressions of Koreans

In the year 1123 there came to Korea as envoy a distinguished Chinese, named Hsii Ching,. He was a famous scholar and wrote a book called *Kao-li t'u-ching Korean Pictures* in which his observations were jotted down:

When Koreans drink, they drink in the night, and when they feast, they feast in the night. Country gatherings spread their mats in the open and by the help of high-hung lanterns make their joys known ...

Some of the candles I have seen are several feet long and as large round as a weaver's beam. On such occasions young men of the best families carry these silken-crowned lantern masts.

As for the grains grown, rice is chief, wheat being very scarce. It seems strange to me (a Chinese) that wheat should be so rare.

As for attendants and servants, a minister of state may have four secretaries, thirty servants, and sixty hangers-on. When he goes out, these carry a great umbrella twenty paces before him. Two men lead his horse, each holding a bridle rein.

Ordinary people who ride may not have a servant to direct the way.

They must handle their own reins and carry their own whip.

When women go out it is on horseback, servants following in the rear. They go veiled in black gauze down to the feet. A hat is worn outside the gauze mantle. The queen, while she wears the same kind of veil, has it broidered with red. There are no chairs or carts even for queens to ride in.

The people of Korea are very clean in their habits. They laugh at us Chinese and think us dirty. Every morning at first call is the bath. In summer, when the weather is warm, they bathe twice a day. Men and women seem quite free to bathe together in the open stream, their clothes lying along the bank. Washing and weaving are the two chief callings of the women: they keep at it night and day with no complaint.

Though there are pigs and sheep in abundance, only the king and h:gh officers of state may slaughter them. The people must depend on fish for their fare; eels, crabs, shrimps, clams, oysters, turtles, and the like. Hence their world has a disagreeable fishy odour.

There are no distinct wood cutters among the Koreans. Anyone may take part in gathering fuel. People in the city, however, think it means bad luck to cut down a tree. It breaks the law of yang and yin. Thus trees have been left to grow as they please, some of them attaining to enormous size, two arm -spa ns round. While in Korea I noticed that people who brought wood into my compound carried it not on the shoulders but on the back.

The Koreans do not know how to slaughter animals as we do. When our envoy arrives, pigs and sheep are not knifed as with us but are taken whole and thrown into a blazing fire. Only when life is extinct and the hair all burned off are they taken out to be dressed. A dis- agreeable burnt odour accompanies all their subsequent use.

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From *Koryŏ myŏngsin chŏn* ('Famous Courtiers of Koryo'): on Yi Kyubo

Recalled from exile after a year, he was appointed to the office of Royal Secretary. At that time the Mongols began their incursions into Korea; frequent messages and threatening demands came from them to His Majesty, and Yi Kyubo was entrusted with the writing of replies. He made Korea's case abundantly clear. Influenced by these communications, the emperor of the Mongols recalled his troops and the land was left in peace.

Yi Kyubo had an alert, active mind, a kindly liberal soul, a clear and gifted understanding. He paid no attention to the trivial affairs of domestic life, but yielded himself up to the joys of the scholar - music and poetry. His writings, both in verse and prose, were unlike anything that had ever gone before. In literature he went his own way, as the waves of the sea do theirs. All the famous writings of the time came from his hand. He was Prime Minister and three times Chief of the Board of Official Examiners.

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Yi Kyubo: To the Mongol Emperor

While the Mongols did not assume the Dragon Throne till 1260, already in 1215 they were pressing Korea hard all along the north from their great cavalry camps in Manchuria. At the same time a remnant of the Khitan was bearing down on Songdo, and it looked as though Korea's end had come. The Mongol emperor, however, sent help that arrived in the nick of time. In response to this aid Yi Kyubo was commanded to write Korea's thanks. He said:

Our little country had been long under the hard heel of the enemy when Your Divine Majesty came to our aid and your angel soldiers scattered the foe. This most grateful help saved us at the very point of death. Reverently would we state that the land first given to Ch'i Tzü, and ever since possessed by us, is a joint neighbour of the Khitan. They and we had lived heretofore very happily together, and why they thus ruthlessly invaded our bounds we know not. Like a swarm of angry bees they came killing our people with great slaughter, and, though we resisted them with our best soldiers, we could do nothing, till your Majesty, out of pity for your little neighbour, came with timely help and brought these tormentors to swift account. The Khitan leader died by his own hand: the remainder of his forces came and bowed submission. Our whole nation lives again and sings its songs of joy. Your servant prays that your Serene Highness may be long spared to rule, and that he himself may be permitted to repay at least one part in a thousand of your gracious favours. I offer herewith my most faithful service to your high Majesty.

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Yi Chehyŏn: To the Mongol Emperor

It was decided in 1323 to make Korea a part of the great Mongol Empire. then came forward to plead for his country's life.

The Doctrine of the Mean says that true government gives its heart to mend the broken line of royalty, to restore the state that has fallen, to bring order out of chaos, to steady those of feeble step, to give liberally but to receive sparingly. This is true rule, that will win the hearts of all men. I learn that the Imperial House meditates making Korea a province of the Empire. Will not such an action run counter to the commands of the great Emperor Shih Tsu (Khubilai) and to the spirit of those emperors who have helped us so greatly heretofore? Our little country measures only about a thousand Ii at best, and of these, seven-tenths are waste land. Though you should receive all the taxes therefrom, the amount gathered would not equal the cost of transportation, and though you levied a polltax it would not pay the salaries of those required for its collection. Though all our humble state were added to the Empire, it would appear scarcely more than a grain of sand on the face of T'ai-shan Mountain. No profits would accrue therefrom. It is miles away in distance and its people are a very ignorant folk who speak a language entirely different from that of the Empire. Its customs, too, are odd and its ideas wholly unsophisticated. If a rumour of this should get abroad fear and suspicion would take possession of my people. How could one ever hope to go from house to house to clear up so great a misunderstanding? Japan also watches us with wakeful eye: if she should hear of it, she would advance to lay a claim.

I pray that your Majesty will think carefully, and, remembering the Doctrine of the Mean, leave us as we are, a separate nation, a contented people. In doing so you will awaken thankfulness in all hearts and grateful tears from the spirits of the kingly dead. Graciously pardon my presumption in thus writing, but this is my petition. This I humbly beg and pray.

Page 212

Yi Kok: On the Empress Ki

A young Korean rose to become Empress Ki. Yi Kok, the father of Mogŭn, writes:

When the emperor of the Mongols had been on the throne some seven years, the palace lady-in-waiting Ki-ssi became empress. She was a Korean and her promotion was due to the fact that she had given birth to a son. 'I am blessed', said she to the eunuchs, 'with this high office and in return I desire to pray to God for eternal blessings on the emperor. Without the help of the buddha, however, these cannot be obtained.' She sought far and wide for blessings and at last hearing that the Changan Temple of the Diamond Mountains was a place of special prayer she gave of her own private means in order to beautify it and make it a place of abiding worship.

