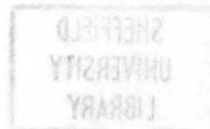


BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS KOREA, 1882-1910.

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A B S T R A C T

In attempting to evaluate British policy towards Korea during the years 1882-1910, the first requirement is to consider the nature of Korean society itself and the changes that were taking place within it. Korea, however, had a special historical relationship with China and there impinged on this both Japanese and Russian aspirations. As a result, British policy towards Korea has to be examined in the light of Britain's interests in the highly complex Far Eastern situation which, in turn, cannot be divorced from her global interests. The Study thus becomes one of an analysis of inter-state relationships.

The course of investigation flows from the British-Korean Treaty of 1882 to the British response to the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910. The main areas of investigation are the Port Hamilton Incident (1885-1887), the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902), the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) and the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1905).

It is within the above framework that an attempt is made to consider the extent to which British policy towards Korea was determined by her attitude towards Korea alone and to what extent by far broader considerations.

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PART ONE. THE OPENING OF KOREA

CHAPTER 1.

THE KOREAN INTERNAL SITUATION

(1) The Political, Social and Economic Situation in Korea

In the late nineteenth century Korea was under the rule of the Yi dynasty (1392-1910), which was declining. The long continuous chronic factional strife among the ruling class since the sixteenth century and the financial chaos due to governmental corruption were some of the major inner factors for her eventual collapse. The Yi dynasty was a typical centralized feudal society. The entire political, ideological and social basis of the Yi dynasty rested on Neo-Confucianism, which also provided justification for the repressive government of the ruling class. Although Confucianism had been introduced into Korea from China a long time ago, it had been developed very much in her own way in Korea. Neo-Confucianism was essentially anti-Buddhist. During the previous Koryo dynasty (936-1392) the Buddhist priests had controlled much of the national economy and had wielded considerable power at Court. Further, they were the de facto rulers in the rural areas. However, after the establishment of the Yi dynasty Confucianism became the new creed. Buddhism and its monks were forced to withdraw before the triumphant Confucianism and the majority of the property of the Buddhist temples was confiscated.¹

1. A Short History of Korea, East West Centre Press, Univ. of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1964, pp. 58-61, 77-81; Woo-Keun Han, The History of Korea, Eul-Yoo Publishing Co., Seoul, 1970, pp. 203-360.

The essence of Confucianism could be summed up in the eight steps to becoming a true gentleman: Investigate nature, Extend the boundary of knowledge, Make your purpose sincere, Regulate the mind, Cultivate personal virtue, Rule the family, Govern the state, and Pacify the world.² Confucius postulated five virtues and five fundamental relationships as ethical principles: Benevolent love, Righteousness, Proper conduct, Wisdom, and Faithfulness. The five principles in human relationships are the relationships between father and son, sovereign and subject, husband and wife, old and young, and friend and friend.³ To keep proper relationships between these pairs, Confucius laid down five articles of morality: Intimacy, Righteousness, Distinction, Obedience, and Faithfulness. When everybody observes these principles, a harmonious and peaceful social order will prevail.

Confucius also believed in the doctrine of inequality, saying:

'As soon as there were heaven and earth, there was the distinction of above and below (superior and inferior), when the first wise king arose,

2. J.K. Fairbank, The United States and China, "The Great Learnings" in the Chinese Classics, Harvard University Press, 1948, p. 74

3. Ibid., p. 75

the country he occupied had the division of classes. The ancient kings established the rules of proper conduct and divided the people into nobles and commoners, so that everybody would be under someone's control'.⁴

According to the Confucian view, inequality and distinction between superior and inferior were the natural order or innate in nature for the good of society. Government was not an institution based on law, but on morals. Therefore, to govern means to rectify the subjects according to the rule of proper conduct. The goal of good government was to introduce moral realism in which the peace and happiness of the people would prevail. This was the utopian society of the Confucian state system.⁵

The doctrine of inequality was an authoritarian element in Confucian thought. Confucius considered abolition of inequality as a return to a state of barbarism and chaos, in which men's desires have no limit. The five virtues and five fundamental ethical principles in human relationships were the explicit expression of an authoritarian feudalism.

4. Melvin Frederick Nelson, Korea and the Old Order in Eastern Asia, Louisiana State University Press, 1946, p. 17; James Legge, The Chinese Classics, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1895, Vol.1, p.103.

5. Bong-Youn Choy, Korea, A History, Charles E. Tuttle Co., Rutland, Vermont, and Tokyo, 1971, pp. 63-67.

Responsibility and authority should be in the hands of the superior virtuous men. The concepts of individual rights, freedom, and equality were alien to Confucian thought. This Confucian doctrine of inequality justified the social structure of the Yi dynasty, under which the population was divided into two classes: the rulers and the ruled. The Confucian concept of the ruler was a most forceful and convenient political ideology for a system of absolute monarchy. The concept of government by virtuous men gave the Confucian gentry an opportunity for setting up a Confucian bureaucratic regime. The affairs of government were monopolized by the Confucian hierarchy, since government positions depended on civil service examinations, which were based on a knowledge of Confucian classics: a knowledge reserved for those whose resources allowed them time for years of study.

The Confucian scholars were the landed aristocracy. They considered manual labour inferior and made a sharp distinction between it and mental labour. They cultivated extreme conservatism and emphasized formalism, such as the correct ceremony of marriage, funeral service, and ancestor worship. In the course of the Yi dynasty's five hundred years' rule, Confucianism, as a state creed, blocked progress, preserved the established social order, and perpetuated the literati's position of power. Both power and wealth were thus concentrated in the hands of a small privileged clique whose existence depended on the survival of an authoritarian regime.⁶

6. Ji-Woon Kang, Kundae Chosun Jungchisa (Recent Korean Political History), Seoul, 1950, pp. 20-24.

Confucian idea also determined the relationship between Korea and China for many centuries. Inequality among nations, as among individuals, was thought to be the natural order of the world on the grounds that equality in relations between nations would produce disorder or war. China was regarded as superior because she was regarded as the land of the sages and virtues. Chinese rulers viewed all non-Chinese as uncivilized people who needed the guidance of the virtuous Chinese and they treated the neighbouring small states as tributary kingdoms. China dominated the neighbouring kingdoms through the penetration of Confucianism and Chinese culture rather than by using military power.⁷

The relationship between China and Korea was that of elder and younger brother within a family based on Confucian theories. One aspect of the relationship which puzzled Westerners, when they were pursuing negotiations for the opening of Korea, was that of investiture and the sending of missions by Korea to China with gifts and protestations of allegiance. The established custom of sending of missions to Peking to inform the Emperor of China of new heirs to the Korean throne or of deaths in the Korean royal family was strictly ceremonial without any idea of subordination other than that of respect and deference on the part of a younger member of a family to its recognized head.⁸

7. M.F. Nelson, Korea and the Old Order in Eastern Asia, pp. 86-106.

8. William Woodville Rockhill, China's Intercourse with Korea from the XVth Century to 1895, London, Luzac & Co., 1905, pp. 3-9.

The annual missions sent by Korea to China did the bulk of the trading, although periodical trading was done at Wiju on the Yalu River. In other words, the so-called tribute missions actually became trading expeditions undertaken by the envoys, their suite and servants. What China expected of Korea was the payment of nominal tribute in order to maintain her overlordship as the 'Heavenly Empire', and Korea enjoyed China's protection as well as trading privileges.⁹

The government of the Yi dynasty was in theory an absolute monarchy. Both the land and the people belonged to the king, and laws and precedents meant only a little. It was typically government by men rather than by law. The central government in Seoul consisted of a Council of State, the highest policy-making organ, and six administrative departments: Civil Affairs, Revenue, Ceremonies, War, Punishments, Works. The country was divided into eight administrative provinces which were subdivided into smaller units of local governments. Local officials were vested with judicial and administrative powers subject to various controls by the central government. All civil and military appointments down to the lowest level of administrative organization were made with the King's sanction from among those who passed competitive civil service examinations based on the Confucian Classics or military arts. Key officials at the provincial and the county

9. Payson J. Treat, China and Korea, 1885-1894, New York, Columbia University, 1934, p. 509

levels were appointed by the central government for fixed and relatively short terms, and close surveillance was maintained over all local officials, which on occasion was carried out by secret agents who were appointed by and were directly responsible to the King.

Control of the military establishment by civil officials was strictly observed. Military officials had to yield precedence to their counterparts of equal rank in the civil branch and the Department of War was usually headed by a scholar official. The military units in the capital consisted of the royal guards. In the provinces, the governor was ex officio the commander of the military forces, although he was often assisted by professional military officers. The ruling aristocracy of the society, called the Yangban, embraced both the civilian officials, drawn from the Literati, and the military officials, not all of whom would have reached the highest standard of the Literati.¹⁰

In order words, there were two main social divisions. On the one hand, there were the members of the royal family and the Confucian aristocracy (the Yangban), and, on the other hand, there was the vast underprivileged mass of peasants, handicraft labourers, and slaves. Under

10. Woo-Keun Han, The History of Korea, pp. 229-237;
 C.I. Eugene Kim, Han-kyo Kim, Korea and the Politics of Imperialism, 1876-1910, University of California Press, 1967, p. 4.

Confucian ethical principles, each person's social status was fixed by his occupation. The scholar (the Sa) was on the top - followed by the farmer (the Nong), the artisan (the Kong) and the merchant (the Sang).

The title of the Yangban was bestowed by the King and could be inherited. Civilian and military retainers who had helped in establishing the Yi dynasty had entered the Yangban class. Later, the title was also given to those who passed the state civil service examination. The Yangban class had exclusive access to government positions, owned lands cultivated by tenants, and enjoyed the prestige and the privileges of the highest social class. The Yangban class divided into the Seoul Yangban and the rural Yangban, the latter consisting of those who had settled in various parts of the country usually after having incurred royal disfavour. The members of the Yangban class were landlords. The Yi dynasty rewarded those who had rendered service to the royal family or to the government by gifts of land, and the right to the land was hereditary and tax-exempt, which meant an absolute privilege in an agrarian society. The Yangban class amounted to only about three per cent of the total population by the end of the Yi dynasty.¹¹

11. Nihon Naikaku Tokei Kyoku, Dai Nihon Teikoku Tokei Nenkan (Japanese Statistical Yearbook), Tokyo, 1910, p. 947.

Rigidly separated from this ruling class, was the rest of the population, which was divided into three major classes: the Joongin (middle-men), the Sangmin (commoners) and slaves. The Joongin class was numerically small and of minor political importance. It included the members of skilled professions such as medicine, painting, mathematics, astronomy. The Sangmin class was numerically the largest and included farmers, artisans, merchants, fishermen and various other occupational groups. The farmers constituted about 85 per cent of the entire population. As most of the farmers were largely self-sufficient, the products of the other occupational groups were primarily destined for the consumption of the small economically unproductive elements in the country. There was no manufacturing class, and only one per cent of population was engaged in primitive handicraft work. The lowest subclass of the Sangmin included musical and acrobatic entertainers, sorceresses, butchers, tanners, Buddhist monks. In addition, there remained a very small class of slaves, which was an historical survival of no real importance.¹²

The traditional Korea was a highly stratified society with little mobility, in which the numerically small Yangban class ruled over the commoners, the majority of whom were farmers. The farm lands, the single most important source

12. Chosen Chusatsu Kempei Shireibu, Chosen Sahkai Ko
(Analysis of Korean Society), Keijo, 1912, pp.
37-42.

of wealth, were also the main source of government revenue, and farmers paid a land tax which accounted for nearly 70 per cent of the total government revenues. In addition, farmers were required to supply labour for public works.¹³

Farming had been considered the foundation of the nation for centuries and one of the main duties of local magistrates had been the promotion of agriculture. In reality, however, the government's performance fell far short of this ideal. The land system made the peasants into virtual serfs of the Yangban. The imposition of ever-increasing duties and taxes exacerbated the life of the peasants. Exploitation by local magistrates, clerks, the Yangban landlords, the Confucian academics, the princely houses and government agencies eventually brought the peasantry to near bankruptcy.

What is called feudalism in Korea did not share the patterns of European feudalism. In Korea there was an early development of political centralization which, it may be argued, contributed to the basic static nature of the Korean economy. However, it can be suggested that it was Confucian teachings that largely contributed to economic stagnation. The Yangban were completely divorced from production, trade was tightly controlled to prevent excessive profit-making and merchants were relegated to the lowest level of the social structure. There was virtually no foreign trade, except for a small amount of private trading with China and limited trade through the tribute missions.

13. Chosen Sotokufu, Chosen no Kosaku Kanshu (Korean Tenant Farming Practices), Keijo, 1929, pp. 22-23, 28.

In addition, trade with Japan was kept at an equally minimal level. Thus, in addition to being a largely static society, Korea was also largely a closed society.

Weak trade adversely affected the general development of industry by depressing the production of commodities for the market. The predominance of primitive methods in domestic production, primarily weaving and food processing for home consumption, also impeded industrialization. Industry was subjected to close government surveillance. Any innovation in technology was suppressed, specialization in manufacture was hardly known and the mining of raw materials was kept to a minimum.

The ruling Yangban class continued to indulge in vicious factional struggles which had pitted groups of high government officials and Confucian scholars against one another. Although these factions endeavoured to attack each other in the name of Confucian orthodoxy, the struggle was essentially nothing but a struggle for power. From the mid-sixteenth century, the ruling class began to divide into two rival factions, and later each of them divided into sub-factions creating an intricate web of alliances and counter-alliances. On the surface, factionalism arose over petty ritual and private matters, rarely over national affairs. At each occasion of royal succession or selection of the royal consort, there was a flare-up of new intrigues and sanguinary attacks. The emergence of a new faction in power invariably led to a wholesale purge and sometimes

physical elimination of opposition factions. Other important problems of the government and the nation appeared to have been subordinated to the requirement of this struggle within the ruling class. Engulfed in chronic partisan strife, the government was unable to govern, the centripetal system of bureaucracy lost its efficiency and impartiality, and there developed a widespread growth of extortion from peasantry and other corrupt practices, operated by officials whose own security of tenure was uncertain.¹⁴

The factional strife weakened the dynasty, hampered the functioning of the entire government, and spread its harmful effects far beyond the capital into every sector of local government and society. Although factionalism began to wane late in the eighteenth century, the government found itself in new difficulties as nepotism began to permeate all levels of government and to paralyse the administration. This problem arose largely because of the growing influence of royal in-laws. Nepotism crept not only into the appointment of officials, but also into the entire civil service structure.

In 1864, after the death of King Choljong, Lee Ha-Ung, father of the newly-enthroned twelve year old King Kojong (1864-1907), became the regent. The title of Taewongun, Prince of the Great Court, was conferred on him.

14. Hadada Takashi, Chosenshi (Korean History), Tokyo, 1951, pp. 125-135; Woo-Keun Han, The History of Korea, pp. 298-304.

The Taewongun's regency left a lasting imprint on Korea, and he was the most prominent ruler of the Yi dynasty to attempt to introduce wide-ranging reforms into Korea and at the same time preserve the ancient order of Korean society. The Taewongun soon set himself up as a dictator and ruled for ten years. The new ruler first set about breaking the power of clans and factions at Court and re-establishing royal authority and power. He expelled the Noron faction, which had been in power for more than a century, and introduced equal opportunity to all political factions. He was determined to stamp out factional warfare between the aristocrats and concentrated power in his own hands in order to clean up all factional influences in the government. He then announced his policy of equal opportunity, hoping in this way to eliminate the danger of one faction acquiring political monopoly.

Old government institutions which had fallen into abeyance under clan rule were restored, in particular, the executive cabinet, The State Council. The legal codes were newly revised, as were the household law of the royal family and the rules of court ritual. In order to break the power of the factions and prevent their re-emergence at a later time, nearly all of the most powerful Sowon (the government-financed Confucian learning institutions), which had become not only factional bases but also a means to evade military duty or taxes, were closed down. Corrupt local officials were strictly disciplined and their illicit profits confiscated. The land tax systems were also reformed. The lands which had been granted to the Confucian institutions by the government were transferred to the local private institutions, and for the first time tax was imposed

upon the Yangban as well as commoners.

These measures strengthened the monarchy, served the royal dignity and benefited the country. In certain directions, however, the Taewongun appears to have been fiscally blind. The new land and tax system did not release the commoners from the heavy burden of taxes. On the contrary, the Taewongun imposed more taxes on the peasants and also demanded compulsory labour from the peasants to reconstruct the Kyongbok Palace, which had been destroyed during the Japanese invasion in 1592. Many of the Taewongun's reform measures were not received enthusiastically by the officials and were challenged outright by an active opposition movement. This opposition seems to have been directed not so much against reforms as such but against some of the Taewongun's initiatives that were felt to be incompatible with the traditional value system.

However, the Taewongun himself also inherited the defects of Confucian thoughts: the rigidity of mind, resistance to change, refusal to face realities which conflicted with his beliefs. It was the tragic irony of his life that he came to power at a time when the ideals in which he sincerely believed and attempted to apply had become outmoded, because they no longer corresponded to the real world. Only a dynamic society with rapidly expanding commerce and industry could successfully oppose the mounting pressure from the West, as the

example of post-Meiji Japan had clearly shown. The Taewongun could not see this. His only answer to Western pressure was to attempt to isolate Korea completely from the outside world, refusing all foreign contact and violently repressing all foreign ideas at home. His persistent policy of seclusion and his persecution of Christianity only helped, as was shown later, to increase intervention by the Western Powers.¹⁵ because of her geographical location. The history of Korea's external relations has been primarily the record of her relationships with the neighbouring Powers, China and Japan. Korea's contact with outsiders was first made with the Chinese as early as 1122 B.C., and for several thousand years, Chinese culture and influence continuously penetrated into the peninsula.¹

As mentioned in the last chapter, Confucian culture can both explain and justify all relationships in terms of relations within a family. Relations between a king and people or between a teacher and a student can be explained as an extension of the relation between father and son in a family. International relations are the extension of inter-parental relations within a family.²

15. For full details of the Taewongun's politics, see Ching-Young Choe, The Rule of the Taewongun, 1864-1873, Restoration in Yi Korea, Harvard University Press, 1972.

1. W.W. Rockhill, China's Intercourse with Korea, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911, pp. 12-13, First Edition, 1882, London.

2. W.W. Rockhill, China's Intercourse with Korea, p. 3.

(2) Korea's External Relations and the Early Approaches
by the Foreign Powers

The peninsula of Korea, constituting the heart of the strategic triangle of North-Eastern Asia, has played the role of the determining factor in the course of the Far Eastern history. Particularly in the modern period, Korea has been 'the master key' to many Far Eastern problems because of her geographical location. The history of Korea's external relations has been primarily the record of her relationships with the neighbouring Powers, China and Japan. Korea's contact with outsiders was first made with the Chinese as early as 1122 B.C., and for several thousand years, centuries, Chinese culture and influence continuously penetrated into the peninsula.¹

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1. William Elliott Griffis, Corea: the Hermit Nation, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911, pp. 12-13, First Edition, 1882, London.
 2. W.W. Rockhill, China's Intercourse with Korea, p.3.

The cardinal principle of foreign policy of the Yi dynasty was the 'Sadae-Kyorin' (Serving the Big and Friendly with the Neighbours). 'Sadae' referred to the relationship with China, and 'Kyorin' to that with Japan. The inequality between a superior and an inferior was as natural in international relations as it was in inter-personal relations. Korea owed loyalty to China as an elderly brother nation and treated Japan in a friendly manner as her equal. This principle was represented mainly by the periodic and ceremonial exchange of official envoys and limited trade relations by means of the exchange of official gifts among the three countries. These limited barter exchanges were maintained under the official supervision and conducted by licensed merchants at two border towns between Korea and China, and in the course of the periodic visits paid by the Japanese merchants from the island of Tsushima to the Korean port Pusan when they came to obtain food and other necessities for the islanders. Except for these transactions, the Korean borders and coasts were completely sealed.³

The somewhat peculiar form of subservience of Korea to China, based on the oriental philosophy of Confucianism, was most confusing to Westerners. They were accustomed to interpret the international relations in the light of

3. M.F. Nelson, Korea and the Old Orders in East Asia, Ch. 6; George M. McCune, 'Exchange of Envoys between Korea and Japan during the Tokugawa period', Far Eastern Quarterly, V (May, 1946), pp. 308-325.

international law and concepts such as Sovereignty, Freedom, and Equality. For them the nature of Korea's relationship to China was a real puzzle. When they were told, at one and the same time, that 'Korea, though a vassal and tributary state of China, was entirely independent as far as her government, religion, and intercourse with foreign states were concerned', it was too confusing to understand.⁴ These confusions occurred in many cases later, especially in the Treaty relations which developed between Korea and the Foreign Powers. For example, in 1871, in reply to the request of the United States Minister in Peking, Frederick F. Low, about 'the General Sherman' incident,⁵ the Tsungli Yamen, the Chinese Foreign Office, wrote that :

'Although Korea is regarded as a country subordinated to China, yet she is wholly independent in everything that relates to her government, her religion, her

4. W.W. Rockhill, op.cit., p. 1.

5. 'The General Sherman' Incident follows on pp. 33-34.

6. The Tsungli Yamen to Low, 22 March 1871, enclosed in Low to Fish, 22 March 1871, Dept. of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1871, vol. 1, pp. 100-101.

7. W.W. Rockhill, op.cit., p. 1.

prohibitions, and her laws; in none of these things has China hitherto interfered'.⁶

These problems will be developed in detail in subsequent chapters. It was difficult for Westerners to understand that even the investiture by the Emperor of China of the King of Korea, which was for many centuries the most important act of suzerainty exercised by China over Korea, was a strictly ceremonial relation involving no idea of subordination, other than that of the respect and deference on the part of a younger member of a family to its recognized head. This was also the case with the investiture of the Kings of Siam and Annam: these were essentially ceremonial relations.⁷

Until the late nineteenth century Korea was able to keep her policy of total exclusion toward the rest of the world with exception of bare minimum dealings with her immediate neighbours, China and Japan. Among the reasons why Korea was able to remain as 'the Hermit Nation' even after the openings of China and Japan were the following :

(a) As most of the Western Imperial Powers came by sea, they tended to concentrate on India, South Eastern Asian countries, China and Japan. Korea's geographical position was remote from their main sea routes.

6. The Tsungli Yamen to Low, 28 March 1871, enclosed in Low to Fish, No. 29, 3 April 1871, U.S. Dept. of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1871-2, p. 112., hereafter referred to as U.S. Foreign Relations.