Page 214

Yi Talch'ung (1328-1385): Whom to Speak Well Of.

Once a man, not much of a man, called on a certain old man and spake thus: 'There's a company not far from here that meets daily to talk over mankind in general. They also speak of you. Some among them say you are a man, and others say you are not a man. How comes it, my Lord, that you are a man to some, and not a man to others?' The master listened and then made reply: 'Though there are those who say I am a man, I am not pleased at that; and though there are others who say I am not a man, I am not distressed. When a real man says I'm a man, or one who's not a man says I'm not a man, I'm interested. What kind of man is the man who says I'm a man? And what sort of man is the man who says I'm not a man? When a real man says I'm a man, I'm pleased; and when one who is not a man says I am not a man, I like that too. If a real man says I'm not a man, then I am anxious; and when he who is not a man says I'm a man, I am anxious also. My one desire is to know whether the man who says I'm a man is really a man; and whether the one who says I'm not a man is really not a man. The saying is, The good man alone can truly estimate others. Is the man who calls me a man a good man? Also is the man who says I am no man, no man? This alone I care to know'. The questioner then laughed and went away.

Page 215

A petition

Yi Chono wrote of Sin Ton: 'A devil has got control of our race and nation. We must get rid of him at all costs.' He and another high officer, Chŏng Ch'u, wrote a petition, the closing paragraph of which reads:

Since your Majesty has entrusted all power to this Sin Ton, the seasons have quite fallen out of gear: we have had thunder in the winter time, yellow mists overlying the land for days, spots appearing on the sun's face, glaring red clouds riding across the midnight sky, meteors dropping earthward with deadly aim, trees broken down with ice and snow, wild beasts from the hills appearing in the streets of the capital in open day. Does it look as though your Majesty's promotion of Sin Ton was in accord with the will of God and man?

Page 221

Chŏng Mongju: On being sent as envoy to China.

'I, Chong Mongju, in the year pyŏngin (1386) was in Nanking in the fourth moon, with my commission from my king. On the 23rd day the emperor, while seated in the Gate of Divine Worship, sent a palace maid to say that it was his imperial will that I should come I went and he talked with me face to face. What he said was most gracious. He ordered our yearly tribute of gold, silver, horses, cotton goods, etc., to be entirely remitted.

Page 228

King T'aejong: Against drink

My desire is to see my people happy, but drink makes them miserable. Let us use the past as a mirror into which to look and learn from our forebears. Let their experience be known and read of all men, for it proves conclusively that drink spells wretchedness. If we see the ruin it has wrought and yet take no warning, what miserable sinners we must be. Though you do not think of the state, think, nevertheless, of your own heart and your own life. If the wise are unconscious of the evil, what can you expect from the common run of men or from ignorant fools? Crime and lawsuits are the natural results of drink.

I write this with an eye to the past and a desire for the future, and ask, therefore, that all officials, out of regard to my wishes, make them-selves examples for good and so avoid excess of this kind.

Page 229

King T'aejong: stone at the entrance to the Confucian Temple (1409)

As I ponder on the religion of the Master, I am profoundly impressed. It is beyond our powers meetly to extol his virtues; an attempt at praise is like venturing to picture the sun and moon, the heavens and all the stars thereof. Our Master, born toward the close of the Chou Kingdom (551 BC), gathered together the best writings of all time and chose therefrom precepts and examples that have served a hundred kings for their illustrious models. This may be regarded as the first real establishment of religion.

Page 230

From the *Chŏngpa Kŭktam*

(Gale wrongly says it is from the *Lighted Bramble Records)*

In the first year of T'aejong buddhist priests were forbidden the palace, and all worship of the buddha ceased within the city.

In the second year the Astronomer Royal wrote, 'In the first year of Koryo (918), there was a man who said, "The land that bears the hills on its back and holds in its hand the waters that go by, needs the buddha and his temples to make it live and flourish." The king then gave command to his officials to build a temple; he gave fields and slaves to its priests, and the temple was called "the House of Blessing". Later the king and his people accepted buddhism and made it the state religion. So from that date on for 500 years temples arose in great numbers. When prosperity overtook buddhism, it split into two sects, the *son* (meditative) and *kyo* (dogmatic) that disputed as to who owned the fields and slave s. Priests cast aside their poverty, dressed in silk and rode beautiful horses. Many of them fell victims to wine and women. All sorts of vicious habits were their portion. Though there was said to be happiness in these practices it was not true, for happiness is not found in actions such as these. My suggestion now is that seventy temples alone be spared and that the rest be given up to the service of the army.'

T'aejong gave his assent to this and it was so ordered.

(. . . .)

There was once a buddhist very badly dressed but very honest and kindly of heart. If clothes were given him he would pass them on to the first beggar he met shivering in the street. He was most gentle of soul, and never found occasion to quarrel with anyone. It was his practice to call every man by his first name, regardless of rank or station. He himself was known as Chabi Sujwa (the compassionate priest). Wherever there happened to be an offender to be beaten, at temple or government hall, he would call and offer himself as a substitute, accepting all the pain. The great were only simple people in his eyes while the humble folk were very dear. Once, when he was staying at the Won'gak Temple, a great feast was held. Princes and ministers of state came in all their glory. Chabi looked on, and, forgetting himself for a moment, sat with knees locked in his arms, a manner not permitted in the presence of royalty. Just at this time Prince Insan, a man of iron will who made all the world to tremble, appeared. Chabi said, 'You are a great man, aren't you?' The prince, astonished at such a rude remark, asked, 'You impudent creature, who are you?' and gave him a resounding blow on the ear, repeating it. The priest dodged and said, 'Don't beat me, Insan, please. It hurts, it hurts!'

Again he met Yi Sokhyong, known as Prince Yonsong, who was the great chief of the Confucian College. Chabi winked at him and said, 'Your face I know but your name I've forgotten.' A moment later he added, 'Why of course, I know it now, your name is Yi Sokhyong.' The other priests hurried forward and begged pardon for this ill -mannered address.

Page 231
Text by Yi Yuk (1438-1498)

Prince Hasong, who was son-in-law of the king, had in his entourage a serving-woman of Yangju County who was accounted rich. She had a very pretty daughter whose name I have forgotten but whom I shall call Mo.16 A scholar, An Yun, fell in love with her and took her by a marriage contract as his secondary wife. Prince Hasong, hearing of this, was furiously angry and demanded a separation. 'How did you dare', said he to the serving-woman, 'send your daughter to the home of a scholar without permission?' He at once had the girl arrested and locked up, intending to marry her off to one of his slaves. Mo learned of this, and, in desperation, climbed the wall and nude her way to An Yun. She wept, saying, 'I shall die, no one can help me.' Yun, equally distressed, could do nothing. A day or two later she was again arrested and made secure. This was the final act of her poor little play: with her girdle string she made her quietus and was found next day hanging dead. Some time later An Yun, returning in the evening twilight from the Confucian College, reached the little hill behind the Kyongmo Palace. It was early autumn. The moon, too, was softly rising over Camel Mountain to the east and everything was perfectly still. Alone he walked on, thinking sad thoughts of Mo and recalling tenderest memories. Suddenly he heard a soft tread and turning to look, there she was. But she was dead; that he knew. It could only be her spirit. Nevertheless he so longed for her that he turned at once and took her by the hand saying, 'Is it you, Mo?' when suddenly she vanished. An Yun wept and from that day on a sickness of heart overcame him so that he died a year later.

Kim Ch'amp'an's son, a friend of mine and a cousin of An Yun, told me the story, (says the writer). Yu Hyojang, a brother-in-law of An Yun, also told me the same tale with tears in his eyes. Said he, 'It is very rare that we see even a daughter of the gentry give her life for her convictions, how much more wonderful on the part of one who was only a slave. She knew nothing of the great teachings of the sages and yet she possessed them all: courage, conviction, and devotion. Her faithful heart was her most priceless possession. "I shall die rather than yield up my husband." Thus she died to save her soul from shame. Was there ever a more wondrous example of the virtuous woman?'

Page 233
Pyŏn Keryang: About movable type

The purpose of the invention was to supply the state with books and a better means of gaining knowledge. This would mean endless blessing. Our first cast of type was defective and the printers grumbled much over the time spent in adjusting and putting it into shape. In the 11th moon of the year *kyŏngja* of Yung-lo (1420), his Majesty took note of this and put the matter into the hands of a

Board Secretary, Yi Ch'ŏn, who had a new fount cast. In seven months the work was done, a great improvement over former efforts. The printers were highly pleased and were able to set up more than twenty pages a day. This work, begun by his late Majesty, was thus successfully carried on. We are prepared now to print any book there is and all men will have the means of study.
Literature will increase and grow, and religion flourish in the earth. The kings of T'ang and Han spent their strength in the training and equipment of armies; how much better this work of our good king. As high as heaven overtops the earth so does this deed outshine theirs. Endless blessing for Korea.

Page 238-9
From the *Chung-Yung*

The godly man's life is the simple life; the man without religion hates simplicity.

The simple life is the highest possible attainment. How long it seems since any man has attained thereto.

The good man accepts his place and acts accordingly. He desires nothing better. If he is rich and great he acts his part; if he is poor and mean, he takes his place as such; if he is a barbarian he does his duty as a barbarian; if he meets misfortune he finds his service there. There is no place in life where the good man cannot fulfil his part: though he sit on high he looks not down upon the low; though he be low he counts not upon the great. He does his part honestly, asks no favours and makes no complaints, blaming neither God who dwells above nor his fellow-man who sits below. The good man, therefore, accepts his place and waits on the will of Heaven.

Page 240
Nam Hyo'on: On dancing

We Koreans have learned the dances of the barbarian in which we bob our heads and roll our eyes, hump our backs and work our bodies, legs, arms and finger-tips. We shut them up and shoot them out, bound after bound, like a twanging bow. Then, bouncing forth like dogs, we run. Bearlike, we stand upright, and then, like birds with outstretched wing, we swoop.

From highest lords of state down to the lowest music-girl all have learned these dances and take delight therein. They are called *homu*, the Wild Man's Dances, and are accompanied by instruments of music. At first I rather favoured them myself, though my dead friend, An Chajong, was much opposed. Said he, ' Man' s attempt thus to show himself off is unworthy of a human being. Such actions lower him to the level of the beast. Why should I take my body and put it through the motions of an animal?' I thought this remark somewhat extreme until I read, in the Han-shu, Ho Tz'u-kung's comment on seeing Lord Tan Ch'ang perform the dance called 'Monkey's Bath'.

Page 241
From the *Taedong kingyŏn* for 1450

Sejong was by nature very quiet, a man of few words, very gentle. He loved peace and harmony. Bright he was and wise, too, a sage indeed beyond his fellows. He was most considerate of his people, greatly inclined to forgiveness, while at the same time underneath he was strong and forceful. One with the eternal spirits, he enjoyed their aid in literature and art. His daily round was like this: by the fourth watch of the morning he was up and dressed ready for audience; not a lazy moment was there in his life; every department of government he took a share in, and all he touched was blessed. When his mother died he mourned her loss as did the ancients, and cried aloud for several days, eating nothing. It was the hottest season of the year but he discarded his softer *yo* (mattress) and used only a rough mat to lie on. Those about him placed oil-paper beneath lest the dampness should harm him, but he refused it and had it taken away.

Page 241
King Munjong: On the plague

The present epidemic is not due to malignant spirits, as some think, or to the fortunes of the yang and the yin, but to the faults and sins of men. For this reason I erect an altar, offer sacrifice and make a prayer. Let good works follow on good works; let all cease from distressing, evil ways; and may the law of life reign once more.

Page 245-6
Why Kim Koengp'il died a martyr

He studied the Hsiao hsueh, which begins:

It is God who makes things live, and grow, and round out, and come to fruition; it is man's part to show love, righteousness, courtesy, and wisdom.

Why was he killed? Because he was the disciple of Kim Chongjik, and Chong-jik's sin was that he wrote in his historical records an account of the evil deeds of the king (Yŏnsan)'s great-grandfather, Sejo. He did it in veiled form, which made it all the worse. He wrote:

In the 10th moon of 1457 (the month in which Tanjong was murdered) while on my way from Miryang to Songju I slept the night at Tapkye post-station. There I had a dream in which an angel from heaven, shining in royal robes, came sweep ing in before me. He said, 'I am a descendant of kings, was king of Ch'u (200 BC) in fact, but Hsiang Yii killed me and flung my body into the Pin River.' Thus he spoke and was gone. I awoke with a start. Now the king of Ch'u lived in the far south of China, ten thousand Ii from here, and removed from me by more than a thousand years. What could his sudden appearance mean? I read my history, but find no mention of his body being thrown into a river. I wonder if Hsiang Yii sent a secret agent to do the deed? One cannot say definitely. Let me, nonetheless, write out my feelings. When God first created the world he gave man an appreciation of truth. He did not give it more fully to the man of China than he did to the man of Korea, neither did he mean it for ancient days any more than he means it for today. Although I am but a poor barbarian and am born a thousand years behind the times, I give my sympathies to the King of Ch'u.