7. W.W. Rockhill, op.cit., pp. 3-6.

(b) Great Britain, France, the United States and Russia were respectively all too busy in India and China, Annam, Japan, and Siberia and Vladivostock. Further, they regarded Korea as less interesting economically.

(c) As for Korea itself, a combination of historical circumstances, the situation of Yi dynasty and the effect of the impact of the Western Powers on China all led the Taewongun to pursue a strict isolation policy.⁸

However, from the end of the eighteenth century onwards, the Far Eastern countries had already begun to feel increasing pressures from the Western Powers. This was touched off by the Opium War, which resulted in the five open ports of China in 1842 by the Nanking Treaty. It was followed by the opening of Japan only twelve years later. It was, therefore, natural that Korea alone could not be left out of the increasing Western influence. Despite Korea's desire to be left alone, reports of 'strange looking' ships, both merchant and naval, reached Seoul with increasing frequency.⁹

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8. Byung-Do Lee, Kuksa Daikwan (The History of Korea), Seoul, 1958, pp. 502-3; Kuk-Joo Shin, Hankuk Keundai Jungchi Waegyosa, (Studies in Modern Political and Diplomatic History of Korea), Seoul, 1965, pp. 25-27.
9. Nung-Hwa Lee, Chosun Kidokgyo Waegyosa (History of Christianity and Foreign Relations of Korea), Seoul, 1925, pp. 70, 130-134; M.F. Nelson, op.cit., p. 110.

Most of the first Western ships, which attempted to open trade with Korea, were British ships. The first among them was 'The Argonaut', under the command of Captain James Colnett, which, in August 1791, passed the Quelpart Island off the south coast of Korea and tried an approach to the Korean officials several times but without success. In September 1797, Captain William Robert Broughton on 'The Providence' surveyed the northeast coast of the Sea of Japan and named the bay embracing the port of Wonsan and Port Lazareff as Broughton Bay. After investigation of Port Hamilton and Quelpart Island, he returned back to Macao in November 1797. In 1816, 'HMS Lyra' and 'HMS Alcesto', which had just conveyed 'The Lord Amherst's' mission to Peking, came to the southwest coast of Korea. Captain Basil Hall, commander of 'The Lyra', recorded his eleven days survey of the coast and gave the groups of islands off the shore the name of Sir James Hall Islands, in memory of his father, who was at that time President of the Edinburgh Geographical Society.¹⁰ But neither Broughton nor Hall made any effort to penetrate into the country or to establish contact with Korean people. In 1832, the British East India Company made an effort to open trade with Korea by sending 'The Lord Amherst' on a

10. Joseph H. Longford, The Story of Korea, New York, C. Scribner's Sons, 1911, pp. 225-6; W.L. Clowes, The Royal Navy: A History, London, 1897-1903, Vol. IV, pp. 562-3.

voyage of commercial exploration in July. She came to the west coast near Kojae Island and stayed there nearly one month, but this expedition, too, accomplished little. An interesting point was that the Prussian missionary, Charles Gützlaff, came as a passenger and landed on several islands and offered Korean officials and people many scientific and religious books and potatoes, but these were refused.¹¹ When it is remembered that these events occurred nearly twenty years before the opening of Japan by the American Admiral, Perry, it is interesting to speculate how differently the history of both Korea and the Far East might have developed if these approaches had been successful. But they were not. Later, in 1845, 'The Samarang', under the command of Captain Edward Belcher, conducted another important survey on the coasts of Quelpart Island and the harbour of Port Hamilton as well as on the coast of Borneo and Nagasaki. 'The Samarang's' voyage made Quelpart Island and Port Hamilton better known both geographically and in relation to British naval strategy.¹²

11. W.E. Griffis, Corea, the Hermit Nation, pp. 359-360.

12. W.L. Clowes, op.cit., Vol. VI, p. 522; Sir Edward Belcher, Narrative of the Voyage of HMS Samarang during the years 1843-46, London, Reeve & Co., 1848, Vol. I, pp. 324-358.

One of the most interesting chapters in the history of Catholicism in Korea is its beginning. From the early sixteenth century, Korea possessed a rudimentary knowledge of the Western world and Christian religion. Because of her geographical position, Korea received this at second hand through China. But, nevertheless, she did acquire some knowledge of European thoughts and institutions. The beginning of Catholicism in Korea is of particular interest. Unlike many other countries, where the Christian religion was first brought in by foreign missionaries, in Korea it began with a kind of 'self-study' of Christian literature by native scholars. After a long period of this 'self-study', in 1783 the first Korean convert to the Western religion, Sung-Hoon Lee, was baptized in Peking and returned home next year. The new faith rapidly spread among the Namin (the men of the South), the faction to which the first Korean Christians belonged and which was estranged from the ruling power at that time as a result of its defeat in earlier power struggles.¹³

Initially Christianity was popular more as a curious knowledge rather than as a religion among Korean peoples. Some elements of Christian doctrine, however, fundamentally conflicted with certain basic ethical and ritual principles of Confucianism. The most heretical element of the religion was its abandonment of the established rite of

13. Urakawa Wasaburo, Chosen Junkyoshi (A History of Korean Martyrdom), Osaka, 1944, pp. 36-44.

sacrifice to the deceased. Many Confucians objected that Catholicism did not take cognizance of the King and parents, but recognized only God. But these criticisms did not lead the authorities to ban Christianity. The real and most important factor in the official suppression of Catholicism which followed Sung-Hoon Lee's baptism was political factional strife. When the first wave of anti-Christian suppression hit the nascent Christian community in 1801, the target was as much the Namin faction as the wicked religion of the West.¹⁴

From 1794, foreign missionaries had started to come into Korea. The first was a Chinese priest Chou Wen-Mo, who came in 1794 but was executed in the 1801 persecution. Between 1836 and 1837 three French priests, Pierre-Philibert Maubant, Jacques-Honore Chastan, Laurent-Marie-Joseph Imbert, were smuggled into Korea, but they too were executed in the second persecution of 1839. Although this second persecution of 1839 at least arrested the Christian movement in Korea temporarily, the many who survived soon began to continue their evangelistic work with even greater vigour and intensity. In 1845, the first Korean priest, Dae-Kun Kim (Andre Kim) was ordained in China and returned to Korea.

14. Nung-Hwa Lee, *op.cit.*, pp. 70, 130-134; M.F. Nelson, *op.cit.*, p. 110; Oda Shogo, An Outline of Factionalism in the Yi Dynasty and Notes on Catholic Persecution, Tokyo, Seikyū Gakuso, 1930, Vol. I, pp. 1-26.

Shortly after his return Kim left for Shanghai, and later was smuggled in again with two French missionaries, Jean Joseph Ferreol, who succeeded Imbert as Bishop, and Marie-Antoine-Nicolas Daveluy.¹⁵ Although Kim himself was executed in 1846, the evangelic work under the leadership of the two new French missionaries and others, who came after them, prospered greatly. It is said that in 1861 there were 18,000 converts in Korea, and, by 1865, there were more than 20,000 converts and twelve French missionaries in the country.¹⁶

An examination of a variety of sources indicates that the Taewongun seems to have had no definite intention to suppress the Christians, at least at the beginning. Even his wife was said to have inclined to Catholicism for some time, and the Taewongun himself had wide contact with the Namin, many of whom were hereditary Catholics.¹⁷ So it was a great blunder and no adequate explanation has so far been offered as to the reason for his engaging in the Catholic massacre of 1866.¹⁸ But there are some tentative

15. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 17; Urakawa, op.cit., pp. 21, 100, 121, 709-744.

16. W.E. Griffis, op.cit., p. 372.

17. Kikuchi Kenjo, Kindai Chosensi (A History of Modern Korea), Tokyo, 1940, Vol. I, p. 98.

18. It is regrettable that the Taewongun left no Memoirs or other reliable records.

Edinburgh Review, Vol. 176 (Aug.-Oct. 1872), pp. 249-255.

explanations as follows.

The Taewongun had been aware of renewed Russian movements along the north-eastern Korean border, a trouble spot since Russia had completed her initial expansion policy in Siberia and to the Far East, thus achieving a common border with Korea for the first time in history in 1860.¹⁹ The appearance of a Russian gunboat off the coast of Port Lazareff demanding a right to trade in 1866, among other several minor border incidents between Korea and Russia, seemed to have persuaded certain prominent Korean Catholics to urge the Taewongun to ally himself with the Western Powers (France and Great Britain) against Russia, to use Catholic Priests as negotiators, and to revoke the prohibition against Christianity. The two priests themselves, Berneux and Daveluy, however, failed to show any enthusiasm, because they were little inclined to politics, and time lapsed before any results emerged. Whether the Taewongun thought he had been tricked by the converts when the Russian ship left without causing trouble, whether he thought the Priests were playing a devious game, or whether the whole affair was a ruse of the extreme anti-foreign faction, is not clear.²⁰

in Annam and Korea they suffered severe persecution and hardship. The reaction of the French government was

19. The Russian Far Eastern expansion will be examined on pp. 67-69.

20. Nung-Hwa Lee, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 33-39; Kikuchi Kenjo, op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 92-100; H.B. Hulbert, History of Korea, Calrence Norwood Weems ed., London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1905, Vol. II, p. 205; Edinburgh Review, Vol. 136 (Aug.-Oct. 1872), pp.299-335.

Increasing pressure was put on the Taewongun by the anti-Christian elements in the government to sanction the arrest and trial of missionaries and heretics. He finally had to take a strong stand against Catholicism. In the persecution of 1866, nine French missionaries, including two Bishops, were apprehended and executed, and the number of native converts, who fell victim to this wave of persecution in 1866 and following years, is estimated to have reached nearly 8,000.²¹ Three French priests - Felix-Clair Ridel, Stanislas Feron, Adolphe-Nicolas Calais - who luckily escaped the arrest and execution, informed Admiral Pierre-Gustave Rose, the commander of the French Asiatic Squadron in Tientsin, and this led to a French punitive expedition.

French activities in the Far East during the 1850's and 1860's had been largely associated with the militant surge of the Catholic missionary movement, with naval and other measures taken in support. The missionary's assignments covered portions of eleven provinces of China proper and peripheral Tibet, Manchuria and Korea. The reception accorded to French missionaries varied widely and in Annam and Korea they suffered severe persecution and hardship. The reaction of the French government was

21. Hulbert, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 211. 'From 1866 till 1870, the persecution was destined to rage with unabated fury and the French estimated the number killed at 8,000. The tales of that terrible time remind one of the persecutions under the Roman Emperors or the no less terrible senses of the Spanish Inquisition'.

sympathetic, but they were unable to embark on such adventures in the early 1850's because they lacked the necessary naval facilities for the task. In addition, they were deeply engaged in the Taiping rebellion and the Near Eastern crisis at that time. Earlier, the French government had not undertaken reprisals for the Korean persecution of the three French priests in 1839.²²

On receipt of the report from Admiral Rose, Henri de Bellonet, the French Charge d'Affaires at Peking, decided on reprisals without waiting for instructions from Paris. He announced to Prince Kung, the Head of the Tsungli Yamen, that since China had repeatedly renounced authority over Korea, France would take immediate action by invading that country.²³ Prince Kung, foreseeing that assertion of Chinese suzerainty over Korea would lead to demands on China for reparations, adopted a policy of evasion by stating that China had never interfered with the internal affairs of Korea.²⁴ Bellonet seized upon the opportunity and proceeded against Korea as an independent kingdom.

22. John F. Cady, The Roots of French Imperialism in Eastern Asia, New York, Ithaca, 1954, pp. 98-100.

23. Bellonet to Prince Kung, enclosed in No. 122, Burlingame to Seward, 12 December 1866. U.S. Foreign Relations, 1867, Pt. I, p. 420.

24. Ibid., p. 421.

After a preliminary survey of the Korean coast in September 1866, on 11 October, Admiral Rose left Chefoo with his Far Eastern fleet of seven ships and about 600 men including the marines from the camp at Yokohama. One of the passengers was Father Ridel, who had volunteered to serve as interpreter. On 16 October, Admiral Rose launched a general attack on the city of Kanghwa, west of Seoul, the traditional haven of Korean Kings in times of foreign invasions and domestic disorders, with his entire force and captured it with little resistance from the Koreans. Having captured Kanghwa Island, Admiral Rose intended to block the lower course of the River Han and thus to stop the flow of tribute rice into Seoul.

But the Korean Government was determined to resist and mobilized 30,000 soldiers of which 5,000 were sent to the front line. The invasion was practically brought to an end by what was called the Battle of Mt. Chongjok. On 8 November, a French force of 160 marines, under the command of Captain Olivier, attacked the fortress of Mt. Chongjok but was defeated by a Korean force of about 540 men, mainly the tiger hunters. In this attack the French were estimated to have suffered nearly fifty casualties, while the Koreans claimed losses of only one man killed and three wounded. This defeat forced Admiral Rose to reassess the plans for the expedition. The blockade of the River Han had little effect and there seemed no hope of negotiations with the Korean government. The possibility of a general attack by the growing Korean army and the freezing of the River Han finally

forced him to withdraw from the Korean coast on 10 November.²⁵

With the withdrawal of the French fleet, the Taewongun's first war with a Western Power ended, and his seclusion policy was vindicated. Louis Napoleon repudiated Bellonet's unauthorized undertaking and recalled him.²⁶ The Taewongun and his government were now more convinced than ever that the coming of the French was the result of the treacherous work of the Christians and his policy towards the heretics became more oppressive during and after the French invasion. In fact, it may be said that his real persecution of Catholics started after the French retreat. The invasion also drove the Taewongun to introduce a more extreme anti-Western policy and led him to misjudge the real strength of the Western Powers and their true motives in coming to Korean shores. After 1866 he persistently viewed all other Western nations as mere reflections of the hated French, and this, in some respects, led him to the following clash, this time with the Americans.

Soon after his victory over the French in 1866, the Taewongun ordered the erection of stone tablets throughout the country inscribed with an anti-foreign declaration :

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25. Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuksa, (History of Korea), Seoul, Eul-Yoo Publishing Co., 1961, pp. 246-274; W. E. Griffis, op.cit., pp. 377-383; Edinburgh Review, Vol. 136 (July-Oct. 1872), pp. 167-169.
26. Tyler Dennet, 'Seward's Far Eastern Policy', American Historical Review, Vol. 28 (1922-23), pp. 51-54.

'The barbarians from beyond the seas have violated our borders and invaded our land. If we do not fight, accord must be made. Those who urge accord sell their country. Let this be a warning to ten thousand generations.'

27

At this juncture, a Prussian adventurer named Oppert tried to open trade with Korea. For this purpose he had made two voyages to the west coast of Korea in 1866, one in March and the other in August, but nothing resulted from these missions.²⁸ In 1868, Oppert organized a small private expedition, as he claimed at the suggestion of the French priest, Monsignor Stanislas Feron, who was one of three escapees from the 1866 persecution. Feron's idea was to get hold of the Taewongun's royal family relics in the belief that this would force the Taewongun to open negotiations for free trade and for the free propagation of the Christian religion. The relics were the remains of the Taewongun's father, Prince Namyon.²⁹ The expedition left Shanghai in two steamers ('The China' and 'The Greta') in April, 1868. The members were of all nationalities:

27. G.H. Jones, 'The Taewongun', Korean Repository, Vol. V (1898), p. 247.

28. Ernest Oppert, A Forbidden Land: Voyages to the Corea, London, 1880, pp. 178-289; Sun-Keun Lee, op.cit., pp. 286-292.

29. Ibid., pp. 291-301; Griffis, op.cit., p. 398.

German (Oppert), French (Feron), American (Frederick Jenkins), some European, Chinese, and Filipino sailors, and several Korean converts. They arrived at an island on the west coast of Korea in May, and marched toward Duksan, calling themselves Russian soldiers, and finally reached the tomb. But before they could unearth the hidden treasures, news reached the Taewongun who took immediate action. Faced by attacks of Korean troops, Oppert and his company had to retreat. On their return to Shanghai, Jenkins was charged with making an unlawful expedition and the American Consul-General, George F. Seward, put him on trial but released him with the verdict not proven.³⁰

The importance of the Oppert affair was its effect on the attitude of the Koreans. The Taewongun and the Court had before their eyes a confirmation of their suspicion that the chief purpose of foreign invaders was to rob the dead and violate human dignity.³¹ The savagery of Oppert's party heightened the Taewongun's anti-Western sentiments and brought the seclusion policy to its climax. It was during this time that American diplomatic overtures to Korea began. Thus, in historical retrospect, it may be said that these advances were doomed to failure even before they had started.

30. George F. Seward to the Secretary Seward, No. 294, 3 July 1868, U.S. Foreign Relations, 1870-71, p. 337.

31. Griffis, op.cit., p. 400.

Until the French expedition and even during the period of the opening of Japan by Commodore Perry, the United States had had no relationship at all with Korea. On 24 June 1866, an American merchantship, 'The Surprise', was wrecked on the west coast of Korea. Captain McAslin and his crew of seven men were treated with great care and kindness by the Korean authorities, particularly in contrast to the treatment they received later from the Chinese authorities. They were supplied with food and returned to China by way of Mukden.³² The Americans were so impressed by what the Koreans had done for the crew of 'The Surprise' that they were much puzzled by the apparent paradox of Korean conduct, when another American merchantship 'The General Sherman' received a very different treatment three months later.

In July, 1866, the owner of the American schooner 'The General Sherman', W.B. Preston, arranged with Meadow & Co., a British firm in Tientsin, to send his ship to Korea with a cargo of miscellaneous merchandise. The schooner left Tientsin on 29 July for Korea and reached the Taedong River in north-western Korea in August. It forced its way towards the city of Pyongyang, subjecting Korean

32. Asiatic Squadron Letters in The United States Department of Navy Archives, 1865-1866, Vols. 93-94.

33. Asiatic Squadron Letters in The United States Department of Navy Archives, 1865-1866, Vol. 93.

34. Asiatic Squadron Letters in The United States Department of Navy Archives, 1865-1866, Vol. 94.

officials to many indignities. They seized Hyon-Ik Lee, the Deputy Commander of the Pyongyang military headquarters, and, as a result, many citizens of Pyongyang gathered on the bank of the River Taedong demanding his release. As the situation was becoming serious the captain of the schooner decided to leave the river, but this was impossible, because a sudden drop in the water level had made the river no longer navigable. In panic the sailors ran wild and shot and killed several Koreans. The situation became uncontrollable. Flaming small Korean junks surrounded the schooner and at last burned it on 2 September. All the crew members were either shot or burned to death in the ship.³³

News of the fate of 'The General Sherman' was brought to China by the French missionary, Ridel, who had been a member of Admiral Rose's French expedition of 1866. On receiving the news, the American Consul-General, S. Wells Williams, approached the Tsungli Yamen with a request to secure the return of any members of the ship's crew who might have survived.³⁴ At the same time, Meadows & Co., the British company that had sent the schooner to Korea with her cargo of miscellaneous merchandise, asked the American Minister in Peking, Burlingame, and the British Admiral for

33. Burlingame to Seward, No. 124, 15 December 1866, U.S. Foreign Relations, 1866, pp. 426-428; Griffis, op.cit., p. 391.

34. Williams to Seward, No. 44, 24 October 1866, U.S. Foreign Relations, 1867, Pt. I, pp. 416-417.

help in the matter.³⁵ However, the Tsungli Yamen, judging that Korea might become involved in a new clash with Britain and the United States, wished to minimize its own involvement. Being caught between Korea's insistence on maintaining her seclusion policy and the demands of the Western countries for her mediating services between them and Korea, the Tsungli Yamen claimed that the traditional tributary relationship between China and Korea was only a ceremonial one, and that China had no responsibility for Korea's management of foreign relations and trade.³⁶

Minister Burlingame saw no use in seeking China's help in the matter, and decided to take independent action to determine the fate of 'The General Sherman'. He suggested to Rear Admiral H.H. Bell, Acting Commander of the United States Asiatic Squadron, that he should send a warship to Korea to enquire about the lost vessel. Bell assigned Robert W. Shufeldt, commander of the warship 'The Wachusett', to the mission. On 21 January 1867, 'The Wachusett' left for Korea, but, on arrival, was unsuccessful in attempting to deliver a letter to the Korean authority. Shufeldt returned with information, obtained from the Korean natives, that a Western vessel had been set on fire

35. Burlingame to Seward, No. 124, 15 December 1866, Enclosure B: Messrs, Meadow & Co. to Burlingame, Ibid., p. 428.

36. Burlingame to Seward, No. 124, 15 December 1866, Ibid., pp. 426-427.

on the Taedong River and all her crew had been killed.³⁷

In view of this report, the American Consul-General, Williams, again decided to seek help from the Chinese authorities. But, again, the Tsungli Yamen replied equivocally that although Korea was subordinate to China, all matters such as official ordinances to keep order and interdict trade with foreign lands and the propagation of alien religions were actually carried out independently by Korea and on her own responsibility. The Tsungli Yamen refused to take any direct action.³⁸ As a result, Williams decided to send another warship and requested the Commander of the United States Asiatic Squadron, Commodore J.R. Goldsborough, to do so. In early April 1868, 'The Shenandoah', under the command of Captain John C. Febinger, left Chefoo for Korea, but this mission also failed to obtain any further information.³⁹

Meanwhile, a change of administration took place in the United States. General Ulysses S. Grant succeeded Andrew Johnson as the President and Hamilton Fish took over the Department of State from William H. Seward. The

37. Ibid., p. 428, Enclosure A; Charles O. Paullin, Diplomatic Negotiations of American Naval Officers, 1778-1883, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1912, p. 284.

38. Williams to Seward, No. 18, 31 July 1868. U.S. Foreign Relations, Pt. I, 1868, pp. 545-546.

39. Ibid., p. 544. Ibid., 1871, pp. 75-76.

question of 'The General Sherman' had begun to develop into a far more significant diplomatic issue. Emphasis now lay on the possibility of concluding a formal treaty with Korea, the primary object being to secure guarantees for the protection of shipwrecked American seamen.

Under instructions from the Secretary of State, Hamilton Fish, the new American Minister in Peking, Frederick F. Low, asked the Peking government to transmit a letter to the King of Korea stating the purpose of a proposed new expedition for February 1871. Low determined to secure, if not a treaty, at least a convention on shipwrecks, and to investigate the fate of 'The General Sherman' as well.⁴⁰ In the situation, the Tsungli Yamen continued to insist that it had no responsibility for Korean actions. It repeated that although Korea was regarded as a country subordinated to China, she was, nevertheless, wholly independent.