In days of old, Ch'in Shih-huang, like a great dragon with horns and teeth, wrought his works of evil. All the waters of the Four Seas were turned to blood by his deeds. Even the whales and sea monsters suffered ; their only thought was to find a way of escape. The state fell and the descendants of royalty were left as beggars in the land, but I specially regret the fate of the king who fell into the hands of Hsiang Yü. Still, God so ordered it, his body was thrown into the river. In the darkness of the night he killed him. The waters flowed by and he returned no more. Earth and heaven remain as of yore, but when will his sorrows be wiped away? The soul, unrequited, flits through the night and now appears to me in dreams. When Chu-tzu wrote his history he made first mention of this foul murder. I follow Chu-tzu and offer my sorrowful soul's sympathy to the King of Ch'u. I pour my glass and trust that his bright spirit will come and drink.

Page 247
Yi Ch'un'gyŏng: From the *Tonggyo yugo*

There is co-operation between the two spirits, God and man, seen in the meting out of blessing and misfortune. In form, God differs from man, yet, according to the law of the Dual Principle, which inter- weaves as warp and woof, God and man work together. God holds the eternal principles in his keeping, but man receives them; God possesses life, but he makes man a sharer in the same; so the principle that God works by, pertains also to man. Man's religion, too, finds its origin in God Himself.

Man, however, being a material creature, with a tangible body, easily concentrates his thoughts upon himself and so misses the thought of God altogether. He foolishly leaves Him out of his reckonings saying, 'What can yon blue heaven have to do with me?' or, 'What concern can a crawling creature like man have with God?' So he gives free rein to self-will and yields himself up to loose and lascivious ways, in the end calling down disaster and making God, who ever lives, dispense calamity instead of blessing. Man shares a similar life with God; and the king, who is exalted above all, God's appointed head of the people, has a special interest in the life that pervades all nature. The prosperity of the world depends on the attitude and doings of the king. So the Book of Poetry says,22 'The Great God is the light that shineth forth on thee and maketh thee king. God Almighty will meet thee early and be thy play-companion.' So the good kings of the past beheld God everywhere and were most careful to fear and obey His commands. Now, however, this teaching has fallen by the way, and men no longer reverence or worship God, but daily seek their own will and pleasure. Pretty birds, strange beasts, fascinating flowers, blind the vision; while flattery captivates the ear, high flavours and rich foods lead away the taste, sweet perfumes turn the sense of smell. As the moth doth corrupt, so their hearts are eaten away by the songs of the dancing- girl. Thus do they lose all sense of what is right, and every desire to return to the straight and narrow way, their conscience being so defiled that an evil-doer seems to them a good man, and a good man an evil- doer. God looks down and beholds it all. Should we not fear and tremble in view of what He thinketh?

Page 248-9
Yulgok: On Yi-ssi

Yi-ssi, wife of Sin Chinsa, was the daughter of a confucian scholar. She was gifted by Heaven with a very beautiful nature: sweet, retiring, reserved, given to few words, delighting in her work, doing everything with kindly care, and ever ready to lend a helping hand. She had been educated in the Chinese character but never indulged in poetry or essay- writing. Her husband, an official, was held fast to his post in Seoul while she, by special request, remained to care for her parents in Kangnung. Sin Chinsa, finally given a holiday, made haste to cross the peninsula, eager to see his wife and daughters. On the way, however, he fell ill and, by the time he reached his home, was down with fever, quite unconscious, evidently at the point of death. Yi-ssi, who had waited with inexpressible longing for his coming, was stricken dumb. Her mother had just died and here was her husband, also about to leave her. There was no one to whom her soul's distress could be spoken. In this strait she prayed earnestly day and night, not once closing her eyes. Then she bathed, trimmed her nails, and taking a short knife under her belt, went up to the mountain peak behind the family cemetery, where she burned incense and offered her prayer. 'O God,' said she, 'Thou givest blessing to the good and trouble to the wayward. Evils abound and yet my husband has ever been a man of honest heart whose acts and words are without guile. Why is it that Thou hast put so sore a trial upon him? We have each served our parents and, in order to do it well, have been separated for sixteen years. Only a few days ago I suffered the loss of my dear mother, and now my husband lies at the point of death. If he recover not, I shall be left in utter desolation. The same laws that pertain to man pertain to God, for nothing is hidden from Thy sight, great or small. Thou, Highest of All, look down in pity, I pray Thee.'

Then she drew forth the knife from under her belt and struck off two joints of the big finger of her left hand. She beat her breast saying, 'Evidently my faith and devotion are a failure, and so I am brought to this place of deep distress. Great God, Highest of the high, behold my severed finger as proof of my sincerity and accept my prayer.' She ended and retired to where her husband was lying, peace written on her face. That night an angel appeared, they say. However that may be, the day following the patient had safely passed the crisis and all the people of the village, filled with wonder, said, 'It is an answer to Yi-ssi's prayer.' This happened in the days of Chungjong, and His Majesty, hearing of it, had mention made thereof in the nation's archives and a shrine of honour erected to her memory.

Page 250
The Yŏllyŏ-sil kisul: On the 1518 earthquake

On the 15th day of the 6th moon an earthquake occurred. Rumblings were heard like the roll of thunder and then the ground began to bounce up beneath the feet of the people. The roofs of the palace went heaving up and down, like a boat at sea that rose and fell on the waves. Men and beasts were so frightened that they lay down in terror on the ground. Walls fell and houses toppled over. It did not pass in a moment, but came on again and again. People rushed out into the courtyards, afraid lest they should be crushed in the general destruction. Little by little it decreased and when a month had passed it finally ceased altogether. The whole eight provinces were equally shaken.

Page 251
Kim Allo: From Yongch'ŏn tamsuk

In the year urhae (1515) I was an officer in the College of Literature and bad to do with the entertainment of the Japanese envoy at Yongsan. I went with him as far as Ungch'ŏn. At that time we were undergoing state mourning that occupied the official world and so the other mem- bers of the party were not present, and I was left alone for the night in the Mangho Hall. It was beautiful moonlight with the sea and the hills as open as the day. The clear air seemed to enter my bones with a joy inexpressible. My heart went out in boundless delight and I thought of jotting it down, so I turned for my writing-brush. Drawing it out of the holder, I was surprised to find the weasel-tail point missing. l spread out my bedding, shook my clothes and looked everywhere but it was not to be seen. I wondered what sort of visitation this meant and was struck by it as the oddest thing I had ever known. Later, by morning light, my horse was saddled and I was about to set out when l again picked up my brush; and there it was in perfect order. The night before I had written a few notes and then inserted it into the holder myself. It could not have left me of its own accord, and there was no place for it to be lost. It was a very little room, floored with shining paper that was as smooth as glass. The walls too, had just been freshly done. There was no place in which to hide: even a single hair or the finest size of needle would be readily noticed. The doors that joined with the main house were all locked; the south side alone, before which I slept, was open. The brush and inkstone were just beside my pillow. How odd that this weasel-point should be missing. Where could it have gone? Its dropping out was a mysterious thing; its being nowhere in the room was a second mystery; but its coming back into place was the most mysterious thing of all. I could see no solution to it and told my chief so. He said he had heard that in ancient days anyone who wrote exceptionally well was the object of envy on the part of the spirit world, so much so that at times the spirits shed tears. It looks as though there might be something in this.