On 8 May 1871, the squadron, consisting of five warships (flagship 'The Colorado', two corvettes 'The Alaska' and 'The Benicia', two gunboats 'The Palos' and the 'The Monocacy') and 1,230 marines and sailors, under the joint command of Minister Low and Rear Admiral John Rodgers, left Shanghai and soon arrived off Kanghwa Island.⁴¹

40. Fish to Robson, No. 220, 4 April 1870, Ibid., 1870, p. 333; Fish to Low, No. 222, 20 April 1870, Ibid., 1870, pp. 334-5; Low to Fish, No. 225, 16 July 1870, Ibid., 1870, pp. 362-3; Low to Fish, No. 21, 22 November 1870, Ibid., 1871, pp. 73-74.

41. Low to Fish, No. 31, 13 May 1871, Ibid., 1871, p. 115.

The local officials raised no objections to the proposed explorations of their coast and waters, but would not forward the letter to the capital. Being unable to get in touch with high Korean officials of enough rank, Low decided to force his way past Kanghwa to the mouth of the Han River which led to the capital, Seoul.⁴²

An advance force, under the command of Captain Homer C. Blake, consisting of two gunboats and four steam launches, began the exploration of the Kanghwa and Han River region. The main objective was to survey the passage between the mainland and the island of Kanghwa, the shortcut to Seoul.⁴³ When the party approached a sharp bend named Sondolmok, beyond which all vessels were strictly forbidden to go, they were bombarded by the Korean batteries situated near Sondolmok and Kwangsong. However, the Korean fortifications were soon silenced by counterfire. Low and Rodgers considered this incident as an indication of the Korean government's determination to reject any negotiations and decided to launch a major attack in order to completely destroy the fortifications. By doing so, they thought they might force the Korean government to come to terms.⁴⁴

42. Low to Fish, No. 32, 31 May 1871, Ibid., 1871, pp. 116-117.

43. Enclosure in Ibid., pp. 119-120.

44. Low to Fish, No. 33, 2 June 1871. Ibid., 1871, pp. 121-122.

The attacking force, consisting of two gunboats and several launches and 450 marines, under the general command of Captain Blake, easily captured two forts, Choji and Dokjin, and destroyed all their batteries and ammunition dumps completely. The Koreans offered no real resistance but retreated to the fort of Kwangsong apparently in preparation for a final stand. The Americans launched a general attack on the fort of Kwangsong and met with fierce resistance. Later Low wrote to the Secretary of State about the fighting, on 20 June:

'All accounts concur in the statement that the Koreans fought with desperation, rarely equalled and never excelled by any people. Nearly all the soldiers in the main fort were killed at their posts.'⁴⁵

The battle finally ended with heavy Korean losses, some 500 killed, and the complete destruction of the five forts, including Kwangsong. The Americans suffered only three killed and ten wounded.⁴⁶ It was a victory for the Americans but not one of which anyone could have been very

45. Low to Fish, No. 35, 20 June 1871, Ibid., pp. 126-129.

46. Ibid.

proud or which anyone could have wanted to remember.

Not even the heavy losses Korea had experienced and the full demonstration of the strength of gunboat diplomacy by the Americans led to a change in the anti-barbarian outlook of the Taewongun and his government and their determination to maintain the seclusion policy. Low observed that the Korean government was from the first determined to reject all peaceful overtures for negotiation or even discussion, and that the recent event, which would have produced a profound impression upon any other government, had had no effect, and that the Korean government as yet showed no sign of change in its attitude of defiance to all nations. There was little hope of bringing them to any proper terms. At last the American squadron withdrew from Korea on 3 July 1871.⁴⁷

The means adopted by Commodore Perry in Japan had proved inapplicable in Korea. The expedition had accomplished nothing. Moreover, it had created an additional obstacle in the way of obtaining a treaty by peaceful means. The task of bringing Korea within the framework of international obligations had become more difficult. It remained for Japan to break the hard shell of Korean seclusion.

47. Ibid.

CHAPTER 2. THE OPENING OF KOREA

(1) Korea's First Treaty with Japan, 1876

Contact between Korea and Japan in the early Yi dynasty was based on a tribute relationship. It was mainly for commercial and cultural reasons that the Japanese sent tribute to the Yi Court. Any Japanese Daimyo (Lord) who desired a tribute relationship with the Yi Court had to obtain a copper seal bearing his name from the Korean government. The Korean government adopted measures aimed at reducing and controlling the Japanese activities. From 1438 the Lord of Tsushima played the role of diplomatic intermediary between Korea and Japan and only the Shogun (the Supreme General), the Commissioner of Kyushu and a few selected Daimyo were allowed to send tribute missions. This role of the Lord of Tsushima as intermediary was maintained throughout the Tokugawa period, and the Lord of Tsushima was also allowed to send envoys to Korea for the purpose of reporting important events such as the death or accession of a Shogun, or the return of shipwrecked Korean seamen.

After the Opening of Japan, the relations between Korea, under the Taewongun's government, and Meiji Japan were characterized by conflict between tradition and innovation. In the eyes of the leaders of the new Japan, the recognition of Tsushima as the diplomatic intermediary was incompatible with the rapid changes at home. Korean



leaders, on the other hand, regarded that tradition as eternal and the only legitimate basis upon which relations with Japan could be maintained. The question at stake was not merely a matter of protocols and technicalities. It involved the far more important issue of the viability of the traditional system of international relations in North East Asia under drastically changed circumstances. After the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese Foreign Office ordered the Lord of Tsushima to send an envoy to Korea to inform her of the restoration in Japan. On 13 November 1868, the Japanese petty envoy, led by Kawamoto, left Tsushima for Pusan, carrying two important notes, one to the Department of Rites, and the other to the magistrate and commander of the Pusan fort. In February 1869, the Japanese Special Ambassador, Higuchi, arrived in Pusan. However, the Korean district magistrate refused to receive the credentials, complaining that they were not written in sufficiently respectful terms. The Korean authority pointed out specifically that the elevation of the title and rank of the Lord of Tsushima was against precedent, terms such as imperial house or imperial edict could only be used by the Chinese Emperor, and they refused to accept the replacement of the seals which Tsushima had received from Korea by a new seal issued by the Japanese government.¹ Thus, the Meiji government's first attempt to open diplomatic relations with Korea through Tsushima failed. This experience began to raise serious doubts about Tsushima's usefulness as

1. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nihon Gaiko Bunsho (Japanese Diplomatic Documents), Tokyo, Vol. 2, Pt. 3, No. 615; Vol. 1, Pt. II, Nos. 705-6; Tyler Dennet, Americans in Eastern Asia, New York, Barnes & Noble Inc., 1941, p. 435.

a diplomatic medium. The management of Korean affairs was formally transferred from Tsushima to the Japanese Foreign Office in September 1871.²

However, the subsequent missions of 1871 and 1875, which were sent directly by the Japanese Foreign Office, brought no results. The repeated Korean refusal to recognise the Restoration government caused much anger among the Japanese leaders and the idea of the conquest of Korea became widespread in Japanese documents and newspapers during the 1870's. As the new regime completed its initial consolidation of power, many young Japanese dreamers began to regard Korea as a stepping stone to the conquest of the Asian Continent. The idea of the conquest of Korea (Seikanron), advocated particularly by Saigo Takamori and Itagaki Taisuke, spread rapidly among the Japanese leadership.³ They started to argue that force would be the only means of inducing Korea to open her doors, and that, in response to the provocative Korean policy of seclusion, Japan should simultaneously dispatch troops and a special envoy to negotiate directly with the Korean government. Indeed, in 1873, the Korean question became one of the

2. NGB. Vol. 2, Pt.II, No.486;
Vol. 4, Pt.I, Nos. 179, 185,
190, 197, 205, 210.

3. NGB. Vol.2, Pt.I, No.51;
Vol. 8, Nos. 27-28.

greatest political issues in Japan, and it was this belligerent policy that precipitated the first Cabinet crisis in Japan in that year.⁴ When the Iwakura mission returned from Europe in September, it argued that Japan was not yet strong enough for military adventures. The subsequent appointment of Iwakura as acting Prime Minister changed the balance of political forces in the Japanese government. The belligerent Saigo and his followers were driven out of the government and the Seikanron (the idea of the conquest of Korea) was dropped as the government's policy towards Korea for the time being.⁵

In the meantime, there was an important change in Korean government. The Taewongun, the powerful Regent, was relieved of office in 1873. While the Taewongun's isolationist policy was generally popular, many of his other actions were not. Though he was the most prominent ruler of the Yi dynasty to attempt to introduce wide-ranging reforms into Korea and at the same time preserve the ancient order of Korean society, his heretical economic

4. Roy H. Akagi, Japan's Foreign Relations, 1542-1936, Tokyo, Hokuseido Press, 1937, p. 115; Chitoshi Yanaga, Japan since Perry, New York, McGraw Hill Co., 1949, p. 186.

5. E.E.N. Causton, Militarism and Foreign Policy in Japan, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1936, p. 111; Dennet, Americans in Eastern Asia, pp. 442-430.

6. Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul (The History of Korea), Seoul, pp. 582-3; Byung-Do Lee, Kuksa Daikwan (The History of Korea), Seoul, Bomunhak Publishing Co., 1958, pp. 450-44.

7. Halbert, History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 220; Yasube Kantaro, Nikkan Heigo Shoshi (A Brief History of the Merger of Japan and Korea), Tokyo, 1906, pp. 22-27.

and cultural reforms provoked the conservatives, and the combined upsurge of Catholicism and the threats of foreign invasion during his reign created an atmosphere of national crisis. The leading forces of the opposition movement was the growing Queen Min's faction supported by political malcontents. The growing independence of the young King also played an important part in the Taewongun's sudden downfall. The new Korean government of Queen Min's faction was ready to open the country, mainly as a reversal of the Taewongun's seclusion policy.⁶

Japan had been anxiously following developments in Korea, watching for an opportunity to open the country. The Japanese decided to apply the tactics they had learned from the Americans in 1854. After the settlement over Formosa and the Liu-chiu in 1874, on 19 September 1875, the Japanese warship 'The Unyo' and another two ships sailed up the mouth of the Han River on the pretext of surveying sea routes. The Captain, Inoue, and twenty men landed on Kanghwa island ostensibly to get drinking water. The Kanghwa battery opened fire but the vessel immediately struck back and stormed the fort. After that the Japanese returned to Nagasaki after two days. This is known as the Unyo-go Incident or the Kanghwa Incident and provided the pretext for the next steps in Japanese policy.⁷

6. Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul (The History of Korea), Seoul, pp. 582-3; Byung-Do Lee, Kuksa Daikwan (The History of Korea), Seoul, Bomunkak Publishing Co., 1958, pp. 440-441.

7. Hulbert, History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 220; Yamabe Kentaro, Nikkan Heigo Shoshi (A Brief History of the Merger of Japan and Korea), Tokyo, 1966, pp. 22-27.

The Japanese government decided to adopt a firm policy towards Korea, if necessary, to take measures against Korea of the type with which they had constantly reproached the Western Powers for using against themselves. In other words, they were determined to force a treaty upon Korea. In so doing they had to take certain preliminary steps before despatching a naval expedition to Korea. Recognizing that success might well depend on the attitude of China, Japan first sent a mission to China, headed by Mori Arinori, to secure a more definite Chinese disavowal of suzerainty over Korea. Li Hung-Chang, the Governor-General of Chihli Province and the de facto Foreign Minister of China, continued to maintain that Korea, although independent in all matters relating to her government and religion, was subordinate to China. But, given the risk of a war between Korea and Japan, Li felt compelled to advise Korea to consider the Japanese demands in a friendly manner.⁸

In January 1876, the Japanese naval expedition, headed by General Kuroda, the Special Plenipotentiary, and Inoue, Vice-Plenipotentiary, with two warships, three transports and several thousand marines, set sail to Korea. Under the threat of war, negotiations proceeded without much

8. T.F. Tsiang, 'Sino-Japanese Diplomatic Relations, 1870-94', Chinese Social and Political Science Review, Vol. 17 (1933-34), pp. 56-57; Griffis, op.cit., pp. 420-422; Dennet, op.cit., p. 441.

difficulty. After some controversies and arguments, on 26 February 1876, Korea's first Treaty of Amity, Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation was signed at Kanghwa between Hon Shin for Korea and Kuroda for Japan.⁹ This, Korea's first treaty with foreign countries in the Western conception, was only possible as a result of the coalescence of two major factors:

- (a) The sudden downfall of the Taewongun, and the advocacy of the opening of the country, as a countermeasure to the Taewongun's anti-foreign policy, by Queen Min's faction in the new Korean government;
- (b) China's pressure on Korea to establish friendly relations with Japan. As Perry came to Japan at the right time so did the Japanese to Korea.

The Treaty of Kanghwa consisted of twelve articles, and the most important provisions were:

1. Korea, being an independent state, enjoys the same sovereign rights as does Japan;
2. exchange of envoys within fifteen months from the

9. Text in Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuksa (The History of Korea), pp. 398-400; English version appears in China, Maritime Customs, Treaties, Regulations, etc. between Korea and Other Powers, 1876-1889, Shanghai, Statistical Department of the Inspectorate-General of the Customs, 1891, p. 1; and also in Hugh Heung-Wo Cynn, The Rebirth of Korea, New York, The Abingdon Press, 1920, Appendix E.

10. Ibid., Appendix F.

- date of the signing of the treaty;
3. opening of Pusan and two other ports in the twentieth month from the date of the signature of the treaty;
 4. mutual extra-territoriality;
 5. a trade agreement to be made within six months of the signing of the treaty.

On 24 August, a Supplementary Treaty was signed, which gave the Japanese the rights:

1. to proceed to the Korean coast;
2. to dispatch letters or other communications to any place or places in Korea;
3. to lease land in Korea;
4. to travel within a radius of ten Ri (4 km.);
5. to employ Korean subjects and to traffic in any article owned by Korean subjects paying in Japanese coin.¹⁰

The terms of the treaty were almost identical with those contained in Japan's and China's treaties with the Western Powers. Japan not only adopted the Western method of negotiations but also the terms of the treaty. The Kanghwa Treaty promised Japan, most of all, exchange of diplomatic emissaries, opening of two ports besides Pusan, granting of extraterritorial rights for Japanese citizens in Korea, the right to conduct surveys in Korean

10. Ibid., Appendix F.

waters. In other words, Japan imposed unequal terms on Korea that were similar in nature to the provision of the unequal treaties which the Western Powers had extracted from Japan only a dozen or more years before.

By referring to Korea, most significantly in the light of future development, as an independent state with same equal and sovereign rights with Japan, the Japanese government denied the existing Chinese suzerainty over Korea, whereas China had no intention of changing the traditional relation in any way. The ultimate intention of the Japanese government was not to see Korea independent and sovereign. Again, the Japanese government, which had been complaining of the extraterritorial clause of the Western treaties with Japan, was careful to stipulate for jurisdiction over its people in Korea while denying a reciprocal right to Koreans in Japan.

The Treaty of Kanghwa was entirely favourable for Japan while discriminatory for Korea. It was a totally one-sided, unfair and unequal treaty, the responsibility for which was partly due to the Korean government. The Korean government did not fully understand the nature of the Agreement it had signed, because it had neither understanding nor experience of the nature of the Western style treaty. Nevertheless, the Treaty of Kanghwa marked the beginning of Japan's full-scale interference in Korea.¹¹

11. John W. Foster, American Diplomacy in the Orient, New York, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1903, p. 321; Harold M. Vinacke, A History of the Far East in Modern Times, New York, F.S. Crofts & Co., 1937, p. 117.

2. The First Treaty with a Western Power, America, 1882

The Kanghwa Treaty seemed to the Western Powers to be a break in Korea's long isolation, and they began once more to take an interest in relations with the kingdom. The first initiative came from the United States. Under the instructions of the Secretary of State, Evarts, and the Secretary of the Navy, Thompson, Commodore R.W. Shufeldt, who had commanded the 'USS Wachusetts' during investigation of 'The General Sherman' Incident in 1867, came to the Far East again in April 1880 on board 'The Ticonderoga'. With the help of the American Minister in Japan, Bingham, who had been instructed to invite the Japanese government to give to Shufeldt suitable letters of introduction to the Korean authorities, Shufeldt attempted to get in touch with the Korean authorities through the Japanese officials. However, as Japan had no real desire to have the trade of Korea thrown open to the world, his attempts failed, and in fact, he was kept waiting in Nagasaki.¹

Meanwhile, in China, Li Hung-Chang, the Viceroy of Chihli, who was directly responsible for Korean affairs, viewed with alarm the steady growth of Japanese influence in Korea. He began to suspect that Japan had aggressive designs on Korea. Li thought that the greatest danger to

1. Dennet, op.cit., p. 457.

Korea, and thus, eventually to China, would come from Japan. He considered Korea vitally important to the safety of China as the first line of defence of the empire.² As he thought that the best means of preventing an attempt by Japan to seize Korea would be to open Korea to foreign trade, Li Hung-Chang began to calculate the advantages of letting Korea enter into treaty relations with the Western Powers.

Thus, as a countermeasure to Japan, China followed a policy of widening Korea's contacts with the Western world in the hope of maintaining division among the Powers. Li Hung-Chang advised Korea, in a confidential letter to the Korean Prime Minister, Yoo-Yon Lee, in August 1879, to do two things: to reorganize and build up her military strength, and to negotiate commercial treaties with the Western Powers.³ This policy was directed not only against Japan but also Russia. Li urged Korea to seize every opportunity to establish treaty relations with the Western Powers so as to neutralize one poison by another and to set one energy against another.⁴ Li estimated that the United States had no territorial design and was the most

2. T.C. Lin, 'Li Hung-Chang: His Korean Policies, 1870-1885', Chinese Social and Political Science Review, Vol. 19 (1935-36), p. 219.

3. Li Hung-Chang to Yoo-Yon Lee, 29 August 1879, NGB, Vol. 14, No.154, Annex.

4. H.F. MacNair, Modern Chinese History: Selected Readings, Shanghai, 1923, p. 511.

reliable of the Western nations. Li therefore thought that the United States would be the best partner for Korea's first treaty.⁵

In 1880, Li Hung-Chang received news that Shufeldt was attempting to deal with Korea through Japanese channels. China was then on the verge of war with Russia over the Kuldja dispute. The presence of Shufeldt in Japan could only be interpreted as meaning that the American government, approving the Kanghwa Treaty of 1876 in which the Chinese suzerainty over Korea was not acknowledged, was about to throw the weight of its influence on the side of Japan in the controversy over Korea. Thus China was menaced directly by Russia and also, so it appeared, by a combination of Japan and the United States, and as a result of either of these dangers China might lose its position in the Korean peninsula. Li lost no time in inviting Shufeldt to come to Tientsin, assuring him of the use of his influence to secure a treaty with Korea. Shufeldt, stung by what he believed to be Japanese duplicity, was willing to accept the invitation and arrived in Tientsin in June 1881.⁶

Again, Li Hung-Chang sent a message to the Korean government in which he expounded the many advantages which could be expected from the conclusion of a Korean-American treaty and urged the Koreans to dispatch a high official to

5. NGB, Vol. 14, No. 154, Footnote.

6. Dennet, op.cit., p. 457.

China to negotiate it. At the time, in Korea, as the ruling faction became more favourably inclined towards discarding the tradition of isolation, the opposition from conservative factions became increasingly vociferous. The manifestations of anti-foreign and anti-government opposition intimidated the Korean government and caused it to delay in responding to Li Hung-Chang's advice regarding the American-Korean treaty. Even so, in the winter of 1881, the informal Korean mission headed by Yoon-sik Kim was able to go to China.⁷

In March 1882, the formal negotiations began between Li and Shufeldt. The most important difference between the Chinese and the American drafts related to the question of Korea's status vis-a-vis China. Li attempted to insert in the treaty a clause which would recognize Korea as a dependent state of China. The Chinese draft, which was made by Li's two trusted subordinates, Ma Chien-Chung, and Tseng Tsao-Ju, and which was referred to as a Korean draft, contained, at the beginning of Article 1, the statement that: 'Korea is a vassal state of China, but has always enjoyed autonomy in both its internal and external affairs'.⁸

7. Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuksa (The History of Korea), pp. 718-724.

8. Li Hung-Chang, Li Wenchungkung Chuanchi (The Collective Writings of Li Hung-Chang), Wu Ju-Lun ed., Nanking, 1908, Memorials, Ch. 43, p. 34; T.C. Lin, op.cit., Chinese Social and Political Science Review, Vol. 19 (1935-36), p. 223.

Conscious of the seriousness of the first article of the Kanhwa Treaty, China now sought to guard itself by a statement of its position. Shufeldt maintained that the question of Chinese suzerainty had no bearing upon the right of the United States to deal with Korea, a nation which was self-governing in domestic and foreign affairs. However, they finally worked out a compromise: the Treaty would not include the Article 1, but, instead, the King of Korea would acknowledge the tributary status in a message to the President of the United States. They finished the provisional treaty on 19 April.⁹

During the negotiations between Li Hung-Chang and Shufeldt, Yoon-Sik Kim, the head of the informal Korean commission who had been staying in Tientsin since winter of 1881, had been busy as an intermediary between Tientsin and Seoul. Although he was never present at any of the sessions, he was kept well informed and was frequently consulted by Li Hung-Chang. He frequently had to act on his own discretion in the absence of specific instructions from Seoul, due to a deliberate decision of the Korean

9. For details of the negotiations between China and the United States, see C.I.E. Kim and H.K. Kim, Korea and the Politics of Imperialism, 1876-1910, pp. 18-28; Sun-Keun Lee, op.cit., pp. 707-738.

10. Text in Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuksa (The History of Korea), pp. 738-742; English version in Chung, Comp., Treaties and Conventions between Korea and other Powers, New York, H.W. Wilson, 1919, pp. 197-204.

Court and the ruling Queen Min's faction to assume as little responsibility as possible for the momentous and unpopular decision to open Korea to a Western nation.¹⁰

Soon after the provisional treaty had been drafted, Li Hung-Chang dispatched a text of the provisional treaty to Korea with a letter, describing in detail the proceedings and announcing an impending visit by Shufeldt. At the same time, Li sent a squadron of three Chinese warships, under the command of Admiral Ting Ju-Chang, to Korea. Ma Chien-Chung also went to Korea to handle political problems. Shufeldt arrived on board 'USS Swatara' and, shortly after, the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, known as the Chemulpo Treaty, was signed by Hon Shin for Korea and Shufeldt for America on 22 May 1882, with Ma and Ting in attendance.¹¹ The Treaty contained 14 articles and was apparently modelled upon the American treaties with Japan and China. The main provisions were the establishment of diplomatic relations on the basis of equality and reciprocity, relief of the shipwrecked, the right of American nationals to reside and trade at the open ports, responsible for carrying out the provisions of the treaty

10. Yoon-Sik Kim, Unyangjip (Collected Writings of Yoon-Sik Kim) Byung-Uk Hwang ed., 8 vols., Seoul, 1913, Vol. 5, p. 16.