Page 252
T'oegye: Advice to King Sŏnjo

Let your Majesty with a sincere and honest heart realize just once what the love of God means. You have been on the nation's throne barely a year and yet we have had many signs of Heaven's disapproval. Nature is out of gear; cold and heat are badly distributed; wheat and barley crops have failed; over-abundant rains beset us on one hand and drought on the other; never were such plagues of wind, hail, worms and parasites seen before. This is proof that God by means of terrible signs would awaken you to repent. My one wish is that your Majesty would serve God with the same heart that you serve your parents, that fear and reverence might attend all your ways. Even though in your acts you may not be conscious of sin, look well to your heart lest self-will gain the mastery and little sins become a great delusion like a mountain in the soul. They must all be put away.

Page 256-7
Yi Hangbok: On Yulgok

He never laboured to find out anything, but seemed to know it by intuition. He seemed to ride on the wind, rise above all barriers that blocked his way, wave the gates open before him and see as God sees. Because of his loving heart he never feared to disagree with others. He made straightforwardness his rule of life, and as his duties presented themselves did each and everything to the profit of all. The whole world sings his praises today.

Page 257
Yulgok: From *Ch'ŏndoch'aek*

God's way is difficult to know and beyond our powers to explain. The sun and moon are in the heavens; the days and nights go by, some longer, some shorter. Who made them so, I wonder? Sometimes these lights are seen together, sometimes they part, occasionally each eclipsed and narrowed down. What causes this? Five of the stars pass us on the line of the celestial warp, while the rest swing by on the wings of the woof. Can you tell definitely why these things are so?

When do propitious stars appear, and when will such uncanny things as comets come again? Some say that the soul of creation has gone out and formed the stars. Is there any proof of this? When the winds spring up, whence come they? Sometimes, though they blow, the branches of the trees scarcely sing, while at other times forests are torn from the roots and houses hurled through the air. There is the gentle maiden wind, and there is the fierce typhoon. On what law do they depend? How do the clouds form and how do they dissipate into original space? Who has charge of the thunder and the sharp strokes of lightning, the blinding flashes that accompany them and the roarings that shake the earth? What does it mean? Sometimes they strike men dead and sometimes other creatures. What law holds this in hand? The frost kills the tender leaves while the dew makes all fresh and new again. Can you guess the law by which frosts and dews are given? Rain comes from the clouds but again some clouds bear no rain. What causes this? In the days of Shen-nung (2800 BC) rains came at the people's call, and ceased when their wishes were fulfilled. So it was in the Golden Age. Was it because God in His dealings was specially favourable to those people? When soldiers rise in defence of the right, rain comes. It comes too, when prisoners are set free. What do you suppose could cause this? Flowers and blossoms have five petals while the flakes of snow have six. Why should this be? Is there any law by which we could do away with eclipses altogether and have the stars keep their wonted courses, so that the thunder would not startle the world, nor frosts blight the hopes of summer; snows not afflict us, nor hailstones deal out death and famine; no wild typhoons rage, there be no floods; all nature run straight and smooth, and heaven and earth work in sweet accord for the blessing of mankind? When shall we find such a religion? All you great scholar chiefs, who are so deeply learned, I think some of you should know. Open your hearts now and I will listen.

Page 265-6
From the *Taedong yasung*

Seventeen Korean women had been captured and were kept in the house of a Japanese officer named Omoiye. They each came with a petition to the Korean commissioner asking that they be delivered from exile and returned to their native land. Among these was a pathetic note from the daughter of a gentleman of Seoul. Her petition ran thus: 'I am So-and-so's daughter, from such-and-such a place. On the opening of the war, I made my escape with my parents, they holding me by the hand as we ran for our lives. In their distress they cried, "Our death is nothing, but what about our daughter?" We rested occasionally and gazed into each other's faces while tears streamed from our eyes. It was as though a sword had passed through my body and soul. I thought, "If I am not to live and serve my parents, better die and be done with it. As it is, I am only an anxiety to them." Just at that moment a troop of the enemy came rushing upon us, and, in our attempt to escape, we were separated and lost sight of each other. Then I was seized and taken prisoner by a fierce fellow and carried off. Oh, my God, my God, what sins have I committed that I should have been made to suffer such a painful, dreadful fate as this? If my parents be already dead there is no need for this appeal, but if perchance they live, when will their sorrows find an end? Why do such things as these happen with their tears and agony? Two years have passed. The fact that I am still alive and have not died by my own hand is due only to the hope that I may yet be returned home to see my father and my mother. But if perchance they be dead? Still, even the sight of the home where they lived would gladden my eyes. After that I could die in peace. So every morning as the sun rises and each night as the moon goes down, I pray to God asking Him to grant me this one blessing, namely, to see my father and my mother. Where are they now, o God? As they love and think of me, so I love and think of them. Look, o God, on this thought of mine and be pleased to grant us a happy time of meeting.'

Page 267
Yi Ik: On Tobacco

Tobacco became generally known in this country in the closing years of Kwanghae. The common story is that it came from a place in the far south called Tamp'a, hence the name. I asked of Teacher T'aeho, 'Do you think tobacco is good for the health?' He replied, 'It is good for those troubled with phlegm, and for those inclined to have spells of nausea. People, too, who suffer from indigestion and insomnia are benefited by it. It allays bitter flavours in the throat and is a protection against colds in the winter season.'

'But is it not hurtful as well?' I inquired. His reply was, 'There are dangers that go with it. It may be hurtful internally to the mind, or externally to the eyes and ears. On the continuous use of it, no doubt, the hair grows gray, the teeth fall out, the flesh dries up and age rushes on. The smell of it too, is dreadful and no man using it can ever expect to come into touch with the immortal gods . . . '

Page 269
Yi Chŏnggu: From A visit to the Diamond Mountains

Softly and sweetly, as though from the Ninth Heaven, sounds of music were wafted on the air. The assembled guests looked at each other in wonder, listened and said, 'Does your Excellency hear it?' I made as though I heard nothing and so they all kept perfectly still and said, 'Wonderful! The music of the upper spheres! Tradition says that the fairies used to live here, and now we actually hear them play!' The sound was especially sweet and clear, and it really did seem to come from the clouds. As the wind blew, it would cease and then be heard again. I knew what it was, and yet I, too, was inclined to think it was the fairies playing.