11. Text in Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuksa (The History of Korea), pp. 738-742; English version in Henry Chung, Comp., Treaties and Conventions between Korea and other Powers, New York, H.S. Nichols, 1919, pp. 197-204.

12. Proceedings of State, 17 March, 1883, George M. McCune and John A. Harrison eds., Korean-American Relations: Documents Pertaining to the Far Eastern Diplomacy of the United States, Univ. of Calif. Press, 1951, Vol. 1, p. 25.

extraterritoriality, and a most-favoured-nation clause. There was no explicit statement on the status of Korea vis-a-vis China. The first article, instead, merely stated that there was to be perpetual peace and friendship between the United States and Korea and should either party become subject to unjust or oppressive treatment by a third nation, the other party to this treaty was to exert its good offices for an amicable arrangement.

A letter from the King of Korea to the President of the United States was given to Shufeldt before his departure from Korea. Despite China's intent, the King's letter to the American President contradicted itself: it acknowledged Korea's dependency upon China as a long-standing tributary, but it simultaneously declared its complete independence in both internal and foreign affairs.¹² The United States government took no official notice of the King's letter, and chose to regard the Treaty of Chemulpo as an evidence of Korea's sovereign independence. The American Secretary of State, Frelinghuysen, insisted that Korea was an independent and sovereign state, responsible for carrying out the provisions of the treaty signed by the two governments.¹³ Li Hung-Chang's attempt

12. Three different English versions of the Korean King's letter of 15 May 1882 appear in M.F. Nelson, Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia, pp. 145-149; T. Dennet, Americans in Eastern Asia, p. 460.

13. Frelinghuysen to Foote, 17 March 1883, George M. McCune and John A. Harrison eds., Korean-American Relations: Documents Pertaining to the Far Eastern Diplomacy of the United States, Univ. of Calif. Press, 1951, Vol. I, p. 25.

to retrieve what China had conceded to Japan in 1876 had not been successful. It is against this background and within this framework that the first phase of British policy towards Korea has to be examined.

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PART TWO. BRITISH-KOREAN RELATIONS:
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PART TWO. BRITISH-KOREAN RELATIONS:

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CHAPTER 3

BRITAIN'S IMPERIAL ROLE AND FAR EASTERN INTERESTS

It would seem reasonable to examine British policy towards Korea in the period under consideration within the framework of Britain's global imperial interests and within that context to attempt to estimate both the degree of importance which she attached to Korea and the significance of her policy measures.

Great Britain's territorial position on the South-East Asian mainland was established early in the nineteenth century. At this stage, the initiative in British policy towards all countries in East Asia rested usually with British officials in the East. They were frequently the first to put forward plans, and the Foreign Office had always given its representatives wide discretion in carrying them out. The function of the Foreign Office was to approve or reject the suggestions of its representatives, to ensure that they conformed to the general lines of government policy.

Britain had emerged from the Napoleonic Wars with an undisputed naval supremacy, and by the middle decades

of the nineteenth century was slowly but steadily securing and fortifying the maritime route leading to the Far East, and had secured overseas commercial and naval bases which guaranteed her control of the sea routes to India. After the acquisition of Burma, Britain alone between 1820 and 1840 possessed all the important qualifications for the task of gate-opening in the Far East. Besides India, her base of power on a grand scale, ambitious British planners of the empire, like T. Stamford Raffles, laid the foundations for British control of the sea lines from India to South East Asia. Raffles negotiated for the transfer of Singapore, the most important advanced base, to the British East India Company in 1819, and five years later he added Malacca to the British chain of naval and commercial outposts on the route from India to the China sea.¹

Great Britain's principal interest in China during the nineteenth century was trade, and the main aim of her policy was to bring about a general extension of that trade, whilst maintaining for herself the predominant commercial position which she had established in the Far East. Loss of the American colonies had accentuated the

1. G.F. Hudson, The Far East in World Politics, Oxford, 1937, pp. 4-12; L.K. Young, British Policy in China, 1895-1902, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970, pp. 2-15.

growing emphasis on commercial rather than colonial development. For the active British merchants, the increase in Chinese trade indicated a possibility of commercial expansion in an area where the British had already made a start, and the closed markets of Siam, Cochin-China, Japan and Korea all appeared to contain great trading potentialities.

Britain's predominant commercial position, secured through two wars with China (1839-42 and 1856-60), was based on certain established treaty rights. By the Treaty of Nanking, (29 August 1842) which concluded the first Anglo-Chinese war (the Opium War), Hong Kong was ceded to Britain and trading privileges were secured in the five ports of Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai. Conditions were laid down which governed the residential, travel, and extra-territorial rights of British subjects in these treaty ports and a trade tariff was agreed, which was then more precisely defined in the Treaty Tariff and General Regulations of 22 July 1843, and in the Supplementary Treaty of 8 October 1843.²

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2. China, the Maritime Customs, Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States, 2 Vols., Shanghai, 1917, Vol. I, pp. 351-6, 383-99; For early Anglo-Chinese relations, see M. Greenberg, British Trade and the Opening of China, 1800-1842, Cambridge, 1959; W.F. Costin, Great Britain and China, 1833-1860, Oxford, 1937; J.K. Fairbank, Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: the Opening of the Treaty Ports, 1842-1854, Mass., 1953.

The Treaty of Nanking brought about major and revolutionary changes in the British position in China. The Treaty was important not only for British interests, but as a foundation for the activities of the other imperialist Powers at the expense of China. Besides the opening of five ports, trade was to be regulated by British consular officials residing at these ports. Further, a number of supplementary agreements, of which the Supplementary Treaty of October 1843 would probably be the most important, fixed both import and export tariffs and transit dues, allowed British subjects and their families to buy and rent properties at the five ports, forbade British subjects to trade at or visit places other than the five ports, established some provision for extra-territorial jurisdiction in criminal cases, and entitled the British to most-favoured-nation treatment.

This position was extended and then consolidated by the Treaty of Tientsin (26 June 1858), which was negotiated during the second Anglo-Chinese War and ratified at the conclusion of the war in 1860. By this Treaty, an additional nine ports were opened along the China coast and on the Yangtze River. Conditions of trade were improved, the trade tariff was revised, and provision was made for foreigners to travel beyond the treaty ports on a system of passports. In addition, the right of foreign diplomatic residence was established

in the capital, Peking, and arrangements were made for the formation of a Chinese office of foreign affairs, the Tsungli Yamen, through which the foreign Powers could deal with China on an official basis.³ The most important elements of these treaties in subsequent history were the most-favoured-nation treatment and extra-territorial jurisdiction of consuls. The effect of the most-favoured-nation clause was to establish a common front of the foreign Powers in making demands on China, since whatever was granted to one became available to all, no matter what had been the circumstances or conditions of the first grant, and, with the later multiplication of treaty ports and the concession to foreigners of the right to travel in the interior, the effect of the extraterritorial right clause was the growth of autonomous foreign settlements, some of which became virtually City-States within, but not of, the Chinese Empire.⁴

The Tientsin Treaty served as the ultimate basis of Anglo-Chinese diplomatic and commercial relations throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century.

3. China, The Maritime Customs, Treaties, Conventions, etc. between China and Foreign States, Vol. I, pp. 404-21.

4. G.F. Hudson, The Far East in World Politics, pp. 17-21; W.W. Willoughby, Foreign Rights and Interests in China, Baltimore, 1927, Vol. I, pp. 35-45, and Vol. II, pp. 726-733.

The Treaty was one of 'Peace, Friendship and Commerce', and the commercial sections formed the major part of its fifty-six Articles. However, the most revolutionary sections of the treaty were neither commercial nor missionary, but diplomatic. Article II provided for the mutual exchange of Ambassadors, Ministers or other diplomatic agents between the Courts of Peking and St. James, and Article III granted the right of residence at Peking for the British representative, and by Article V the Chinese Emperor agreed to nominate a high government official to conduct business on a footing of perfect equality with the British representative. By these Articles, the Chinese assented to Western notions of equality and sovereignty among nations, and to residence and intercourse at the Chinese capital on the basis of such notions, a surrender which ran counter to the very foundations of China.⁵

In 1860, by the Convention of Peking, Tientsin itself became a treaty port. Thereafter a steady succession of ports were opened for British trade and consular residence, either as a result of direct pressure by the British government or under the most-favoured-nation clause. Later, by 1900, some thirty Chinese ports and inland cities were open to trade

5. N.A. Pelcovits, Old China Hands and the Foreign Office, New York, King's Crown Press, 1948, p.19; David Steeds and Ian Nish, China, Japan and 19th Century Britain, Dublin, Irish Academics Press, 1977, pp. 29-38.

and consular residence, and, in addition, there were, particularly along the Yangtze, various landing stages at which goods could be loaded and unloaded.⁶

The British interests in China were commercial, not political. The object of British policy was confined to the opening up of China to trade. Most of the British merchants were convinced that in China there lay a vast unexplored source of trade and wealth. The Foreign Office also believed in the potentialities of the China trade and was indifferent toward the opening of other countries except in the case of Siam. The high hopes for the China market, however, soon waned as the British began to learn that the average purchasing power in China was extremely low. Although British merchants in Shanghai and Hong Kong controlled 70 per cent of the Chinese external trade there, dominated the river trade and even carried half the purely coastal trade, the overall volume of this was small, considering the size of China. The main reason for this disappointing situation in China trade was China's poverty and self-sufficiency, rather than the malevolence of Chinese officialdom or the lethargy of British representatives. In the mid-nineties, it was not significantly greater

6. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

than British trade with Japan, and for Manchester it was no better as an outlet than Turkey, and, despite the sharp drop of cotton exports to India during the eighties, they were still five times as great as those to China. Nor was there any sign that trade was increasing, it remained static throughout.⁷

After the Taiping rebellion of 1851-64, it became clear that, while British commercial interests desired an extension of trade, undue pressure to achieve this could only weaken the existing Chinese government, aggravate internal discontent in China, and lead to a possible restriction of the existing trade to the detriment of Great Britain's advantageous position. Consequently, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, British mercantile interests became reconciled to the fact that official policy was directed to the maintenance of Britain's commercial pre-eminence by peaceful means and to the support of Chinese political stability. During the latter decades of the nineteenth century, there was no threat to Britain's predominant position in China. The British firms dominated over their competitors in

7. David Steeds and Ian Nish, *Ibid.*, pp. 30-34; P. Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China 1894-1900*, London, 1928, pp. 228-9, 238; N.A. Pelcovits, *Old China Hands and the Foreign Office*, New York, 1948, pp. 53-4, 69-71, 192-3, 264; J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism*, London, 1938, pp. 307-23; C.J. Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967, pp. 227-230.

the treaty ports. They controlled the bulk of the imports and coastal carrying trade, and the financing of this growing volume of trade was also served by British interests.

During the last few decades of the nineteenth century, however, several factors emerged in Far Eastern affairs which threatened Britain's political and economic dominance. In the 1880's, the increased industrial development of the European countries and the United States enabled them to offer a widespread challenge to Britain's international trading position. Their competition was marked by the establishment of tariff walls in the home markets and by the struggle for the control of undeveloped markets abroad. An increased interest was shown in the unappropriated areas of Africa, the Pacific Islands, and the Far East. As the Powers could not hope to establish their control in these areas in open commercial competition with Great Britain, they tended to seek a form of exclusive territorial control and to press their mercantile enterprises with diplomatic support. As a result, the Open Door Policy, the principle of equal and open commercial activity, which Britain sought to maintain throughout the world, was steadily undermined by the activities of the other foreign Powers. The era of world imperialism had begun.

Britain's major two rivals in colonial acquisition in the Far East between 1840 and 1894 were France and

Russia, the one approaching China from the south and the other from the north. Russia, which had a long history of contact with China over a common land frontier, carried her activity in the mid-nineteenth century to a new phase. Russia's Far Eastern expansion in the period 1850-75 was the product of two different types of colonial activities: a west-to-east land-power advance from Lake Baikal, and a north-to-south sea-power advance along the coast from the Kamchatka and the Okhotsk Sea. The consequences of the Crimean war reacted on Russo-Chinese relations by giving Russia a strong incentive and pretext for violent action. Lacking command of the sea, Russia was cut off from communication with the Far East by maritime routes, and her chief base in Kamchatka, Petropavlovsk, was threatened with an Anglo-French attack. For the succour of their exposed Pacific coastline, the Russians demanded from China in 1854 a right of way down the Amur, and held the whole line of the Amur, cutting off all the territory to the north of the river. China, distracted by the Tai-Ping rebellion, was unable to offer any resistance. To obtain formal recognition of this conquest from China, Russia appeared as a mediator on behalf of China between the defeated China and Britain and France in 1858, and was allowed to annex all the territory north of the Amur and the littoral to the south of the lower Amur as

far as the border of Korea in 1860. As a result, Korea, for the first time in her history, had a common border with Russia. Through the initiative of Count Nikolai Muraviev, the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, and taking advantage of the weakened China, which was struggling with the Tai-Ping rebellion and the war against Britain and France, the Russians now established her settlements in the Amur and the Ussuri regions and held the Pacific coastline of Asia from the Bering Strait to Possiet Bay. By the Treaty of Aigun (1858) and Peking (1860), Russia acquired over 350,000 square miles of territory to the north and east of the Amur and Ussuri Rivers. Further, she founded the new port of Vladivostok in 1860, and obtained Japanese recognition of her claim to the island of Sakhalin in 1875.⁸

The new port of Vladivostok, on the desolate shore of Peter the Great Bay, was a great advance on any base the Russians had previously possessed. It was only about

8. A. Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904, Berkeley and London, 1958, pp. 6-9; George A. Lensen, The Russian Push toward Japan: Russo-Japanese Relations, 1697-1875, Princeton, 1959, p. 275; G.F. Hudson, The Far East in World Politics, pp. 55-63.

9. George A. Lensen, op. cit., p. 448.

10. Ernest S. Ravenstein, The Russians on the Sea, London, 1861, p. 125; Ussuri is one of the Kuril Islands.

two hundred miles farther away by sea from Shanghai than the British base at Hong Kong. But Vladivostok was not out of range of winter sea-ice, and to obtain an ice-free port it was necessary to continue the advance still further south. The stage was thus set for a major shift of rivalry in the Far East to that of Britain against Russia, which was to continue until after the turn of the century.

The first crisis, though minor, occurred in 1861 when Russia occupied Tsushima Island. This island was of great strategic value due to its geographic position which commands the southern entrance of the Sea of Japan and makes it a convenient stepping-stone from Korea to Kyushu. A survey of the Tsushima coast by a British warship in 1861 aroused Russian suspicion that the British might try to annex the island and bottle up Russian expansion at this point.⁹ Earlier, during the Crimean War, French forces had landed on Urup Island, had destroyed the storehouse of a Russian-American Company and proclaimed the island an Allied possession.¹⁰ In view of this, Commodore Likhachev, Commander of the Russian Far Eastern Squadron, sent the Russian corvette 'The Possadnik' to Tsushima in March 1861 with the

9. George A. Lensen, op.cit., p. 448.

10. Ernest G. Ravenstein, The Russians on the Amur, London, 1861, p. 135; Urup is one of the Kurile Islands.

purpose of preventing its falling into the power of the British or French. In the hands of any naval Power the island would offer a base of operations against either China or Japan. It was natural that Britain, France, and Russia, in their rivalry for control of the Far East, should have been interested in this strategic point and have done every possible thing to prevent each other from occupying the island.

Britain acted promptly. To the British, a Russian occupation of Tsushima constituted a threat to the balance of power in the Far East. Having advised the Japanese government to direct a protest to the Russian government, the British Minister in Japan, Sir Rutherford Alcock, despatched Admiral James Hope, Commander of the British Asiatic Squadron, to the island supported by a formidable British fleet. Under British pressure as well as the protest of the Japanese government, the Russians had no choice but to withdraw after a six month's occupation. This was the first move of a policy which was ultimately to lead to the alignment of Britain and Japan against Russia in the Far East.¹¹

France was the third European Power to acquire territory on the Pacific littoral of Asia during the

11. G.A. Lensen, The Russian Push toward Japan, p.450; T. Dennet, Americans in Eastern Asia, p. 431; G.F. Hudson, op.cit., p. 64.

nineteenth century. The building of the French colony of Indo-China began in 1862 with the annexation of part of Cochin-China and was completed as a result of the Franco-Chinese war of 1883-5. The tradition of French influence and the plight of the Catholic Church in Annam gave an opportunity for action to the French. Britain was no longer in a mood to obstruct all French expansion in the East, and was prepared to allow France to acquire a new colonial possession, provided that it was neither too close to India nor on the farther side of Hong Kong. The French joined the British in making war on China in 1857, and in the following year also invaded Annam in company with a Spanish force from the Philippines. By a treaty in 1862, France obtained the cession of the three eastern provinces of Cochin-China, and from this base the French gradually extended their control and finally imposed a protectorate on Annam itself in 1874. This led to hostilities between France and China, as China had asserted her right as suzerain over Annam, but after her defeat in the Franco-Chinese war of 1883-5, China renounced all claim to interfere in the affairs of Annam and recognized the French protectorate. In 1887 Cochin-China, Cambodia, Annam proper and Tongking were grouped together as French Indo-China, and Laos was added in 1893. Of the three large states between the Bay of Bengal and the South China Sea, one was thus annexed by

France, and Burma by Britain, and Siam, situated between Annam and Burma, retained her independence as a buffer state.¹²

In the last few decades of the nineteenth century, it became increasingly clear that the expansive tendencies of Russia and France were not turned on Europe, but on the establishment of their positions abroad. The Far East, in particular, attracted the attention of the two Powers. Russia and France attempted to extend their positions in China, and later the participation of Germany, Japan and the United States in this activity resulted in an intense struggle for influence between the Powers in the Far East. In this situation, Great Britain was forced on to the defensive, not only to protect her established treaty rights but to preserve the whole basis of her position in China.

Great Britain's aim was to ensure that the whole of China should be opened to foreign trade and that all nations should participate in it on an equal footing. Britain did not seek a monopolist ascendancy in China, and pursued a free-trade policy, because Britain already possessed more territory outside China than she could administer and would gain nothing from assuming responsibility for China's untold millions. If China were

12. Ibid., pp. 65-70.

partitioned, Britain would lose the trade she controlled in conditions of open competition. In contrast, Russia, France and, later, Germany, saw no virtue in a system that simply guaranteed British commercial predominance now that they were in a position to challenge it. The very cause of the free trade and the open door policy itself required a superiority of power sufficient to prevent the formation of spheres of exclusive and monopolistic privilege. Britain, however, was in no condition to fight a war in the Far East without an ally at that time. British Far Eastern policy was one of manoeuvre: on the one hand attempts to reach an understanding with Russia coupled with forceful diplomacy at Peking, and on the other, attempts to find an ally to counteract the Franco-Russian alliance. The outcome of this, later in January 1902, was an alliance with Japan.¹³

It is necessary to note that from 1868 Japan embarked on a sustained programme of modernization and political and military reorganization, the Meiji Restoration, which was to bring her to the level of the major Powers by the turn of the century. One of the problems which faced the Japanese politicians of the Meiji period was the need to evolve a foreign policy to replace the discarded

13. Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 will be examined in detail in Chapter 7; G.W. Monger, The End of Isolation, London, 1963, p. 15; G.F. Hudson, British and American Policies in the Far East since 1900, Leeds, 1955, p. 7; C.J. Lowe, The Reluctant Imperialists, London, 1967, p. 230.

Tokugawa policy of seclusion. To this end, they applied themselves to the problem of Japan's strategic position in the Far East, and, in particular, they displayed a close interest in the control of the islands and territories surrounding Japan. Thus in the eighteenth-seventies the Liu-chiu and Bonin islands were taken over, colonization was encouraged in Hokkaido, and serious efforts were made to extend Japanese influence in Formosa and Korea. In particular, the close proximity of Korea made it an area of primary importance in Japanese policy.

Throughout the nineteenth century, however, Russia was the one Power which constantly challenged Great Britain. The British government, in turn, tried to thwart Russia in every corner of the globe. In Europe, Britain supported the decaying Turkish Empire to keep Russian frontiers and influence as far as possible from Constantinople. In Asia, Britain watched with jealousy and alarm any extension of Russian power into Central Asia, especially Turkestan, Persia, and Afghanistan, lest it should endanger India. The recurrent issue in Anglo-Russian rivalry throughout the nineteenth century lay in the supposed vulnerability of India to Russian attack. In 1878 and again in 1885, an Anglo-Russian war over Afghanistan seemed imminent, and Britain was forced to turn to more active measures and to attempt to arrive at a settlement with Russia on the north-west frontier of India. Britain

was equally vigilant in the Far East against every Russian movement toward the North Pacific. In the eighteen-eighties, when overt signs of Russian interference in Korean affairs, which will be mentioned in detail later, first became apparent, British attention was more on Russian activity in Central Asia than in the Far East. In so far as there was a connection in Chinese affairs, the safety of Kashgaria and Tibet rather than that of Korea exercised the diplomatic ability of the British representatives in Peking. Even the British occupation of Port Hamilton, an island off the Korean coast, in 1885 needs to be seen in relation to the Afghan crisis of that year. The Port Hamilton Incident will be examined at length in the following chapter.¹⁴ Thus, the framework in which British policy towards Korea evolved was many-sided and it would be necessary to trace out some of the key inter-relationships in the following chapters.

14. W. Habberton, Anglo-Russian Relations concerning Afghanistan, 1837-1907, Urbana, 1937, pp. 23-68; C.C. Davies, The Problem of the North-West Frontier, 1890-1908, Cambridge, 1932, pp. 1-17, 71-98; A.P. Thornton, 'Afghanistan in Anglo-Russian Diplomacy, 1869-1873', The Cambridge Historical Journal, II (1954), pp. 204-218.

CHAPTER 4.BRITISH-KOREAN RELATIONS: THE FIRST ACTIVE PHASE(1) The First British-Korean Treaty, 1882

Britain had had no relationship with Korea until the early 1880's. Though it was mostly British ships which had approached Korea in an unsuccessful attempt to open trade in earlier days, Britain had never tried hard to open relationships with Korea.

Britain's approach towards Korea was different from that of France, the United States, and Japan. Britain did not attempt to force a treaty upon Korea because of her vested interests in China. The British were just cautiously awaiting some favourable opportunity to ensure success without provoking the sensibility of both China and Korea, and also to achieve success with as little effort and risk as possible. Britain had never challenged Chinese suzerainty over Korea, because she was satisfied with Korea's position under China's shadow and protection. But, as the other Powers, hitherto occupied in China, increasingly turned their attention to the surrounding territories of East Asia, in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, and especially as the struggle for the control of China's tributary dependencies developed, British interest in Korea became more active and forward looking. At the beginning of 1881, there were rumours that Russia intended to seize some Korean territory in the spring and pressures

came from a number of directions for the opening of Korea in order to block Russia's design.

Britain encouraged China to advise Korea to frustrate the undue growth of the influence of any one Power by allowing equal commercial rights to all the interested foreign Powers. The British Minister in Peking, Thomas Wade, warned the Tsungli Yamen repeatedly that the persistent exclusiveness of the small states dependent on China was a source of danger both to China and to themselves.¹

Wade, in fact, expected little from Korea commercially. He believed that the loss of Korea would be politically serious for China, and the only way to avert it was to give several Powers such a vested interest in that country that no one would be able to annex it. Wade thought that for a single Power, especially Britain, to meddle in Korea would precipitate a Russian attack. He asked the Tsungli Yamen to announce that Korea was open to treaty relations.²

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1. Wade to Foreign Secretary, No. 91, 29 June 1880, F.O. 17/831: Foreign Office, General Correspondence, China (17), Vol. 831, hereafter cited as F.O.
 2. Wade Tel. 3, 7 Jan. and Tel. 10, 9 Feb. 1881, F.O. 17/859.

3. Admiralty to Foreign Office, 23 May 1882, F.O. 17/913; Wade to Foreign Office, No. 16, 17 May 1882, F.O. 17/835.

4. E. P. O. Hoffman, *British Diplomacy in China, 1860-1895*, Cambridge, 1935, p. 100.

The Tsungli Yamen warmly approved Wade's proposal of opening Korea, and advised Korea to establish treaty relations with the Western Powers, and there seemed no obstacle to Britain making a treaty with Korea. However, the British did not take the initiative. The British hope was to see Korea opened to the foreign Powers, not so much to strengthen her as an independent state as to strengthen China. Britain saw no advantage in negotiating a treaty with Korea ahead of other European Powers. The initiative came from Japan and the United States, as examined in the previous Chapter.

As soon as news of the American-Korean treaty spread among diplomatic circles in Peking, Western diplomats were anxious to follow the pattern of the United States. Great Britain immediately adopted a subtle yet energetic policy. The Admiralty ordered Rear Admiral George O. Willes on the China Station to watch what Shufeldt was doing. In May 1882, news circulated that an American Squadron was assembling, apparently intending to negotiate with a display of force.³ The Foreign Office saw American action in Korea not as a model but as a guide to how easily it might achieve satisfactory results. By the middle of May, Wade received instructions from the Foreign Office to exert himself against any interference with American wishes.⁴ Towards the end of May when Wade sought an

3. Admiralty to Foreign Office, 23 May 1882, F.O. 17/913; Wade to Foreign Office, No. 16, 12 May 1882, F.O. 17/895.

4. E.V.G. Kiernan, British Diplomacy in China, 1880-85, Cambridge, 1939, p. 80.

interview with Li Hung-Chang, Li agreed to render him assistance if the British intended to accept the same terms, without an alteration of one word, as the American treaty. Wade consented to this, although he had found in the agreed terms of the draft treaty several objectionable points, the worst being the American promise not to trade in opium.⁵ Li had also told him earlier that in any treaty that might be made with Korea he would insist on an article enforcing Chinese suzerainty. With this promise assured, Li furnished him with a letter of introduction and appointed the same Chinese official, Ma Chien-Chung, who had accompanied Shufeldt, to return to Korea with the British Envoy, Admiral Willes.

Admiral Willes, the British plenipotentiary, arrived on 27 May 1882 at Chemulpo, three days after Shufeldt had left. The Korean government appointed Nyong-Ha Cho, plenipotentiary, and Hong-Jip Kim, vice envoy. The negotiations took place in Chemulpo. Willes wanted more detail in the treaty, and proposed three additional clauses, namely, the same trade regulations as those of the Japanese: agreement for British warships to visit Korean harbours and be provided with necessary supplies

5. Wade to Foreign Office, No. 19, Conf., 12 May 1882, F.O. 17/895.

and food; and the freedom to survey the coasts.⁶ To the Korean envoy, however, these provisions were quite unnecessary, since the treaty would automatically meet these needs. Willes' final proposal, the use of the island of Komun (Port Hamilton) as a base for British warships, was also rejected.⁷

The parties signed the treaty on 6 June 1882. It consisted of fourteen articles in all and was a carbon copy of the American-Korean Treaty. Britain even accepted the clause (Art. VII) which provided an absolute prohibition of the opium trade. Willes confessed that the treaty perhaps appeared too similar, but he felt the main thing was to get a footing.⁸ He returned to Yokohama on 14 June. During the next few months, Willes, accompanied by William G. Aston, the British Consul at Kobe, visited the treaty ports in Korea; Wonsan and Pusan, examining the harbour, trade prospects, and the sites for foreign settlements. The British squadron

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6. Umchung-sa, (Diary of Yoon-Sik Kim), 2 Vols. Seoul, 1958, Vol. II, 28 June 1882.
7. Chosen Sotokufu, Chosen-Shi (History of Korea), 37 Vols., Seoul, 1932-40, Series VI, Vol. 4, p. 614.
8. Willes report, 9 June 1882, F.O. 17/915; for text of the Willes Treaty, see China, Imperial Maritime Customs, Treaties, Regulations, etc. between Corea and other Powers, 1876-1889, pp. 53-61.

also visited Port Hamilton where it remained for some days.⁹

Britain, in the early 1880's, faced two pending problems: the opium trade in China and treaty revision in Japan. A Korean treaty was not a separate but an integral part of British interests in East Asia. The Foreign Office naturally gave thought to the far-reaching effect and change which the new Treaty might have on British relations with other Asian countries, especially China and Japan. It also had to take into account the opinions of interested British parties. The first step taken by the Foreign Office was to refer the Korean Treaty to various Chambers of Commerce in order to obtain their opinion. The consultation lasted until the following spring although the Treaty was due to be ratified within a year.¹⁰ The unanimous objection of the British merchantile community was that the Treaty had conceded too much in allowing a high tariff, which ran at a rate twice as high as the one set in British treaties with China and Japan.¹¹

9. Parkes to Granville, 25 September 1882, Dispatch from H.M. Minister in Japan forwarding a Report on Korea, House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1883, Vol. 75, pp. 257-268.

10. 'Corea, Treaties with Great Britain and the United States', Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 22 Feb. 1883, Vol. 276, p. 584.

11. The Chamber of Commerce to the Foreign Office, F.O. 17/915; 17/940.

13. Enclosure in Bingham to Frelinghuysen, No. 1533, 28 July 1882, Japan: Dispatches, Vol. 47.

The Yokohama General Chamber of Commerce, nominally representing all foreign merchants but predominantly British in composition, was the foremost opponent of the treaty. In a letter to Granville on 9 January 1883, it condemned the proposed treaty as meagre in its details and unsatisfactory in its provisions. It argued that under such conditions no foreign merchants would attempt to do business in Korea, especially in the face of the greater privileges granted to the Chinese and Japanese.¹²

The British press in Japan and China also raised similar objections. 'The Japan Daily Herald' as early as July 1882 published an article from its sister journal 'The North China Daily News', which pointed out that the treaty was to benefit the Chinese with the lion's share while placing the foreigners in an unfavourable position. It blamed Shufeldt, who, in his eagerness to secure a treaty, accepted terms that fell far short of what he could have obtained. Willes' mistake, it said, was that he had blindly followed Shufeldt's lead.¹³

In China, Britain had been facing a demand for an increase of the import duty on opium. The British government had promptly accepted the various concessions

12. Ibid.,
Enclosure in Bingham to Frelinghuysen, No. 1632, 14 Feb. 1883, Dispatches from the United States Ministers to Japan, Vol. 48, Records of the Department of State, National Archives. Hereafter cited as Japan: Dispatches.

13. Enclosure in Bingham to Frelinghuysen, No. 1538, 28 July 1882, Japan: Dispatches, Vol. 47.

made by China at the Chefoo Convention in 1876, but had rejected the part which allowed China to increase the opium duty. China's demand became more persistent since her conclusion of treaties with the United States in 1880, which absolutely forbade Americans to take part in the opium trade. As things went so unsatisfactorily, the Foreign Office, by the summer of 1882, summoned Wade to confer on the matter.¹⁴

The British not only vigorously objected to the Willes treaty but also attempted to prevent, if possible, the ratification of the Shufeldt treaty by the United States. The Yokohama Chamber of Commerce considered ratification of the American treaty detrimental to foreigners given the pending treaty revision negotiation with Japan. They protested to John A. Bingham, American Minister to Japan, against the restrictions on trade in the Shufeldt treaty, and made a request that the United States government, before ratifying the treaty, should give considerations to its view. Bingham, however, considered the request an attempt to influence the American government against its own interests and to promote European policy in East Asia.¹⁵

14. S. Lane-Poole and F.V. Dickins, Life of Sir Harry Parkes, 2 Vols., London, 1894, Vol. II, p. 335.

15. Enclosure in Bingham to Frelinghuysen, No. 1552, 28 Aug. 1882, Japan: Dispatches, Vol. 47.

American policy had been to give Japan its commercial rights by treaty revision while British policy was to conserve the privileges which the British had secured, and to prevent Japan from obtaining revision from any treaty Power separately.¹⁶ To Bingham the treaty concluded by Shufeldt with Korea was more liberal and just than any Western treaty concluded with either China or Japan. He observed that this treaty marked an additional departure in the Far Eastern policy of the United States from that of the European Powers towards Asian nations. For this reason he was most anxious to see the United States ratify it as soon as possible.¹⁷

Despite British objections, the United States ratified the Shufeldt Treaty in February 1883. President Arthur appointed Lucius H. Foote as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. He arrived in Korea on 13 May 1883. Being unsuccessful in preventing the United States from ratifying, the Foreign Office proceeded with a plan, in co-operation with the treaty Powers, designed to obtain a modification of the Korean Treaty. It invited Germany to co-operate and the two countries agreed to make a new effort to secure a treaty. One commentator has argued that 'Britain

16. T. Dennett, Americans in Eastern Asia, pp. 515-516.

17. Bingham to Frelinghuysen, No. 1527, 12 July 1882, Japan: Dispatches, Vol. 47.

needed German goodwill in Egypt at that time and it could be paid for cheaply at Seoul'.¹⁸ Aston, the British Consul at Kobe, dispatched by the British Minister in Japan, Parkes, visited Korea from April to May 1883, for the purpose of postponing ratification of the treaty on behalf of Britain and Germany. He asked for the deadline to be set for the end of 1883 - a request that the Korean government accepted without argument.¹⁹

Drafting a new treaty with Korea became one of Parkes' first duties when he was transferred from Tokyo to Peking in the summer of 1883. He submitted on his own initiative a draft of a new treaty, regulations of trade, and a tariff, together with lengthy explanatory remarks.²⁰ The whole document revealed Parkes' precautionary measures to safeguard British interests in Korea. It was also an ambitious design to meet the demands of British opinion which the Willes Treaty had failed to satisfy. His scheme was domination of the Far East by a Western bloc directed by Britain.²¹

18. E.V.G. Kiernan, British Diplomacy in China, 1880-85, p. 104.

19. Young-Mok Min to Parkes, 15 May 1883, Youngshin (Correspondence with the British Government), The Archives of the Korean Foreign Office, Vol. 1.

20. Parkes to Granville, No. 108, Conf., 22 June 1883, F.O. 17/920.

21. E.V.G. Kiernan, op.cit., p. 14.

It was not until September 1883, that the plans were ready at the Foreign Office. On 4 September, Granville, Foreign Secretary, notified Parkes that the British government had authorized him to negotiate and conclude a new treaty with Korea. His appointment as the British Plenipotentiary signified that the British government intended this time to admit no concessions. Parkes sailed from Chefoo for Korea on 18 October, intending to get there at the same time as Edward Zappe, the German Consul-General at Yokohama.²² Parkes arrived at Chemulpo on 26 October 1883. The German Envoy, Zappe, was already there waiting, and the two envoys and company left for Seoul the following day. Admiral Willes as well as Commodore Shufeldt had negotiated at Chemulpo without ever being in the capital, Seoul. Moreover, they had conducted negotiations through the Chinese Commissioner, Ma Chien-Chung. From the start the setting for the treaty negotiations differed from the previous year.

It would be necessary to discuss the salient points which Parkes endeavoured and managed to modify. The first important question was the removal of the clause relating to the eventual relinquishment of extra-

22. Foreign Office to Parkes, 4 Sept. 1883, F.O. 17/931; Parkes to Foreign Office, No. 28, 18 Oct. 1883, F.O. 17/925.

territorial jurisdiction. The Koreans were anxious for reinsertion of the first treaty's provision, that extra-territoriality should be abolished when Korea had overhauled her laws. They agreed on a compromise that they would omit the clause from the treaty proper but append it in the treaty's protocol.²³ The extra-territoriality clause in the treaty proper placed every British subject in any civil or criminal case entirely under the jurisdiction of his own authorities and provided for a satisfactory procedure. Parkes thought this article was so clearly worded that he wished Britain had similar treaties in China and Japan which would serve the British interests even better than in Korea where British interests were comparatively small.²⁴

The next question was the revision of the tariff and trade regulations which proved the most difficult. Since the British were dissatisfied with the tariff rate negotiated by Willes (10-30 per cent), Parkes proposed a

23. Enclosures 1 and 2 in Parkes to Granville, No. 69, 31 December 1883, F.O. 17/927. For text of the Anglo-Korean Treaty, see The British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 74, pp. 86-97.

24. S. Lane-Poole and F.V. Dickins, The Life of Sir Harry Parkes, Vol. II, p. 215.

different system of grading imports, with rates of different levels. Cotton and woollen manufactures were to pay $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, while metals, raw cotton, raw wool and yarns, comprising the bulk of probable British imports were in the 5 per cent levels. These proposals were turned down by the Koreans. Parkes found it necessary to compromise on small points to secure his main ones, so he agreed to the exclusion of opium. But whereas the Shufeldt and Willes treaties provided for an absolute prohibition of opium in the treaty proper, the Parkes treaty concealed the clause in the tariff schedule, under Class 6, 'Prohibited Goods', with the reservation 'except medicinal use'.²⁵

Other major modifications Parkes accomplished were:

(1) Additional stipulations to the article relating to diplomatic representations that a diplomatic representative might reside permanently or temporarily at the capital. Parkes observed that to appoint a permanent diplomatic representative to Korea, as the United States had done, would be unnecessary. He proposed a combined

25. There are two forms of tariff schedule attached to the treaty: one arranged alphabetically and the other classified according to the rate of duty.

appointment in view of the peculiar relations between China and Korea and the possible influence it might have upon treaty questions in both China and Japan.²⁶

(2) Conditions of trade and residence at the treaty ports were improved. Under the new treaty the British were to have some liberty to travel and trade in the interior as the Japanese and the Chinese; to pay no transit duty; to buy land and build factories at three ports (Chemulpo, Pusan and Wonsan) and two interior points, Seoul and Yanghwachin, which Parkes secured in addition to the three named in the Willes Treaty.

(3) Penalties for smuggling at non-opened Korean ports were lightened, and in all cases of smuggling, the sole jurisdiction rested with the British courts.

(4) Provisions were made for British warships to establish naval stores at any of the open ports of Korea without payment of a duty, and to make surveys in Korean waters with the assistance of the Korean government.

By this treaty, Korea surrendered not only what the Chinese and the Japanese treaties had granted to the Western Powers but also a considerable amount of what foreigners had obtained by the extra-treaty method of

26. Parkes to Granville, No. 54, Conf., 16 Dec. 1883, F.O. 17/927.

interpretation. Although Parkes considered the Korean trade to be not more than an off-shoot of the trade with China and Japan, he did not overlook any minor point detrimental to British interests elsewhere as well as in Korea.²⁷

After the signing of the treaty on 15 November 1883, Parkes and Zappe, on November 27, had an audience with the Korean King, Kojong. The King thought the new treaty a good and thoroughly satisfactory arrangement, and expressed desire that Britain would give active assistance and protection in the event of any difficulty arising in the future. Parkes replied that the treaty would bring the two countries into close and friendly relations, and the commerce it secured would prove mutually beneficial. Parkes sailed for China two days later.²⁸

The treaty received approbation in all quarters. Granville, on behalf of his government, in February 1884, conveyed his appreciation of Parkes' achievement. He added that the results Parkes had obtained could not fail to be highly beneficial to British commercial interests in the Far East.²⁹ The Yokohama Chamber of Commerce also

27. Parkes to Granville, No.70, 31 Dec. 1883, F.O. 17/927.

28. Enclosures 1 and 2 in Parkes to Granville, No. 55, 17 Dec. 1883, F.O. 17/927.

29. Granville to Parkes, 15 Feb. 1884, F.O. 17/947.

expressed its satisfaction with the Parkes' Treaty. The Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce expressed the same opinion, but proposed some minor modifications which the Board of Trade considered not to be of sufficient importance to delay the ratification of the treaty.³⁰

Granville, on 7 March 1884, notified Parkes that the Foreign Office, with the approval of the Queen, had appointed him to be Her Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Seoul in addition to his present post, which was exactly what Parkes had proposed.³¹ He was now determined to fulfill the mission. No sooner had the treaty been concluded than he began taking the necessary steps for ratification. He believed that ratifications should be exchanged as early as possible and that the Order in Council should come out with them. The Draft Order in Council, which was to be cited as the China, Japan, and Corea Order in Council, was ready by April 1884.³²

Parkes, on 21 April 1884, left Shanghai on the 'HMS Cleopatra', accompanied by Aston, Hillier, and

30. Granville to Parkes, 28 Feb. 1884, F.O. 17/947; Board of Trade to Foreign Office, 20 March 1884, F.O. 17/969.

31. Granville to Parkes, 7 March 1884, F.O. 17/947.

32. Foreign Office to Parkes, 25 April 1884, F.O. 17/969.

33. Parkes to Foreign Office, Corea, 28 April 1884, F.O. 17/947; Foreign Office to Parkes, 23 July 1884, F.O. 17/947.

W.R. Carles. The ceremony took place at Seoul on 28 April, the day on which Parkes, from the new British legation, wrote the first dispatch of the Korean series. On the same day 'HMS Cleopatra' saluted the Korean flag at Chemulpo harbour. Parkes, on 2 May, had an audience with King Kojong and presented a belated letter from Queen Victoria, which marked the beginning of the diplomatic relations between Britain and Korea.³³

Korea's opening to the West was unequal and was similar to other Japan and China had done by 1860 or thereabouts. Korea's opening, however, was not immediately attributable to any successful Western military effort as was the case with China or Japan. And yet it was not the result of a voluntary decision made by sufficiently powerful and enlightened Koreans. Consequently, there was neither an overwhelming shock, nor were adequate modernization measures taken by Korea to adapt to this opening up. Moreover, the initial and primary impetus for Korea's opening came from two neighbours of Korea - China and Japan. Japan represented the force of change and innovation, while Chinese influence was on the side of maintaining the status quo. For a little over a decade following the opening of Korea, the two conflicting forces were in competition, thus adding a new dimension to the endemic factional strife within Korea.

33. Parkes to Foreign Office, Korea 1, 28 April 1884, F.O. 17/949; Foreign Office to Parkes, Korea 1, 23 July, 1884, F.O. 17/947.

(2). Korean Internal Disturbances and Sino-Japanese Intervention

At this stage, it is necessary to pause in order to consider both certain domestic changes in Korea itself and the Sino-Japanese intervention which occurred in response to them. Korea had concluded treaties with the United States, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, Germany, France and Austria by 1883. The first treaties Korea made with the nations of the West were unequal and were similar to those Japan and China had made by 1860 or thereabouts. Korea's opening, however, was not immediately attributable to any successful Western military exploit as was the case with China or Japan. And yet it was not the result of a voluntary decision made by sufficiently powerful and enlightened Koreans. Consequently, there was neither an overwhelming shock, nor were adequate modernization measures taken by Korea to adapt to this opening up. Moreover, the initial and primary impetus for Korea's opening came from two neighbours of Korea - China and Japan. Japan represented the force of change and innovation, while Chinese influence was on the side of maintaining the status quo. For a little over a decade following the opening of Korea, the two conflicting forces were in competition, thus adding a new dimension to the endemic factional strife within Korea.

Shortly after the signing of treaties with the Western powers, a riot broke out in Seoul, known as the

Soldiers' Mutiny of 23 July 1882. This incident was the first violent reaction of the Koreans against the changes which had occurred since the opening of the country. The immediate cause of the riot was the ill-treatment suffered by the Korean troops, mostly the former royal guard. The underlying cause was the complex internal political strife of that period. In addition to the regular royal guards, since 1881, there had existed a Special Skill Force of about three hundred men which had been undergoing modern training under a Japanese military instructor, and they received special care and favour. Towards this elite corps, the soldiers in the old order, who were poorly fed and clothed, felt envy and hostility. The discontent sought the leadership of the retired Taewongun, who found an opportunity to reinstall his seclusion policy. A relatively minor incident in the evening of 23 July 1882 quickly led to a large-scale mutiny, and transformed itself into a general uprising against the Japanese and the Queen Min faction.¹

The importance of this outbreak was that it brought in China and Japan. The mutiny was not confined to the domestic political area. It resulted in armed interventions from China and Japan, and brought two countries to the verge of war. During the agitation the mob attacked the Japanese legation as well as the Korean Royal Palace, killing seven Japanese including the military

1. Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuksa, pp. 425-486.

instructor, Lieutenant Horimoto. The Japanese Minister in Seoul, Hanabusa, and some of his legation staff fled to Chemulpo and returned to Nagasaki in the British surveying ship, 'The Flying Fish', that had rescued them in the open sea off Chemulpo.² The Queen Min also made a narrow escape. The insurrection had major consequences.