Page 278-9
From the *Kimun ch'onghwa*

There was a wedding ceremony in the home of one of the royal princesses. Her son was to be married. The king commanded the wives of the ministers to be present. The ladies, delighted, came dressed in their very best. It was a great occasion; for silks and costly gems the like had never been seen. Last of all there came in by the gateway a humble two-man chair, from which an elderly matron stepped out, leaning on a staff. She was dressed in plainest garb, and yet made as though she would mount the steps into the gorgeous assembly. The princess in charge, suddenly noticing this, pushed everything aside and hurried down to meet her. The guests looked with wonder at the plainish old woman, questioning who she could possibly be; but the princess led her up, seated her in the highest place of honour, and treated her with the most exacting forms of ceremony. They were more mystified than ever to see that when the feast tables were brought in, one for each guest, the table of honour was placed before her. 'Thanks very much,' said she, 'but I shall have to go as my old man and my two sons, who have been busy all day, will be home shortly and I must see to their meals'. Then the assembled company recognized her as Kwon-ssi, the famous wife of Wolsa.

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Kim Ch'angŏp: on the embassy to China

Tribute offerings
200 rolls of white grass-cloth 100 rolls of red silk
100 rolls of green silk
1,000 rolls of white cotton cloth
2,800 rolls of unbleached cotton cloth
2 grass mats with five-claw dragon pattern
20 grass mats in flower designs
100 deer skins 400 sable skins
300 black squirrel skins
10 swords
2,000 rolls of large-size white paper
3,000 rolls of small-size white paper
70 bags of glutinous rice
30 bags of white rice

All the way from Uiju to Peking is a world of sand, and, from Liao-tung on, the carts and horses are without number. The dust they raise is a cloud in the sky, finer than the finest haze. On the slightest wind the whole air is blinded with it, and those coming cannot see those going; while beyond Shanhai-kwan it is total obscurity. Even on days when there is no wind, the air is impregnated with fine sand by the mere passing of the wheels of the carts and hoofs of the horses, so that people's clothes, hats, faces and eyes are covered thick. Your whole appearance is changed so that you look like another order of being; people cannot recognize each other. Though you attempt to wash it off your face and whiskers, it doe s not yield readily. Instead, it gets into the mouth, so that you can hear a gritting sound between the teeth. A basket may be wrapped in ten folds of paper, or a bottle have a double case over it, and yet the sand finds its way in. It is a mystery that I cannot fathom. In markets and houses, where goods and chattels are displayed, people have whisks made of feathers and keep up a constant round of dusting. To fail to do so would soon leave an inch of stive covering everything. Men water the streets of Peking in order to keep it down.
(. . . .)
Peking: 21st day. Weather fine. Light wind. Very warm. After breakfast Kang Uyang brought in a man who was skilled in removing wax from the ears, and I had him try mine. Truly he could go to the very depths, clear out everything, and never hurt you in the least. He had six or seven instruments all of which were fitted to the shape of the ear, with hooks and spoons at the end. He had also a kind of pincers for extracting the wax. The other instruments I cannot describe fully. One was like a tiny brush with a horn handle. This he used to clean the ear perfectly after the wax had been removed. He charged five cash each for every man's ears he cleared. He could barber well too, could clean the feet and finger- and toe-nails. All his various instruments he carried in a box that he strapped to his back. Thus he was ready for whatever he was called upon to do. He would put his box on the ground and have his patient sit upon it while he leaned forward and did the work. He did not seem in the least ashamed of his calling, though it was surely the most contemptible of all professions.

Peking: 1st moon 4th day. Not cold. Cloudy toward evening. Today a friend sent me a pot of narcissus flowers, a dozen or more stalks, all out in the richest bloom. These flowers are as large in the face as a p each blossom, the soft white petals being most delicate and beautiful to behold. I had bought a number of them before, but they had failed me and never bloomed. Now I see them at their best and am delighted.18

Peking: 19th day. Fine weather. Fresh wind. The traffic on the main street was so congested with carts, horses, and passers-by that it was exceedingly difficult to push one's way along. One of our horse-attendants, who had his animal loaded with water buckets, was not paying strict attention as he walked, and his horse kicked over a hot-food vendor's stand. The Chinaman gathered up his dishes and wares, but said not a single word. I was so chagrined that I wanted to give the groom a blow with my stick, but the Chinese on each side stopped me, and would not let me do it.

Page 285-6
From the *Haeyu-rok*

We, a company of six boats on our way across the sea, ask the blessing of the Great Spirit. For two days we have purified ourselves and for one day fasted and prayed; we have cut off wine, smoked no tobacco, have partaken of no strong food such as onions or garlic, have heard no music , have shared no feasts, have engaged in no foolish talk, have taken no part in services of the dead, have visited no sick, but have lived day and night in all reverence, and thus we approach the service. If any one of our company swear falsely may his sins be exposed to the light of day.

Page 289
An Chongbok: On Christianity:

In the years *kimyo* (1603) and *kapchin* (1604) christianity became popular with a certain class of young men who contended for it, saying that God had come down to earth and had given commands through bis angels. Alas, in a single day how greatly their hearts had been changed, and turned away from the writings of the Sages. It is like the boy who graduates from the classroom and then comes home to call his mother by her first name, a sad story indeed.

Let me give herewith my opinion as to what is written in these books. One called *Truths About God* by Matteo Ricci says, 'In the 2nd year of the Emperor Yüan-shou (1 BC), on the third day after winter solstice, God made choice of a virgin, and by means of birth came and dwelt among men, bis name being Jesus. Now the name Jesus means 'saviour'. He taught his disciples for thirty-three years on the western frontier of Asia, and then ascended up to heaven.'

But I would ask: has the worship of God not been known to us in the Far East from the earliest ages? It certainly has, for the Book of History says, 'God gave man his conscience which, if he preserve it clear and undefiled, will find him the way of peace'. The Book of Songs, too, says, 'King Wen safeguarded his heart and so served God accept- ably.' Again it says, 'In fear of the majesty of God one can preserve one's faith under all circumstances'.... Mencius says, 'To set one's energies to the training of the heart, this is the service of God'.