Both Japan and China acted vigorously and rapidly. The Japanese government at once sent back Minister Hanabusa accompanied by a strong guard of troops and three warships to present its demands to the Korean King. The Chinese government moved quickly, too, in order to give no pretext to Japan for starting hostilities. Within a week of Hanabusa's arrival in Seoul, Ma Chien-Chung with 3,000 Chinese troops and three warships reached Korea. The presence of two armed forces on a foreign soil, representing antagonistic nationalities, was a serious threat to peace.

Britain encouraged China's action as a means of averting a collision between China and Japan. The British Minister in China, Wade, advised the Chinese officials of the Tsungli Yamen that, having once sent

2. Bingham to Frelinghuysen, No. 1547, 19 Aug. 1882, Japan: Dispatches, Vol. 47.

4. Young to Frelinghuysen, No. 5, conf., 13 Aug. 1882, China: Dispatches, Vol. 62.

5. J. C. F. Bland, Li Hung-Chang, New York, 1917, pp. 164-5.

in troops, China should restore order vigorously since delay would encourage the Japanese to take the law into their hands while other Powers, probably meaning Russia, would not fail to take the advantage of the situation.³

However, neither China nor Japan did resort to force to obtain a Korean settlement. Japan was not yet ready for a conclusive test of strength, and, above all, its current financial situation needed peace. Further, war almost inevitably meant foreign intervention and territorial dismemberment.⁴ China's diplomacy was also conciliatory. Li Hung-Chang was convinced that unless China organised a powerful navy and strengthened its defence, it should not undertake aggressive steps against Japan. All he intended was to move in before the Japanese could act and also appease his political opponents at home.⁵ Under Li's order, Ma Chien-Chung sought the forcible removal of the antiforeign Taewongun. To the Chinese, the Taewongun must have appeared persona non grata since he attempted to overthrow the rule of the Queen Min faction that had been faithfully following the Chinese guidelines on matters

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3. Wade to Foreign Office, No. 2, secret, 25 Aug. 1882, F.O. 17/898.
 4. Young to Frelinghuysen, No. 5, conf., 19 Aug. 1882, China: Dispatches, Vol. 62.
 5. J.O.P. Bland, Li Hung-Chang, New York, 1917, pp. 164-5.

of foreign relations. Ma arrested and charged the Taewongun with disrespect to the Emperor of China and sent him to Tientsin where he remained as a prisoner for three years. Li thought that as long as the Taewongun had a free hand in Korea peace was impossible.⁶

The removal of the Taewongun had an immediate salutary effect on the suspended negotiations between Japan and Korea. Japan obtained, by the agreement signed on 31 August 1882, an indemnity of 500,000 Yen, the right to station troops in Seoul as legation guards, and complete freedom of movement for Japanese officials in the interior of Korea.⁷

So the mutiny against the policy of opening and also against the ruling Queen Min faction ended. The manner in which the status quo was restored set a portentous precedent for foreign armed intervention in Korea. Two hundred Japanese soldiers remained in Seoul as legation guards. But, most of all, the mutiny resulted in the unprecedentedly forceful and open intervention of China. China now publicly asserted her authority and right of interference in Korean affairs. Besides the presence of

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6. Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuksa, pp. 504-517; Tabohashi Kiyoshi, Kindai Nissen Kankei no Kenkyu. (A Study of the Japanese-Korean Relationship in Recent Times), Keijo, 1940, Vol. I, pp. 831-848.
7. Chosen Sotokufu, Chosen-Shi, Series VI, Vol. 4, p. 642; Hilary Conroy, The Japanese Seizure of Korea: 1868-1910, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1960, pp. 106-7.

the impressive strength of the Chinese forces that stayed on in Korea, the Chinese reorganized and trained the Korean troops and supplied modern weapons. Three thousand Chinese soldiers plus two thousand Korean soldiers under Chinese control assured a near-complete military control over Korea. It is ironical that the Mutiny of 1882 only resulted in foreign armed interventions and, above all, such drastic Chinese intervention, contrary to the original intentions of the mutineers and the chauvinistic Taewongun and his followers.

Another evidence of China's determination to assert her suzerain status with renewed vigour was the terms of a new Sino-Korean Trade Agreement signed shortly after the mutiny. The preamble to this agreement fixed the status of Korea as a dependency of China, and because of this relation, the Chinese were to enjoy exclusive advantages in residence, travel, trade, and import duties. The scheme of fostering trade with Korea was not commercial only. China resolved to assert political control over Korea.⁸

The new trade regulations provoked the treaty Powers, especially the United States and Japan. However, they were more concerned about the political implication: i.e. the status of Korea, than the commercial aspects of

8. For the Text, see Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Korea: Treaties and Agreements, Washington, 1921, pp. 1-6; and also British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 75, pp. 1334, 1339.

10. Dispatch to Foreign Office, 14 Dec. 1882, F.O. 17/200.

the agreement. Renewing his idea of a joint understanding with the United States, Japanese Foreign Minister, Inouye, accused China of imposing a command on Korea, and proposed that both Japan and the United States should demand from Korea the same favours given to China.⁹

Great Britain, however, reacted differently. The British Charge d'Affaires at Peking, T.R. Grosvenor, observed that China showed an arrogant intention of putting her Korean trade on a better footing than that of others and of denying the most-favoured-nation clause. But Philip Currie at the Foreign Office noted that if Korea was independent, Britain would claim most-favoured-nation treatment; if not, British treaties with China applied equally to her. Korea's status was not a matter of great concern so long as Britain enjoyed the most-favoured-nation treatment.¹⁰

In addition, in order to counteract Chinese domination and to strengthen his claim to full independence, the King of Korea turned to the Western Powers, particularly the United States. Having realized the need for modernization, he had reorganized the Korean Foreign Office and was encouraging young people to learn military and political sciences. He was convinced that

9. Inouye to Bingham, Enclosure No. 2. in Bingham to Frelinghuysen, No. 1620, 12 Jan. 1883, Japan: Dispatches, Vol. 48.

10. Grosvenor to Foreign Office, 14 Dec. 1882, F.O. 17/900.

Korea must cultivate friendly relations with the Western Powers which would help rid Korea from long subservience to its immediate neighbours. The first move in this direction was the King's plan to send a mission to the United States. The mission led by Young-Ik Min, nephew of the Queen Min, left for the United States in August 1883. The Korean mission to the United States was the first of the kind to visit any Western nation and was a success, having strengthened friendship between the two countries and increased the influence of the reformers at home. On return Young-Ik Min became Vice-President of the Foreign Office.

While the King was endeavouring to bring about reform and strengthen his position through the aid of the United States, a group of progressives developed the idea of reforming the country with the aid of Japan. During the years from 1882 to 1884, a small number of young officials in the government gradually united in their desire for national independence and domestic reform. Their leadership came from the respectable Yangban families which, however, lacked political power or wealth in the 1880's, and mostly came from either the members of early missions to Japan or those of the mission to the United States. The most active leader was Ok-Kyun Kim, who had frequently visited Japan on official functions, including the apologizing mission after the Mutiny of 1882 and negotiations for a foreign loan in 1883-4.

By the autumn of 1884, there was a distinct cleavage within the government between the progressives and conservatives. The conservative element of which the Queen Min faction was the leading representative, with support of the Chinese, grew steadily in power and influence. The entire core of the Korean government began to turn to the Chinese, and the separation of the two parties was so wide as to render any discussion of public affairs between them impossible. Political circles in the capital were uneasy. The treasury was empty, only a third of the taxes raised was reaching the government, crops had failed. Powerful families usurped the functions of the Council, and there was no force capable of repressing disaffection. It was extremely difficult for the progressives to challenge the Min party. They had to rely on covert ways to their goal - to seize the government and King, and to demand from him widespread reforms as well as a declaration of independence from China. After all, Korea had to liberate itself from the Chinese shackles, which required the overthrow of the Queen Min faction. There must be reforms in every aspect of national life. The progressives frequented the Japanese legation and held discussions with the Japanese Minister, Takezoe, on the plan of a coup.

It would seem that Takezoe was given a large degree of freedom in dealing with the progressives, as long as he stayed within the bounds of the two basic objectives -

promotion of Korean independence and avoidance of war with China.¹¹ In early 1884, the Chinese government was in a major political crisis. The unfavourable turn of the war with the French provided an opportunity for the anti-Prince Kung forces to oust the Prince from the Tsungli Yamen, and his successor, Prince Shun, was untried in the management of China's foreign policy. It appeared that China would be less willing at this time than before to risk a war against Japan, even if Japan was openly aiding the anti-Chinese progressives in Korea.

The uprising began at Postmaster-General Young-Sik Hong's party on 4 December 1884, to celebrate the opening of the new post office building. All the high Korean officials of both parties attended together with the foreign representatives. The first move in their plot was the attempted assassination of Young-Ik Min, who was severely wounded. During the ensuing confusion the progressive leaders hurried to the Palace and led the King to a smaller Palace ostensibly for safety. About 200 Japanese guards, led by Takezoe, had already rushed into the Palace to protect the King. The King issued a declaration of independence, while the progressive leaders filled the important offices so expeditiously vacated. In the name of the King, the progressives

11. C.I. Kim, H.K. Kim, Korea and the Politics of Imperialism, 1876-1910, pp. 46-49.

executed six conservative Ministers.

The Chinese realized the urgency of quick action and took vigorous steps to recover the ground lost to Japan. Chinese troops hastened to the Palace on the afternoon of 6 December, and forcibly expelled the Japanese who were far outnumbered. The capital filled with turmoil. An angry crowd attacked the Japanese legation and killed thirty Japanese residents. After fierce fighting, Takezoe, together with the leaders of the progressives, had to retreat to Chemulpo. Thus the three-day crisis came to an end.¹²

This incident at once focused diplomatic attention in both Peking and Tokyo. The Japanese government decided once again to demand satisfaction from Korea with a display of force. By the end of December, the Japanese Foreign Minister, Inouye, as Special Ambassador, came to Korea, accompanied by 2,500 troops, to settle the issue. China, too, sent its commissioner, Wu Chang-Ching, to settle the affair. Wu arrived in Seoul on 1 January 1885, with a force of 3,000. It was a repetition of what had happened in 1882. There was every possibility that further conflict might arise as a result of the arrival of soldiers from the two hostile powers.¹³

12. For details of 1884 Coup, see Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuksa, pp. 615-651.

13. Aston to Parkes, 2 Jan. 1885, F.O. 17/996.

For Britain, Parkes' first thought was to avert a clash between Chinese and Japanese troops in Seoul. News was that the Japanese government was making military preparations, and that two warships and 700 men were on their way to Korea. Parkes asked the British Minister in Tokyo, Plunkett, to warn the Japanese not to engage in war with China.¹⁴ At the same time, Parkes advised the Chinese government not to antagonize Japan lest she join forces with France. He also enlarged on the danger that, in case of an armed coalition between France and Japan, Russia would welcome the opportunity for self-help. Parkes exerted his influence to ease the tension and maintain the status quo in the Far East, the disturbance of which would seriously endanger British security.¹⁵

The negotiations between Japan and Korea began in Seoul on 7 January 1885. The foremost protest of the Korean government was against Takezoe's conduct during the uprising. Realizing that his government would have to take the responsibility for its Minister's action, Inouye resolutely avoided going into the details of Takezoe's conduct. Inouye only took two facts into consideration: first, Takezoe attended the King by his invitation; second, over thirty Japanese had been killed. The agreement signed,

14. Parkes to Aston, No. 28, 24 Jan. 1885, F.O. 17/977; Parkes to Granville, No. 321, 14 Dec. 1884, F.O. 17/953.

15. Parkes to Granville, No. 327, 20 Dec. 1884; No. 338 very conf., 28 Dec. 1884, F.O. 17/953.

containing three main points: Korea should apologize to Japan; pay an indemnity of £55,000 for Japanese loss of life plus £10,000 for property damage; and Japan was to be allowed to build barracks for its legation garrison which was to be increased to 1,000 men.¹⁶

It was ironic that Korea should apologize to Japan for the results of a Japanese-sponsored coup. Foreign representatives in the Far East praised Japan's policy as being in line with progressive international practice.

The Japanese government chose to settle the issue with China without risking a war. The Japanese Premier, Ito Hirobumi, came to Tientsin to undertake negotiations with Li Hung-Chang on 31 March 1885. On 18 April, Li Hung-Chang and Ito signed a convention at Tientsin, which provided for the withdrawal of their troops from Korea within four months from the signing of the treaty. It further provided that both Chinese and Japanese officers should not take part in training the Korean army, and that whenever either Power felt it necessary to send its troops to Korea, it must give notice to the other. Li Hung-Chang maintained that since China had duties and rights as the suzerain of Korea, the Chinese position was superior to that of the Japanese.

The Japanese government made it clear that if it found

17. T.C. Lin, 'Li Hung-Chang: His Korean Policies, 1870-85', *Chinese Journal of Political Science*,

Review, XIX (1955-6), p. 251. English text
 16. Aston to Parkes, 2 Jan. 1885, F.O. 17/996. For the text of the treaty, see The British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 76, p. 574.

China unwilling to accept Japanese proposals it had no other alternative but to go to war. The Tsungli Yamen decided that China was not ready for the duel, and Li had to concede.¹⁷

The Convention definitely advanced Japan's position in Korea. The Japanese government had three immediate aims: to maintain Japanese influence in Korea, to avoid a war with China, and to satisfy the Japanese public. Although Ito was unable to get some mention of the sovereignty or at least the autonomy of Korea into the Convention, he secured for Japan an equal footing with China in Korean affairs. For China, it was a relief to have the dispute settled without an unwelcome war and to have evaded recognizing the complete independence of Korea. China remained confident that propinquity and historical precedent would enable it to retrieve its position in Korea.

It was clear that the Li-Ito Convention of 1885 was nothing but a temporary compromise between the two rivals. Japan's ultimate aim was to force China to abandon its suzerainty over Korea and to win it for itself. Britain continued to support Chinese claims

17. T.C. Lin, 'Li Hung-Chang: His Korean Policies, 1870-85', Chinese Social and Political Science Review, XIX (1935-6), p. 231. English Text of the Convention of Tientsin in Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp.7-8.

in Korea, with as little friction as possible. British representatives in Korea showed no concern or sympathy for Korea's struggle for independence and reform. Britain's aim was to avoid, and, if possible, prevent any disturbance of the status quo in the Far East, in case Russia should find an opportunity for encroachment. Anticipation of Russian expansion towards the South Pacific prompted Britain to search for a naval base in Korean waters. As early as 1880 the Edinburgh Review advocated acquisition of an island station in the narrow waters between Japan and Korea or off the southern extremity of the latter peninsula. Britain had no coaling station in the eastern seas north of Hong Kong. However numerous and efficient the ships which the British might possess, they could not carry out extended operations at a distance from a coaling station. Harry Parkes attached great importance to Korea's strategic

1. Edinburgh Review, Vol. 153 (July 1880), p. 180.

2. Ibid., Vol. 152, p. 88.

(3). British Occupation of Port Hamilton, 1885-1887

Throughout the nineteenth century Russia was the one Power which constantly challenged Great Britain. During the early 1880's an allegation of Russian aggressive intention persisted which the Powers attributed to Russia's search for an ice-free port in Korea. The British maintained that Russia was searching for a new naval station and that the place the Russians considered best to meet their requirements was Port Lazareff in Broughton Bay.¹ Anticipation of Russian expansion towards the North Pacific prompted Britain to search for a naval base in Korean waters. As early as 1880 the Edinburgh Review advocated acquisition of an island station in the narrow waters between Japan and Korea or off the southern extremity of the latter peninsula.² Britain had no coaling station in the eastern seas north of Hong Kong. However numerous and efficient the ships which the British might possess, they could not carry out extended operations at a distance from a coaling station. Harry Parkes attached great importance to Korea's strategic

1. Edinburgh Review, Vol. 152 (July 1880), p. 80.

2. Ibid., Vol. 152, p. 88.

position which, he thought, would have an immense value in due course.³

In Central Asia, in the meantime, the Russians had begun to push across towards Persia and Afghanistan. By the 1880's, Russia's southward movement had begun to look as if it would never stop. One by one the little states gravitated toward the neighbouring colossus. Each Russian advance in these regions was considered to constitute a threat to British interests in India, since it was a tenet of British foreign policy to safeguard the Indian frontier by using both Persia and Afghanistan as buffer states.⁴ On 14 February 1884, the Russians occupied Merv, a territory long claimed by the Afghans. Britain decided to make a remonstrance, but had no intention of straining relations with Russia. However, the clash between British and

the Admiralty about Port Hamilton. The Admiralty thought most highly of Port Hamilton because of its

3. Parkes to Granville, No. 4, conf. 16 Dec. 1883, F.O. 17/927.

4. Edinburgh Review, Vol. 163 (Jan. - Apr. 1886), p. 18; Rose L. Greaves, Persia and the Defence of India, 1884-92, London, The Athlone Press, 1959, p. 137. Persia and the Defence of India, pp. 12-13.

Russian troops at Penjdeh, on 30 March 1885, brought the two Powers to the verge of war. The British Government prepared for war.⁵ The Foreign Office warned major Embassies in Europe that a situation of the utmost gravity had arisen. While the Admiralty was watching all Russian ships, the government chartered the steamships of the Peninsula and Oriental Company for use as armed cruisers. In India, the Viceroy prepared to move 25,000 men to Quette, considered several possible plans of campaign, and received assurance that reinforcements from Britain would be forthcoming.⁶

Among other measures, Britain chose to follow a traditional strategic plan - to attack Russia at some weak point in her possessions. Port Lazareff was under consideration. The Foreign Office consulted the Admiralty about Port Hamilton. The Admiralty thought most highly of Port Hamilton because of its

5. Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Third Series, 27 April 1885, Vol. 297, p. 847.

6. R.L. Greaves, Persia and the Defence of India, pp. 72-73.

closeness to Russian territory and because its geographical formation possessed every requisite for a naval station. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Northbrook, believed that in event of war the port would be necessary as a base against Vladivostock.⁷

The Cabinet decided, on 11 April 1885, to get 'pre-emption or first refusal' of Port Hamilton. The Admiralty on 14 April instructed Vice-Admiral William Dowell of the China Station to occupy the port and report proceedings. Three warships, 'The Agamemnon', 'The Pegasus', and 'The Firebrand', entered Port Hamilton on 15 April 1885, without hoisting the flag. The Admiralty instructed that the flag should not be hoisted until Russian warships entered the harbour.⁸

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7. Foreign Office to Admiralty, conf. 20 March 1884, F.O. 17/969; Admiralty to Foreign Office, conf. 4 April 1885, F.O. 17/1001.
8. Granville to Gladstone, 26 April 1885, F.O. 17/1000; A. Ramm, ed., Political Correspondence of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville, 1876-1886, Oxford Univ. Press, 1962, Vol. II, p. 363.

The British decision to occupy Port Hamilton was the result of military and strategic considerations. Safe anchorage in the southern extremity of Korea would advance the British fleet to within easy operating distance of Vladivostock, only 850 miles away, almost halfway between the Russian port and Hong Kong.

In the meantime, the Russians had secured their objective, a foothold on the glaciers of the Hindu Kush and control of the Sarik Turkomen. They sought to consolidate their position without losing face. The Russian army was in the midst of reorganization, coast defences were unprepared, the treasury empty. The Russian government decided that the moment was not opportune for a war. They had repeatedly expressed hope that the unhappy incident at Penjdeh should not prevent negotiations.⁹

9. Thornton to Granville, 7 May 1885, Granville Papers, Public Record Office, P.R.O. 30/29/186.

The British government, too, in spite of its determined action, was anxious to avoid war. The Afghans refused to admit British troops to their territory, lest a war between Russia and Britain should lead to occupation by the armies of one or both of the contending parties. Moreover, Britain was without an ally on the Continent. Without allies, a war against Russia would be futile and costly. Taking these factors into consideration, neither the British officials in India nor those at home thought that Penjdeh was worth a full-scale fight. Once the excitement had died away the British government sought a compromise.¹⁰

The turning point came early in May 1885 when Britain and Russia agreed to submit their claims to an arbitrator. The two governments eventually dispensed with the services of an arbitrator and entered into direct negotiations, and signed a preliminary protocol on 10 September 1885.

The occupation of Port Hamilton helped to thwart the Russian advance in Central Asia and it was also part of a forward-looking strategy. Port Hamilton could serve as the British base from which to attack Russia's

10. Fortnightly Review, Vol. 43 (1885), p. 728.

Far Eastern possessions in the event of a general war. Fortunately, there was no war. Nevertheless, the occupation of Port Hamilton, although by no means a major issue in British foreign policy, was to become the core of diplomacy in the Far East during the next two years. The British government had undertaken the occupation without a clearly defined policy, leaving the detailed negotiations to its representatives in Peking and Seoul. Britain announced from the beginning that the occupation was a temporary measure, but the British would neither abandon Port Hamilton nor annex it.

Korea, as well as China and Japan, regarded the British action as an invitation to Russia to make a countermove south which would leave them to face difficulties in the north. There was also the possibility that Japan might follow the same course. Under these circumstances, the Chinese government could be upset and angered, made constant protests, but they had no other means but verbal protests available to them. Negotiations were prolonged until the British found an opportune time to evacuate the port.

11. Granville to Tseng, 16 April 1885; Tseng to Port Hamilton belonged to Korea, with which Britain had established diplomatic relations as a sovereign state.

Enclosure in Granville to Tseng, 20 April

Vol. 78, pp. 143-6.

12. Granville to O'Connor, 6 May 1885, *ibid.*
But, Britain entered into and conducted negotiations primarily with the Chinese government, as if Korea was part of China. The day after the British fleet took the Korean port, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Granville,

notified the Chinese Minister in London, Tseng Chi-Tse, that the British decision had been taken in order to prevent the probable occupation of the island by another Power. Granville expressed readiness to come to an agreement with China. The Foreign Office furnished a draft agreement, binding China to acknowledge the British occupation of the port as lawful, and with the condition that Britain should pay to Korea any revenue derived from these islands, with a deduction for China of whatever might normally go her as tribute.¹¹

The Chinese government, however, claimed that the obstacle to an agreement was the threat of the Russian Minister in Peking, who had declared that, if China acquiesced in the British action, Russia would have to occupy another part of Korea. There was also the possibility that Japan might follow the same course. Under these circumstances, the Chinese government could not authorize its Minister to sign the draft proposed by the British government.¹²

11. Granville to Tseng, 16 April 1885; Tseng to Granville, 27 April 1885; Draft Agreement, Enclosure in Granville to Tseng, 28 April 1885, The British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 78, pp. 143-6.

12. Granville to O'Connor, 6 May 1885, Ibid., Vol. 78, p. 147.

The Chinese refusal took the British by surprise, because they had been confident that all would go smoothly. Granville decided to drop the matter for the time being. Thus, without any agreement and consent, the British squadron remained in occupation of Port Hamilton long after the crisis in Central Asia was over.

Great Britain left Korea unnotified until about the latter half of May, which though unintentional, revealed Britain's lack of respect for Korea as a sovereign country. Granville had sent a cable to the British Minister in China, O'Connor, on 23 April, instructing him to address a confidential note to the Korean government informing of Britain's action. O'Connor's note did not reach Seoul until 19 May.¹³

Korea's silence did not betray ignorance of what was happening. A few Korean officials had heard of it through foreigners in Seoul, and felt much indignation against Britain for taking such action without notifying to the Korean government. They regarded it as an open violation of international law and as a breach of the Anglo-Korean treaty. Some Korean officials

13. Granville to O'Connor, 23 April 1885, The British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 78, pp. 144-5; Carles to O'Connor, 7 May 1885, F.O. 17/996.

14. Carles to O'Connor, No. 47, 19 May 1885, F.O. 17/996; Dispatches, Series VI, Vol. 4, p. 254.

thought of making representations to the treaty Powers. But the Korean government refrained from making a protest until it received the note from the British government. On 16 May, officials of the Korean Foreign Office left for Port Hamilton to investigate the situation. When the Korean delegates demanded explanation, the British Commanding Officer, Captain J. P. MacLear, refused on the grounds that he was acting only under his superior's orders. The Korean delegates went to Nagasaki and presented a written protest to the British Admiral, William Dowell, who promised to forward it to his government.¹⁴ However, the long-awaited dispatch from O'Connor, which the Vice-Consul in Seoul, Carles, delivered to the Korean Foreign Office on 19 May, contained nothing new from what the British representative had been saying, and there was no detailed explanation.¹⁵

The Korean government issued a more formal protest than the one presented to Admiral Dowell, to the effect that because Port Hamilton was Korean territory no Power could take it. Korea hoped Britain would abandon such an intention out of regard for friendly relations.

14. Carles to O'Connor, 19 May 1885, F.O. 17/981; Dowell to the Admiralty, 19 May 1885, The British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 78, pp. 149-152.

15. Carles to O'Connor, No. 47, 19 May 1885, F.O. 17/996; Chosen-Shi, Series VI, Vol. 4, p. 764.

Should Britain fail to withdraw at once, Korea had no choice but appeal to the treaty Powers. The British were embarrassed by the threat of an appeal to other Powers.

The British government decided near the end of May 1885, on an offer of a yearly rent of £5,000, mainly to end the protest. Granville directed O'Connor to make the offer through the Chinese government, because Britain needed China's support and cooperation not only over Port Hamilton but because of Britain's commercial interests in China.¹⁶ When Korea repeated its protest in a more formal way, O'Connor, too, concluded that it would be better to go through the Chinese government than through the British Consulate in Seoul.¹⁷

Granville sought through the Chinese Minister in London, Tseng, to solicit China's influence in the interests of Britain. But the Peking government refused to interfere in such negotiations. It was probable that China feared that Britain's occupation of the islands might be the first stage in a partition of Korea. O'Connor decided to turn to Li Hung-Chang, whose influence was absolute in Korea. Though he shared the fears of the Peking government, Li Hung-Chang began to see an

16. Granville to O'Connor, No. 120, Conf. 27 May 1885; No. 124, Secret, 29 May 1885, F.O. 17/975.

17. O'Connor to Granville, No. 251, very conf., 26 May 1885; O'Connor to Aston, 30 May 1885, F.O. 17/981.

advantage in the British occupation of a Korean port. The presence of the British fleet in such a strategic point might help China check not only Russia but Japan. Li assured the British that although China could not consent to British occupation openly, it would not oppose it.¹⁸ Li suggested that whilst the Korean government found it impossible to accept the British proposal of an annual rental, owing to foreign opposition, that an offer of a lump sum, under a private arrangement, might be effective. O'Connor decided that the offer of such a lump sum would be the best lure for Korea, and asked the London government if it would pay a lump sum instead of an annual rent.¹⁹ However, the British government rejected the idea and Granville instructed O'Connor not to propose any lump sum without further notice.²⁰

The Gladstone ministry did not survive to conclude the Port Hamilton negotiations. There was growing popular discontent in Britain, stemming largely from a series of

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18. O'Connor to Granville, No. 259, 2 June 1885, F.O. 17/981.
19. O'Connor to Granville, Tel. No. 48, 9 June 1885, F.O. 17/987; O'Connor to Granville, No. 276, conf., 10 June 1885, F.O. 17/981.
20. Memo. in F.O. 17/987; Granville to O'Connor, No. 134, 11 June 1885, F.O. 17/975; O'Connor to Granville, No. 284, Conf., 12 June 1885, F.O. 17/987; Granville to O'Connor, Tel. No. 34, 13 June 1885, F.O. 17/975.

incidents in foreign policy. The British had retreated from the Sudan and left Penjdeh to the Russians. In the Far East, there was suspicion among the Powers about the seizure of Port Hamilton. A vote on the budget bill brought defeat of the Liberal government in June, and Queen Victoria sent for Salisbury to form a new Cabinet. When Salisbury took office as both Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary on 24 June 1885, he substituted a cautious policy for that of his predecessor. However, the Port Hamilton question remained unresolved for some time. The British government had given no written reply to the Korean protest of May. Salisbury's policy was to prove to be much the same as that of Granville.

In mid July, the British Consul-General in Seoul, Aston, succeeded in inducing the president of the Korean Foreign Office, Yoon-Sik Kim, to withdraw the appeal to the treaty Powers. Aston argued that the British seizure of Port Hamilton was due to Russia's relations with Korea and not to Britain's trouble with Russia. Further, if Korea should continue to follow the advice of friends of Russia and to appeal to foreign Powers, it would make the settlement about Port Hamilton more difficult. Kim retorted that the British government had not treated Korea fairly. The Korean government had tried to settle the matter directly with Britain, but failed. It had no alternative but to request good offices of other Powers, which would result in an international conference. In the end, Kim promised to

abandon an appeal to the Powers until he had received an answer from the British government.²¹

Encouraged by this success, Aston, for the first time, brought up the subject of leasing Port Hamilton. He told Kim that Li Hung-Chang had suggested the idea. The British endeavoured to make it appear as if the offer had been proposed by Li Hung-Chang, that is by the Chinese government in Peking. He thought that this would influence the Korean Foreign Office. O'Connor drew up a draft agreement containing three points: Britain was to pay an annual rent to the Korean government; Britain was not to use the islands against Korea and China; lastly, Britain was not to impair rights of Koreans on the islands.²² Yoon Sik-Kim admitted Korea's financial difficulties but thought that no pecuniary advantages could make up for the political difficulties in which concessions would involve Korea. Knowing that Britain would never commit herself to guaranteeing Korea's integrity, Kim refused the offer to protect his country from multiple external pressure.

21. Aston to Conon, No. 81, 10 July 1885, F.O. 17/996; O'Connor to Salisbury, Tel. No. 54, 16 July 1885, F.O. 17/987.

22. O'Connor to Salisbury, No. 325, Conf. 29 June 1885; Enclosure in No. 328, 30 June 1885; O'Connor to Aston, Nos. 58, 59, 30 June 1885, F.O. 17/982.

Even Li Hung-Chang's direct advice at O'Connor's request brought no change to Korea's refusal.²³

Meanwhile, the negotiations between O'Connor and Li Hung-Chang stretched out to the opening days of 1886, resulting in reiteration of proposals, counter-proposals, and refusals. The Korean government insisted on outright withdrawal. The Chinese attempted to make Britain guarantee Korea's integrity in return for recognition of British occupation. The British insisted on acceptance of their proposals and refused to make any change in them. The resulting deadlock meant that Britain was not paying any rent for Port Hamilton but continued to enjoy its facilities.

Coinciding with the British annexation of Upper Burma in January 1886, the British government questioned whether Port Hamilton was worth hanging on to. Three British admirals had reported that unless the British government would fortify the port at great expense, it was worthless. Vice-Admiral Dowell reported on the unsuitability of Port Hamilton and recommended abandonment in May 1885, and his predecessor, Admiral George Willes, had strongly agreed. When Vice-Admiral Richard V. Hamilton succeeded Dowell in September 1885, the Admiralty gave him special orders to report fully on the matter. By

23. Aston to O'Connor, Nos. 84, 85, 10 July 1885, F.O. 17/996.

this time the crisis in Central Asia reached a preliminary settlement. The new Commander's report concurred with the views of his predecessors. He reported that the occupation of Port Hamilton in time of peace was an unnecessary expense, while in time of war it was a source of weakness to the Royal Navy. Even keeping two or three ships there weakened the cruising power of the British Squadron on the China Station. Forwarding the Commander's confirmatory report, the Admiralty urged the government to come to a decision.²⁴

The British government had no objection to departure. The question was how to make a dignified exit. The British government decided to let China prevent Russia from occupying Port Hamilton. Before the Conservative government could take action, the Gladstone interlude (February-July 1886) began with Lord Rosebery as Foreign Secretary. Rosebery drew up a memorandum on 14 April 1886, which declared that Britain would evacuate Port Hamilton on condition that the Chinese government would either assume responsibility for the security of Port Hamilton, or get Russia and the other Powers to enter into an international agreement concerning Korea's integrity, to which Britain would be a party.²⁵ China

24. Secretary of the Admiralty to P. Currie, 20 Jan. 1886, The British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 78, pp. 157-8.

25. P. Currie to H. MacArtney, 14 April 1886, The British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 78, pp. 160-161.

refused to give such a guarantee alone, or to enter into an international agreement.

The British government appointed Sir John Walsham as British Minister to China and Korea. Without knowing what was passing between the governments of China and Britain, Korea kept sending notes of protest to the British Minister. Since the Chinese government had not carried out the British proposal, Walsham came out with a suggestion - to open both Port Hamilton and Port Lazareff as treaty ports. In London, Salisbury returned to power with Lord Iddesleigh as Foreign Secretary, who approved Walsham's suggestion.²⁶ But for both Korea and China, to open additional ports was out of the question. Port Lazareff was close to another treaty port, Wonsan, and Port Hamilton was a desolate island. There was no reason for opening either port, and they denounced the proposal.

Rumour of a Russian seizure of Port Lazareff in early August 1886, however, helped promote the British position, and hasten Li Hung-Chang to negotiate with the Russians. Li Hung-Chang believed that because the Powers threatening Korea were Japan and Russia, the

26. Walsham to Rosebery, 31 July 1886; Iddesleigh to Walsham, 12 Aug, 1886; Ibid., Vol. 78, p. 161.

latter's guarantee would suffice, and there was no need of international agreement which would reduce China's superior position in Korea. The only way favourable to China was to draw from Russia a formal pledge of non-aggression in Korea. To secure such a pledge would enable China to keep Japan in check jointly with Russia. Li's negotiation with the Russian Charge, Ladygensky, at Tientsin ended in October 1886 with a verbal promise that Russia would not occupy Korean territory under any circumstances.

British withdrawal was anti-climactic, compared to the occupation twenty two months earlier. The Chinese government in early November 1886 notified Walsham of the Russian promise. Walsham informed the Korean government that the British decision to end the occupation of Port Hamilton was conformable to its original intent. The British Acting Consul, T. Watters, handed Walsham's dispatch to the Korean Foreign Office on 21 January 1887. Evacuation took place on 27 February 1887. The Korean government, in spite of its understandable anger, meekly expressed recognition of Britain's good faith and its desire to maintain friendly relations between the two countries.²⁷

27. The British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 78, pp. 162-169.

There was wide divergence of opinion among the British on the wisdom of abandoning Port Hamilton. On the whole, the balance of public sentiment was that Port Hamilton was not worth the price of Chinese enmity, which might result in a restriction of British trade in China and opposition to British plans in Burma.²⁸

The British seizure of Port Hamilton had reversed Russia's naval policy in the Far East. The incident showed how easily the British could block the Russian squadron in the Sea of Japan. The Russian government decided in 1887 to launch a new policy for its Far Eastern possessions: to depend on land forces in place of naval strength. This led to the building of the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1891-1903. Vladivostock, which the Russians had fortified at a great expense a decade earlier, declined in importance as a naval base.²⁹

The result of the Port Hamilton Incident was to throw Korea more under the control of China. The way

28. Fortnightly Review, Vol. 47 (March-June 1887), pp. 352, 810.

29. A. Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904, University of California, 1958, pp. 33-34.

Britain had proceeded with the arrangements for both occupation and withdrawal gave great satisfaction to the Chinese government and strengthened Anglo-Chinese friendship. Although Port Hamilton belonged to Korea, throughout the entire episode, Britain had treated Korea and her government as being of secondary importance.

Thus ended a short period of the first and arguably the only active relationship between Britain and Korea.

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PART THREE. THE EVOLUTION OF BRITISH POLICY

CHAPTER 5. THE QUIESCENT PHASE, 1885-94

Apart from Port Hamilton, British concern during the summer of 1885 was with the political vacuum in Korea which the withdrawal of Chinese and Japanese troops would create. The Li-Ito Convention of April 1885 had stipulated such a withdrawal in order to prevent a clash between the two forces in Korea. The Korean government had no trained forces to replace the outgoing foreign troops. O'Connor consulted Consul-General Aston about maintaining order in Seoul by a Korean force, but Aston replied that although the Korean soldiers were sufficient in number, their reliability in an emergency was questionable. Aston saw no way of assuring peace and safety except by retaining some Chinese and Japanese troops.¹

O'Connor thought it essential that China should maintain order and prevent disturbances in Korea. Moreover, Japan's modified policy following the Li-Ito

1. O'Connor to Granville, No. 252, Conf., 27 May 1885, F.O. 17/981; Aston to O'Connor, No. 66, 16 June 1885; and No. 82, 10 July 1885, F. O. 17/983.

agreement led O'Connor to conclude that Japan was willing to accept Chinese dominance in Korea. The Japanese government had expressed no objection towards the various measures taken by China since the agreement, and there was a strong indication that Japan had altered its policy towards Korea.² O'Connor assumed that the duty of keeping order in Korea would fall on the Chinese, who no doubt would welcome it. He pressed the Chinese government to retain part of its troops in Korea. But the Chinese had no intention of violating the agreement with Japan, and the withdrawal of both foreign troops ended by the end of June 1885.³

After withdrawal of its forces from Korea, China adopted a new policy which coincided with British interests. Britain encouraged and gave full support to

of Li Hung-Chang and his cabinet under General

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2. O'Connor to Salisbury, No. 302, 17 June; No. 332, 2 July; No. 340, 6 July 1885, F.O. 17/982; American Charge in Seoul, Foulk, concluded that 'Japan had been apparently little more than a passive observer, yielding much to the Chinese claim of suzerainty'. Foulk to Bayard, No. 214, 16 Aug. 1885, G.M. McCune, Korean-American Relations: Documents Pertaining to the Far-Eastern Diplomacy of the U.S., Univ. of California Press, 1951, Vol. I (1883-86), p. 126. Hereafter referred to as Korean-American Relations: Documents.
 3. Aston to O'Connor, 22 June and 10 July 1885; O'Connor to Salisbury, No. 358, 18 July 1885, F.O. 17/983.

China's new policy towards Korea, and made known that their interests lay in upholding Chinese suzerainty over Korea. The Li-Ito Convention forbade the Chinese and the Japanese to use troops to gain their ends, but various surreptitious ways were open. In September 1885, China returned the Taewongun to Korea, despite strong objections from the ruling Queen Min's faction. During the same month the Chinese constructed the first telegraph line that linked Inchon, Seoul, Tientsin and Peking and appointed a Chinese official to superintend its operation. China's control of the telegraph monopoly increased Korea's dependence on China.⁴

One of the most important steps was the appointment of Yuan Shih-Kai as Chinese Commissioner of Trade. Yuan, the future President of the Chinese Republic, was a young protege of Li Hung-Chang and had served under General Wu in Korea in 1882. Returning to Korea in November 1885 as 'the Commissioner stationed in Korea to Superintend Diplomatic and Commercial Affairs', he was virtually a

4. O'Conor to Salisbury, Corea, No. 19, 29 Sept. 1885, F.O. 17/984.

Chinese Viceroy in Korea for the next nine years until 1894. He showed no qualms in asserting Chinese authority in the peninsular kingdom even by means of extreme measures. As an ambitious young man (26 years old in 1885) he was anxious to succeed. Yuan's appointment coincided with the British Consul-General, Aston's resignation. His successor was E. Colborne Baber who had been in consular service in China since 1866. Baber took office in October 1885 as provisional acting Consul-General, and during the next eleven months he was to give full support to Yuan's programme.⁵ The exact English title of Yuan's office in the Korean service was never determined. Some called him 'Resident Commissioner', and some 'The Chinese Resident'. Whatever his title, Yuan was to bring Korea back under Chinese control and was to combat all efforts of the Korean King to assert his independence.

Chafing under the increasingly rigid control of China, the Korean Court unsuccessfully sought Russian influence as a check to China in 1885-6. The central figure in the ill-fated appeal for Russian protection was the German adviser to the Korean government, Von Moellendorff. Although a German, he had been sent to Korea

5. Baber to O'Conor, No. 113, 23 Oct. 1885, F.O. 17/985.

in 1883 by the Chinese to act as a foreign adviser to the Korean government. He became one of the Vice-Presidents of the newly created Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Korea and also Inspector-General of Korean Customs. Before long he came to identify himself more with Korea than with China, and introduced some positive reforms and improvements in transportation, industry and the army. After the Emeute of 1884, Von Moellendorff began to contemplate the advisability of military reforms under foreign tutelage, and persuaded the King to appeal to the Russians for assistance and military instructors for the Korean army. The King was more than willing to approve Von Moellendorff's scheme, but, faced with the strenuous opposition of the Queen Min's faction and in fear of a forceful intervention by foreign forces, had to reverse his stand and disapprove the project. As O'Connor urged Li Hung-Chang to remove Von Moellendorff, so China demanded his dismissal. In September 1885, Von Moellendorf was finally dismissed, and Henry F. Merrill, an American, replaced him. Although an American, Merrill maintained the most cordial relations with Consul Baber and Commissioner Yuan. Their collective position was one of virtually

ignoring the Korean government and supporting Chinese policy.⁶

The Chinese assertion of influence became so irksome that even the British thought it unwise and ineffective. O'Connor advised Li Hung-Chang to be more careful not to injure the susceptibilities of the Korean King and provoke needless opposition.⁷

The King of Korea, too weak to counter Chinese interference, sought help from the Western treaty Powers. Obviously Britain could not be depended upon, owing to the Port Hamilton Incident as well as her support of the Chinese. Even so, when Baber took office as acting Consul-General in October 1885, the King expressed a desire to see the British representative invested with high diplomatic rank. On receipt

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6. O'Connor to Salisbury, No. 356, 17 July; No. 360, 22 July; No. 383, 25 Aug. 1885, F.O. 17/983; O'Connor to Salisbury, No. 491, 15 Dec. 1885, F.O. 17/986; Foulk to Bayard, No. 272, 18 Jan; No. 297, 23 Apr. 1886, G.M. McCune, Korean-American Relations: Documents, pp. 87, 147-9; F.H. Moersel, 'The Emeute of 1884', Korean Repository, Vol. IV (1897), pp. 135-40; Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul (History of Korea), pp. 607-8.
7. O'Connor to Salisbury, Corea, No. 25, Conf., 8 Nov. 1885, F.O. 17/985.

of Baber's dispatch, O'Connor advised the British government not to comply with the Korean King's wish. Even the United States had reduced the rank of its Seoul legation from that of full-fledged Minister Plenipotentiary to Minister Resident, without reducing the salary.⁸

Britain was constantly trying to discover Russia's policy in Korea. Its representatives were reporting every move the Russians made in Korea, especially since the arrival of the newly appointed Russian Charge d'Affaires, Carl Waeber, in October 1885. Waeber was mild and conciliatory and created a favourable impression in Korean circles.⁹ No sooner had he arrived than the British Consul at Tientsin, Brennan, informed O'Connor of the news he had received from Li Hung-Chang that Waeber had offered the Korean King Russian protection by dispatching a squadron to Chemulpo. However, having received no report to confirm such a Russian proposal, O'Connor refrained from action.¹⁰

8. Ibid.

9. O'Connor to Salisbury, Korea, No. 23, 23 Oct. 1885, F.O. 17/985.

10. O'Connor to Salisbury, No. 463, Conf. 21 Nov. 1885, F.O. 17/986.

11. Foulk to Bayard, No. 272, Conf. 13 Jan. and No. 6, Conf. 24 Sept. 1886; Parker to Bayard, No. 24, Conf. 4 Aug. 1886, G.M. McCune, Korean-American Relations: Documents, pp. 87-92.

The British and the Chinese were on the alert when Waeber tried, beginning in 1886, to secure trading rights on the Korean frontier along the Tumen River, which the Russians had long coveted. The Russians proposed to establish a free zone of about 35 miles on each side of the Korean border along the Tumen River. This would have advanced the Russian frontier into the peninsula and would have enabled the Russians to push south into Korean territory. Fear flared again in the minds of the British that the design of Russia was ice-free Port Lazareff. One could easily see that in case of war between Russia and China, Russia, operating from a base in Korea, could attack Peking. China could not allow Russia such an advantage, while Britain would have to interfere to protect her enormous China trade. Any Russian move in Korea stimulated an alliance of interests between China and Britain. Representatives of the two Powers were pressing the Korean government to frame counter-proposals to the Russians.¹¹

At this time, a visit of a Russian warship to Port Lazareff started a rumour that the Russians had seized the port. As the British were nervous because of Port Hamilton, they denounced the Russians for seizing

11. Foulk to Bayard, No. 272, Conf. 18 Jan. and No. 6, Conf. 24 Sept. 1886; Parker to Bayard, No. 24, Conf. 4 Aug. 1886, G.M. McCune, Korean-American Relations: Documents, pp. 87-92.