Page 290
Hong Yangho: *Letting go the wild geese*

In the late autumn of the year *chŏngyu* (1777), a farmer from the Tumen River caught two wild geese, cut their wings and brought them to me. They were kept in the courtyard, where the steward looked after them. One day he came to me and said, 'These birds, sir, are better-flavoured than pheasant. I advise your Excellency to kill and eat them.' 'God forbid,' said I. 'Wonderful birds such as these were never intended for slaughter. Have not you noticed that when they fly they observe the strictest order (ye); when they mate, they are true to another, righteous (ui); in their migrations they follow the warmth of the sun, wise (chi); and though they go far afield you can always depend upon their sure return, trustworthy (sin); they never make war on other creatures with bill or claw, they love (in). Only mere birds with feather s, and yet they possess all the Five Virtues-in, ui, ye, chi, sin. They are mentioned in the classics; their note is accounted a song; the Li chi, Book of Rites, talks of them. They are present on wedding occasions, and are carried along as good luck for the happy bride and bridegroom. Kill them? Never!'

I therefore fed them every day, gave them water to drink, fixed them a shelter to keep out the cold, shut them up at night from foxes and rats, and let a moon and more go by till their wings were grown. Then I took them to the peak near by and let them fly off with this message:

Now don't go North
Where larchwoods moan, and hairy beasts go by,

Where roaring speeds the Amur on its way,
Ice piled aloft stands high in horny heaps,
And bearded men slink by with green-grey eyes,

Men who have claws and teeth like tiger's fangs.
The bow they twang; and the far-hurtling spear,
Swift from the hand, drives straight its barbet home.
If you go there you're dead, and that's the end.

Nor yet go South,
Where fiery dust breaks on the smothery air,
With boiling waters seething everywhere;
Where snakes with venom fill the empty void,
And spin tail-tipped with tongues like forks protruding;
Hills all asmoke and rocks red with the sun,
With rays that pierce and flames that blind the eye.
If you go there, your quills are burned away.

Nor go you East. Cross not the sea;
For wild waves mount and echoing roar their will,
Great whales appear that swallow down the ship,
And glancing sea-snakes spring upon you whole.
Black, too, the women's teeth, tattoed the men,
Equipped with cunning and a practised hand
That wields the gun, and waits the deadly aim:
A thunder-clap, a fiery flash, 'tis all.
Avoid it on your life, go nowhere there,
Where bones and joints are ground to powder small.

Avoid the West-the treacherous Yalu's stream,
For there the great unwashed barbarian hides,
With wild disordered speech and half-hung hair;
A dirk at belt and arrows on his arm,
He hunts for flesh to stuff his ravenous maw.
He loves the fishy smell and rancid hide,
Long pheasant tails he swings upon his spear,
And every feathery thing he takes with guile.
If you go there, a wandering ghost you'll be.

But here's the place for you, in this green land
Of ours where first the sun alights, safeguarded
By the stars and sheltered by the sky.
Here on our hills with all their circling streams,
So cool and yet not cold, with endless miles
Of fertile soil-rice too, and beans to spare.
The children of the sages, we: how wide
And fa r-extended is our favour. No chicks are killed,
Or cgglings stolen away; abundance rules.
Go nowhere; find your place within this land.
Bring wife and weans and all your kindred dear,

Dance 'neath the clouds and sing out to the moon,
Dine off the reeds: but guard the passing spear,
Take note and lend an eye: avoid the net.
With springs that go and winters that return,

Live out your life in peace.

Again I say, spread wide your wings and ride
Between the clouds, cross o'er the Mach'on Pass,
The long straight route to Iron Hill; still on
Unto the peaks that guard the fair spot, Seoul.
Dance your glad joy to his high grace the king
And step your welcome home. Trim off
Your morning quills within the palace park,
Then light and play and dip upon the Han.
Sing out clear notes to please his royal ear,
Tell his Majesty how I am an exile
Grown grizzly grey, but that my heart is true.
True, yes, as ever.

Page 295

Hong Manjong: From *Sinmirok*

There are three religions in the world: confucianism, taoism, and buddhism. Now confucianism makes love and righteousness its basis. By a life of virtue it aids others to virtue, and by keeping the Five Commands makes peace the universal law, so that even birds, beasts and insects are ble ss ed thereby. When one's appointed days are numbered one is called to another world, submissive always to the will of God. This is confucianism.

Taoism has to do with purity and by means of water and fire lifts its subject to a place of refinement where the spirit sloughs off its outer shell and guards only the essence; so that one may journey freely outside the body, drinking the dew of the morning and the glow of the evening sky; absorbing the light of the sun and the soft radiance of the moon; looking on the world as but a passing phase of the day, and all the ages gone by as but the breaking of the morning; living in the world, and yet not of the world. This is taoism.

Buddhism dwells in the regions of silence where wisdom is reckoned mother, gentle ness father, joy one's wife, love and tenderness one 's son and daughter. With all sensations of the mind and body cast aside as worthless, and zero as the object of attainment, it moves by meditation through the immensities of space with nothing to trammel the so ul, leaving its transmigrations far behind, hell and terror forgotten forever. It grows brighter and clearer in mind as the body decays, and increases in strength and vigour as the eternal ages go by. This is buddhism.

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King Chŏngjo on his mother’s sixtieth birthday

Next year, *ulmyo* (1795), will mark my mother's years as sixty, the twentieth of my reign. How can I express my gratitude for the blessings of Heaven that are mine? What God has given me would take more than one year of time to tell, for all my life has been filled with proofs of His kindly favour. I therefore command a celebration this year and next. Let the assembled officers of state go to my mother's palace on the 1st day of the 1st moon and sing their congratulations. In order also that the whole country may share in the joy, I order every official of seventy years and more to be present, and all people over eighty, and all such old couples as have spent their lives together. I shall have those over a hundred ennobled with the title *sungjong taebu*, 'Excellency'; all married couples of seventy and over given rice and materials for wear; officers of whatever degree advanced in rank; and old men of eighty honoured by the king.
(. . . .)

I wonder if the old people of the Chou kingdom when assembled made such a concourse as this? A happy year indeed! If our house had not been one of good deeds and beneficent action how could I have come to such a day as this?

Page 297-8
Alexander Hwang Sayŏng: The start of the Silk Letter

We sinners, Thomas and others, in tears address you, our venerable Bishop. Our sins so heavy on the one hand that we have drawn down upon us the anger of the Lord; and our wisdom on the other so poor that we have lost the sympathy of men! A great persecution has broken out, a calamity that has taken in as well our spiritual father. (*Father James Chou, executed 31 May 1801.*) With what face can we who have not known how to meet danger and give our lives, as he, for the Lord, dip our brush and forward to you these complaints'!

Page 300
King Sunjo (r. 1801-1835): From *Kundo-p'yŏn* ('Hand-book of the king')

There were eight headings: Worship God; Love the people; Offer your prayers with sincerity; Honour your parents; Be frugal and careful; Make friends of the good; Take rebukes kindly; Be sparing in meting out punishment.

The ancients said, 'God's warnings to kings are like the warnings of a parent to children, prompted by love.' King Yongjo ruled for fifty years and all that time he made these two characters his rule: Kyong Ch'on (Honour God). When therefore the wind blew or rain fell or when the elements seemed out of season he used to rise in the night, dress fully, kneel and say to those about him, 'I wonder if I have done something wrong that these warnings come?' and so he would pray that he might be enlightened. Sometimes too, when he was ill, he would have his ministers called into his bedroom to talk to them of God.

Page 301
On the rebellion of Hong Kyŏngnae
(source unidentified)

A great gymnast named Mun lived in the south, known far and wide as a Herculean champion who could lift a mountain off its hinges. He was out fishing one day alone by a quiet brookside, when a boy came by carrying a box on his back. He dropped it near Mun, bowed and said, 'May I ask a favour, please? I am obliged for a moment to run to the village beyond the hill but will be back instantly. Will you kindly look after this box while I am gone? Guard it well, I pray you.' 'All right,' said Mun, 'I'll see to it, don't be anxious.' The boy left and Mun wondered what the box contained that could so deeply concern the lad. He took hold of it to lift it, but it was heavy and would not budge. He bent his back till the very tendons of his being cracked, but the box was glued to the ground like primaeval rock. Sitting down, ashamed, Mun wondered. Then the boy reappeared and, thanking Mun kindly for his care, whipped the box on to his back and was gone. Mun called after him, 'Who are you?' 'I?' asked the boy in apparent surprise. 'Why, I am Hong Kyongnae from Yonggang.'

Page 301
The opening of the novel *Sinmirok* or *Hong Kyŏngnae silgi*

In North P'yŏngan in the county of Yonggang lived a man whose family name was Hong and whose given name was Kyŏngnae. Tall of body, eight feet high, with a tiger's head, a wolf's back, a swallow's chin, a monkey's arm and a voice like resounding thunder, he had gifts and wisdom beyond bound. Such a shot was he with the bow that spirits and devils looked on with amazement.

Page 310-11

An eye-witness account of the destruction of the *General Sherman* in 1866

The writer (Gale) once encountered a sturdy old-time hermit, Chong Huijo of P'yongyang, who had seen (the incident) as a boy and told it as only a beholder can tell. 'As the American ship', said he, 'came up the river, news of its approach was sent by courier post.' The governor at the time was a great scholar and highly-honoured gentleman, Pak Kyusu, whom Yüan Shih-kai once called sich'e saram, 'man of the times'. Chong went on to say;

Little by little the boat came further up, the water being exceedingly high at that season. When the news of it got abroad the people of the city fled for their lives out of the gates and, when the gates were ordered shut, over the walls. Many like myself, however, were moved by curiosity and desired to see who Ch'oe Nanhon was, for this, we were told, was the name of the foreigner in command of the fearful expedition. Governor Pak summoned Colonel Chong Ch'ihyon, who was in command of the troops, and sent him to make inquiry. He went, but for some reason was detained on board and not allowed to return. Seeing this, crowds. of people armed with stones, sticks, and bows and arrows went out on the river to get within throwing distance. Suddenly a cannon shot was fired from the ship and wrought great havoc among those who had ventured near. Some lost an arm, some a leg, some were blown up and killed altogether. The colonel made every effort to get away, but the foreigners held him fast and finally took his seal from him.

By means of the written character he conversed with a Chinese. Chao Ling-feng, who happened to be on board. In this conversation Chao wrote, 'Is there a stone pagoda anywhere near?' The colonel replied Yes and asked what he meant by such a question. Chao made answer, 'Before coming on this trip I met a fortune-teller who read my chances for the journey and wrote: *Ch'ien-nien-ku-ch'eng shih-t'a ko-wei* ('A thousand-year-old city, stone pagoda, very terrible') which means that a stone pagoda standing before a certain thousand-year- old city is greatly to be feared.' Strange as it may seem, a stone pagoda did stand just over Ch'i Tzŭ's dyke in the willow-grove opposite to where the ship hung fast. The same pagoda stands in front of P'yŏngyang railway station today.

The governor then summoned the guard, several hundred men, and a group of fifty or more tiger hunters, and ordered them to fire on the ship. But the cannon shots that came in reply spread terror every- where and ploughed the land where potato patches now are. This continued for several days, during which time news was being constantly sent to Seoul. Finally word came back from the old regent: 'Destroy them utterly.'

Among those who ventured to try a hand against the foreigner was a man who had a boat protected by bull's hide. A cannon shot sunk him and blew him up, his bag of gunpowder and all. He was killed and my father took pity on his son and brought him into our home where he lived for many years.

While the ship was still fast aground a bold sculler went close up and called on Colonel Chong to jump. The colonel, being free at the moment, did so, and also one of his attendants; but another, Yu-bogi, missed his footing, fell into the water and was drowned.

Though the attacking party was balked for several days, at last, by loading a scow with brushwood sprinkled with sulphur, they got the ship afire and the crew smoked out. They dashed into the water and Ch'oe landed with Chao the Chinese. Both offered submission, bowing deeply, but this was refused. They were pinioned at once with the rest, among whom were two black men, negroes, and led over Ch'i Tzŭ' s wall to the willow-grove where the fated pagoda stood. There they were beaten to death. The man who first struck the American Ch'oe was a brother of the colonel's attendant who was drowned. There were about twenty in all and they met their fate on the 22nd day of the 7th moon in the year *pyŏngin* (2 September 1866).

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The end of the *History*

Finally let Viscount Kim Yunsik, who died on 21 January 1922, speak. Head of the Confucian College, a true Korean chief and patriot, how much he suffered for his country. Long years in exile, disgraced by the old government, imprisoned, degraded, condemned; yet always a gentleman, kindly of speech, temperate in habit, beautiful of face. One of the treasures the writer (Gale) carries away from Korea is a copy of Kim Yunsik's works in eight volumes, given with his photograph and an autograph letter. One of the first poems I find is this:

The departing swallow
You guard your fledgling's budding beak,
And twittering teach him how to speak;
Your thousand labours eve and morn
Declare him dearest ever born.

Upon our coloured eaves you light
And build a nest in Madame's sight;
She loves you, dear, both she and I,
And yet you think to leave us, why?

With endless twittering spring has fled
And here is autumn, rustling, dead.
'Mid waxing cold you sit so still,
And show no life or winged skill.

When you arrived 'twas two, no more;
But now, on going, you are four.
You said, as wide you circled free,
'Our coats are black, great lords are we.'

You skimmed the flower and tipped the stream
But now you're gone, a dream, a dream.
The cricket, whiles, a witless wight,
Keeps up his cheeping all the night.