Port Lazareff, part of the Korean Kingdom. In the House of Commons a debate took place: if Russia occupied the Korean port, what steps would the British government take to protect British interests in the China Sea? The Under-Secretary of State, Sir James Fergusson, replied that the Foreign Secretary, Giers, had denied the report's validity, and the British government had received no confirmation. All Britain could do was to urge China to protest.¹²

In the meantime, Yuan Shih-Kai in Seoul took active steps. Urging a Chinese expedition to ward off the Russians from Korea, Yuan denounced the Korean King and threatened to call a Chinese army into the country. Yuan suggested to Li Hung-Chang that China should kidnap and dethrone the King. This would have largely repeated the experience of the Taewongun in 1882. Yuan secured support from the Chinese government, and Li Hung-Chang sent a squadron to the east coast of Korea.¹³

12. The Annual Register: 1886, p. 445; Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 308 (1886), p. 166.

13. Foulk to Bayard, No. 3, 8 Sept. 1886, G.M. McCune, Korean-American Relations: Documents, pp. 149-154; Fred H. Harrington, God, Mammon and the Japanese: Dr. H.N. Allen and Korean-American Relations, 1884-1905, 1944 (2nd Printing 1961), New York, pp. 215-6.

When the crisis reached its height it suddenly died away. Li Hung-Chang had made an inquiry through the Chinese Minister at St. Petersburg and by direct communication with the Korean King about the authenticity of the alleged secret agreement between Korea and Russia establishing a Russian protectorate over Korea. Both the Russian Foreign Office and the King of Korea denied knowledge of it. The Russian Charge, Waeber, denied that he had ever received such a document. Russia's denial of its bid for protection over Korea was enough for Li Hung-Chang, who knew that a further step might bring in the Japanese on whom he had to keep his eyes. Further, the visit of the Chinese fleet to Vladivostock proved that the Russians had no immediate intention of occupying Port Lazareff. Yuan's threat slid by, without a Chinese attack on Korea or the dethronement of the Korean King.¹⁴

Thus, so called the 'Russian threat' had once again led to British-Chinese intervention in Korean affairs. Great Britain, through its representatives in Peking, had been urging the Chinese government to interfere in Korean affairs. In Seoul, the British representatives were outspoken that Korea was a vassal state and

14. Ibid., pp. 217-8; The Annual Register: 1886, p. 445.

altogether incapable of self-government. The incident of 1886 did give an excuse to the Chinese for her aggressive policy towards Korea. Britain continued to stimulate Chinese suspicions of Russian policy in Korea.¹⁵

This event caused further damage to the traditional tie between Korea and China, in that Korea's submission to China no longer stemmed from willingness to recognize Chinese superiority, in accordance with their traditional relationship. Korea, by 1890, had been forced to submit, thus subverting the Confucian relations between the two nations that had hinged upon the personal allegiance of the lesser ruler to the Chinese throne. In the face of China's superior power, Korea could not openly defy China. But Korea's will to defy was subtly manifested in various moves to oust Yuan who personified Chinese control in the Korean capital. In 1888 and again in the following year, the Korean government requested Yuan's recall but Li Hung-Chang rejected these pleas. Li argued that Yuan's unpopularity in Korea was in itself a proof of his efficiency and thoroughness in carrying out China's policy, something which the Korean King

15. Foulk to Bayard, No. 13, Conf., 14 Oct. 1886, G.M. McCune, Korean-American Relations: Documents, p. 155; Dinsmore to Bayard, No. 20, 27 May 1887, Spencer J. Palmer, ed., Korean-American Relations: Documents, Vol. II (1887-1895), p. 11.

and some foreign representatives did not view with favour.¹⁶

Another matter in which Britain was in line with China was over Korean diplomatic representation in Western capitals. Korea's treaties stipulated reciprocal sending and receiving of diplomatic and consular officers. There was no question that the Korean government, in establishing legations abroad, was acting within its rights under the treaties it had concluded with foreign Powers, with China's approval. However, when the Korean Court decided in 1887 to establish legations in the Western countries, China objected, because maintenance of China's suzerainty over Korea required vigilant superintendence of Korea's dealings with other foreign Powers. When the Korean King decided to establish legations abroad, and appointed two Ministers Plenipotentiary in August 1887, one to the United States and the other to Europe, (Britain, Russia,

16. M.F. Nelson, Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia, pp. 176-77; Li Hung-Chang, Li Wen-chung-kung Chuan-chi (The Collected Writings of Li Hung-Chang), Wu Ju-Lun ed., Nanking, 1908, Memorials, Ch. 67, pp. 4a-5a; Ch. 74, pp. 46a-47a.

Germany, France and Italy), Yuan warned the Korean King directly that any important question of foreign affairs must first be approved by Li Hung-Chang. Yuan set out to wreck the whole project of the King and his advisers and demanded the cancellation of the plan. When the King dispatched Chong-Yang Park to the United States as Minister Plenipotentiary on 23 September 1887, Yuan prevented the envoy from departing. As the British Consul, T. Watters, told the Chinese that the Korean King's move was a slap at Chinese suzerainty, and if China remained supine then Korea would become another Annam, Li Hung-Chang thoughtfully secured an imperial order to demand that the King of Korea should obtain China's consent before such action. The Korean King, determined to send the missions at any price, belatedly petitioned the Chinese government for permission to send the Park mission and a comparable mission to Europe, and took the procedure China requested.¹⁷

The Minister designated to Europe (Britain and the other four European Powers) never proceeded on his

17. Dinsmore to Bayard, No. 53, 30 Sept. 1887; Yuan to the Korean Government, 23 Sept. 1887; Yuan to Dinsmore, 30 Sept. 1887, S.J. Palmer, Korean-American Relations: Documents, Vol. II, pp. 101-106.

18. Dinsmore to Bayard, No. 73, Conf., 17 Nov. 1887; Enclosure to Bayard, No. 521, 9 Dec. 1887, ibid., pp. 108, 110-111.

Even then the Chinese ruled that the rank of Korean envoys should never be higher than Ministers Resident, because even China did not have a Plenipotentiary in any capital. There were three additional rules laid down by Li Hung-Chang which the Korean representatives were to observe in relations with Chinese colleagues in Western capitals: (a) the Korean Minister must report his arrival at his post first to the Chinese legation, and introduce themselves to the foreign office in question only through the Chinese Minister; (b) at any official reception Koreans, were to take a seat below the Chinese; (c) Koreans must consult in advance with the Chinese representatives on any important matter. The King agreed, but secured permission to send Ministers Plenipotentiary as he had planned, on the understanding that he would replace them by Charges d'Affaires as soon as they had carried out the formalities.¹⁸

The Minister designated to Europe (Britain and the other four European Powers) never proceeded on his mission due to Britain's interference. Li Hung-Chang asked the Chinese Minister in London to inquire whether

18. Dinsmore to Bayard, No. 73, Conf., 17 Nov. 1887; Enclosure in Denby to Bayard, No. 521, 9 Dec. 1887, Ibid., pp. 108, 110-112.

19. Ibid., pp. 108, 110-112. Nov. 1887, P.O. 187/1049. Journal of the Asiatic Society in Eastern Asia, p. 438.

the rules laid down by China were acceptable. The British government not only complied with them but volunteered the information that if the Chinese did not favour the Korean mission, Britain would refuse to receive the Korean envoy. The mission headed by the Minister Plenipotentiary, Shin-Hee Cho, left Korea on 22 November 1887, nine days after departure of the mission to the United States, but when the mission reached Hong Kong via Shanghai, the British saw to it that it did not get farther. Shin-Hee Cho returned home on a pretext of poor health, and his replacement, Jae-Soon Park, never left for his post.¹⁹ Britain's prime object in the step might have been to please China. It is also probable that the British were not disposed to see the mission's headquarters established at St. Petersburg rather than London. While Korea retained diplomatic representatives in Washington, British activities deprived the Koreans of an opportunity to work in the same way in the European capitals.

Although China was unable to establish complete control over Korea, the attitude and policies of the British government helped both to solidify the Chinese position in

19. Watters to Salisbury, No. 6, 24 Nov. 1887, F.O. 17/1049; T. Dennett, Americans in Eastern Asia, p. 484.

Korea and to promote British-Chinese friendship. The British constantly had in mind China's potential usefulness in the event of Anglo-Russian war. Most British, if not all of them, thought war with Russia likely, and that only co-operation with China could safeguard British interests in Asia. Britain also desired to conciliate China because it wanted the Chinese government not to interfere in British pacification and control of Burma. An Anglo-Chinese convention of 24 July 1886, recognized Britain's annexation of Upper Burma, and, in return, a continuation of the Burmese decennial tribute missions to China - these to save Chinese prestige. These considerations also prompted the British to support Chinese policy in Korea. But, most of all, the British believed that to resist Russian expansion in the Far East required stable relations between China and Korea. To let Korea assert independence was dangerous. The British did not see any contradiction in their treaty with Korea, which assumed equal status. To treat Korea as a sovereign state in commercial matters was to extract as much trading benefit as possible, but British commercial interests in Korea in the 1880's remained negligible.

Foreign trade in Korea was stagnant. Although the greater proportion of Korean imports consisted of British

cotton manufactures, nearly ninety per cent of the shipping, import and export business was in Japanese hands. As there had been no marked change in the import trade since 1884, a few British merchants, who had prospected the country, withdrew after incurring losses. They avoided entering the country and allowed the Japanese to carry and control the trade as before. Chinese merchants increased in number and occupied second place.²⁰

There were several notable causes for the stagnation in Korean trade. One of the principal drawbacks was the lack of a proper medium of exchange. The only currency in Korea was copper coins. More important, there was an absence of a sufficient quantity of Korean products available for export to balance the cost of imported goods. The Europeans could not compete with the Japanese and the Chinese, and, further, did not care to engage in small business. The few Europeans who established themselves in Korea complained of difficulties in obtaining payment in silver or in kind for the commodities they imported. The government never regarded foreign commerce as an important affair of state. The people lacked initiative. Partly due to various official restrictions

20. E.C. Baber's report on trade, 1886, F.O. 17/1027.

on economic activities and partly to the long seclusion and self-supporting economy, they lacked incentive and were slow to become aware of the advantages of foreign trade. They worked only for necessities of the day. Without immediate improvement in currency, a means of transport, as well as increase in purchasing power of the Koreans, the prospect for foreign trade in Korea offered little hope.²¹

The experience of China in respect of modernization repeated itself in Korea. The government of Korea was incapable of providing the political, institutional foundations for economic development. The scholar-bureaucrats blindly accepted Confucian philosophy and shunned all such practical activities as industry and commerce. Continuous political unrest, the monopoly system, sumptuary laws, and insecurity of property prevented Korean farmers and merchants from engaging in business.

In the latter half of the 1880's, the Korean economy was experiencing the usual dislocation attendant on throwing open an economically backward area to the concession-seekers and mercantile interests of superior

21. Ibid., F.O. 17/1027; Report of a journey by W.R. Carles, April 1885, F.O. 17/962.

22. Woo-tsun Han, The History of Korea, pp. 398-402, Horace N. Allen, Korea: Past and Present, Seoul, Methodist Publishing House, 1904, p. 102.

financial and technological powers. The opening of Seoul to foreign merchants had been one of the most unpalatable consequences of Korea's decision to join the modern family of nations. Since the rights of the other foreign nations were based on the trade rights first obtained by the Chinese, it was essential to negotiate first with China for the withdrawal of foreign merchants. But China flatly refused and Seoul stayed open, and the native merchants slowly lost ground in competition with the Chinese and Japanese.

The plight of the Seoul merchants was only one of the serious economic difficulties that confronted Korea. Public finances faced ever greater deficits. In addition to the increasingly unfavourable balance of trade in the 1880's, Korea incurred heavy foreign financial obligations. The various modernization projects undertaken during the 1880's added considerably to the already over-burdened treasury. The imposition of heavy taxes upon the populace, made more intolerable by official corruption, caused a few uprisings in the years between 1885 and 1893, but the taxes were inadequate for the sudden and large increases in government expenditures. The only recourse was foreign loans.²²

22. Woo-Keun Han, The History of Korea, pp. 398-402; Horace N. Allen, Korea: Facts and Fancy, Seoul, Methodist Publishing House, 1904, p. 170.

The King and his close advisers solicited foreign loans on their own without going through regular governmental channels. As the years went by, the interest charges alone required more foreign loans. Thus, after a period of irresponsible borrowings from foreign Powers, the sum of Korea's indebtedness in the middle of 1889 was approximately 1.3 to 1.5 million Yen, the creditors being the Germans, Americans, Japanese and Chinese.²³

Meanwhile, Japanese commerce in Korea suffered a relative decline mainly due to the competition of the Chinese merchants under the powerful protection of Yuan Shih-Kai and the strong influence of the Chinese government in this period. China's trade with Korea, particularly Chinese exports to Korea, showed a significant gain. From 1885 to 1892 China's share in Korea's import trade increased from 19 per cent to 45 per cent, while that of Japan declined from 81 per cent to 55 per cent. Since the Emeute of 1884 Japan's political influence in Korea had waned, and even in the economic realm Japan was gradually losing ground.²⁴

23. Kondo (Charge in Seoul) to Okuma (Foreign Minister), 9 June 1889, NGB. Vol. 22, No.187. 39-440.

24. H. Conroy, The Japanese seizure of Korea: 1868-1910, p. 460.

These years, therefore, witnessed a growth in Sino-Japanese conflict of interest. In the short run, British friendship for the Chinese government, combined with the relative weakness of Japan, resulted in continued peace. But the growth of Japanese strength and military preparedness, combined with Chinese weaknesses and internal Korean instability, created a new situation - a situation which was to culminate in the outbreak of Sino-Japanese war. (Learnings). During the latter part of the 1800's, Korea, on the surface, presented a picture of a quiescent society in spite of occasional diplomatic crises. The Tonghak uprising, however, revealed the restlessness of the poor and the discontent, who resented the great majority of the population. It was a reaction by those who viewed the decadent luxury and corruption of the royal family and high officials with scorn and resentment. Public offices, even at the national and local levels, could be procured by the well-to-do who reaped the dividend for their investment by ruthlessly exploiting those below them either in the political hierarchy or in social status. Ultimately the heavy burden of supporting the privileged classes rested on the peasantry. The Tonghak Rebellion of 1894 was essentially a political protest against the evils of Korean society.

CHAPTER 6. THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR, 1894-5

The dramatic reversal in Korea's relations with her two neighbours in 1894-5 developed in the wake of large-scale popular uprisings in the southern provinces of Korea led by a group of religionists known as the Tonghak Tang (The Society of Eastern Learnings). During the first few years of the 1890's, Korea, on the surface, presented a picture of a quiescent society in spite of occasional diplomatic crises. The Tonghak uprising, however, embodied the restiveness of the poor and the persecuted, who comprised the great majority of the population. It was a reaction by those who viewed the decadent luxury and corruption of the royal family and high officials with scorn and resentment. Public offices, both at the national and local levels, could be procured by the well-to-do who reaped the dividend for their investment by ruthlessly exploiting those below them either in the political hierarchy or in social status. Ultimately the heavy burden of supporting the privileged classes rested on the peasantry. The Tonghak Rebellion of 1894 was essentially a political protest against the evils of Korean society.

1. Charles Allen Clark, *Religions of Old Korea*, New York, Fleming & Howell Co., 1932, pp. 145, 158-176; Benjamin B. Swann, 'Reform, Rebellion, and the Heavenly Kingdoms: the Association for Asian Studies, Monographs and Papers', Tucson, Univ. of Arizona Press, 1954, Vol. IV, Ch. 2.
2. B.B. Swann, *Ibid.*, Ch. 1.

The early Tonghak movement had started in 1860 as a new religion promising salvation on earth. It opposed the Western Learnings and Catholicism. The new doctrine combined features from Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and in time it developed its own scriptures and rituals. The new faith became popular among the peasants in the populous southern provinces despite official persecution of this 'wicked learning'. In 1866, its founder, Jae-Woo Choe, and some of his chief supporters, were executed, but his followers carried on proselytizing work among the people.¹

As the Tonghak movement grew so did the intensity of the official persecution. In 1892 and 1893, the Tonghak believers held mass rallies to petition the government for an end to suppression and for clearance of the name of Choe. At this stage, the movement was conducting widespread political agitation, demanding the expulsion of foreigners and corrupt officials.²

In February 1894, a militant Tonghak leader, Bong-Joon Chon, staged an uprising in the rural town of Kobu. Within two months, the rebellion spread throughout

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1. Charles Allen Clark, Religions of Old Korea, New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1932, pp. 145, 158-176; Benjamin B. Weems, 'Reform, Rebellion, and the Heavenly Way' in the Association for Asian Studies, Monographs and Papers, Tucson, Univ. of Arizona Press, 1964, No. XV, Ch. 2.
 2. B.B. Weems, Ibid., Ch. 3.

the province and involved several thousand armed peasants. The rebels seized the government granaries and returned the tax grains to the peasants from whom they had been collected. The provincial troops melted away before the rebel forces and the reinforcements rushed from Seoul in May were not in time to save the provincial capital. Several social and political reforms, which were demanded by the rebels, were finally conceded by the government. These included official toleration of the Tonghak religion, punishment of the pro-Japanese Koreans, improvement of the treatment of the lowest social groups, abolition of slavery, land redistribution, tax reform, and punishment of corrupt officials and the arrogant Yangban class. These were the long-standing popular grievances which were at the root of the rebellion.³

The above concessions represented a truce which lasted a little over four months. The strength of the rebels grew in these months and they came to exercise quasi-governmental authority in certain parts of the southern province. The Korean government was unable to cope with the situation and the rebels advanced northwards and were soon threatening

3. Chi-Yong Oh, *Tonghaksa (The History of the Tonghak)*, Seoul, 1940, pp. 126-7; B.B. Weems, *op.cit.*, Ch. 3.

4. W.C. Miller, *Narrative of events in Korea*, London, 1866, p. 100.
 5. *Salso Buncho (Japanese Diplomatic Documents)*, vol. 37, Part II, No. 1041, Reference to an NDB
 6. E.J. Palmer, *Korean-American Relations Documents*, Vol. II, p. 340.

the capital, Seoul.

The irony of the Tonghak movement, which had a distinct anti-foreign tendency, was that it gave rise to foreign armed interventions, which eventually led to the Sino-Japanese War. On 1 June 1894, shortly before the truce in the rebellion, the Korean government unofficially requested Chinese assistance through Yuan Shih-Kai, the Chinese Resident in Korea. A formal written request was delivered to Yuan two days later. The Chinese government promptly complied, dispatching 1,500 soldiers and two warships.⁴ At the same time, Li Hung-Chang notified the Japanese government, in accordance with the Tientsin Treaty.⁵

In the meantime, in Japan, dissatisfaction with the policy of the government in dealing with Korea had been voiced for some time by various individuals and groups. Some opposition party members in the Japanese Diet (Parliament) took delight in embarrassing the government by advocating a tough line in foreign policy. The most

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4. W.G. Hiller, Narrative of events in Korea, enclosed in O'Connor to Kimberley, No. 389, 24 Oct. 1894, F.O. 17/1198.
 5. Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nihon Gaiko Bunsho (Japanese Diplomatic Documents), Vol.27, Part II, No. 504; Referred to as NGB. S.J. Palmer, Korean-American Relations: Documents, Vol.II, p.340.

decisive influence for an aggressive policy by Tokyo in the summer of 1894 came from the Japanese army general staff which was controlled by General Kawakami Soroku, an ardent advocate of Continental expansion. The army had maintained a close watch on the Korean situation for some time through a separate intelligence system of its own. They thought that the rebellion could provide a welcome opportunity to send Japanese soldiers to Korea to carry out reforms and establish Japanese predominance. The army general staff made a formal proposal to the Cabinet for a decision to send an army unit. The army proposal, the impending movement of Chinese troops into Korea, a parliamentary crisis within Japan, and the popular demand for strong action in Korea converged to create an atmosphere of extraordinary tension. The outcome was a decision by the Japanese Cabinet, on 2 June 1894, to send a mixed brigade. Foreign Minister, Mutsu Munemitsu, was the most vocal advocate of a militant policy among the civilian leaders of the Japanese government.⁶

6. Tabohashi Kiyoshi, Kindai Nissen Kankei no Kenkyu (A Study of the Japanese-Korean Relations in Recent Times), Keijo, 1940, Vol. II, pp. 288-352; Tatsuji Takeuchi, War and Diplomacy in the Japanese Empire, New York, Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1935, pp. 110-111; Mutsu Munemitsu, Kenkenroku (Memoirs), Tokyo, 1933, p. 16.

7. Paget to Kimberley, Tel. 14, 7 June 1894, P.O. 467440.

Japanese reform of Korea's financial, administrative, and military systems. The Japanese refused to withdraw their troops until arrangements had been made for the introduction of reforms in the Korean government which would prevent disturbances in the future. They also refused to recognize Chinese suzerainty over Korea.⁸ Japan sent an additional infantry regiment to Korea. Japan had resolved to risk a war with China to regain her position in Korea.⁹

The Chinese government would admit no questioning of their suzerain rights in Korea. Further, they were strongly opposed to the question of reform being raised on the grounds that it constituted an interference in Korea's domestic affairs. In addition, China insisted on the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea before any other matters were discussed. On 22 June,

8. O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 27 and 28, 24 and 25 June 1894, F.O. 17/1204; Paget to Kimberley, Tel. 19, 25 June 1894, F.O. 46/440.

9. Tabohashi Kiyoshi, *op.cit.*, pp. 288-352; Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, pp. 33-37; NGB, vol. 27, Part II, Nos. 551, 577-8.

11. NGB, Vol. 27, Part I, Nos. 370-371.

the Chinese government totally rejected the proposals, just as the Japanese had anticipated.¹⁰ The Japanese Cabinet meeting of 22 June finally decided on a policy to reform the Korean governmental system singlehandedly.¹¹

Reform was the best weapon Japan had over China. It is generally agreed that under Chinese influence there was almost no hope for modernizing and reforming Korea and it was Japan that could be counted upon to support a reform movement. Japan, with her ultimate aim of the domination of the peninsula, took advantage of the existing condition and proceeded to act directly and aggressively in the area of reform. In doing so, she was paving the road for her conquest of Korea.

On 28 June, the Japanese Foreign Minister, Mutsu, instructed Otori, the Japanese Minister in Seoul, to advance a series of reforms that were to be imposed on Korea. On 3 July, Otori, supported by 4,000 Japanese troops in the vicinity of the capital, presented to the

10. NGB, Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 576; O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 27 and 28, 24 and 25 June 1894, F.O. 17/1204.
11. NGB, Vol. 27, Pt. I, Nos. 370-371.
13. Norinosuke Kajima, *The Diplomacy of Japan, 1894-1922*, Kajima Institute of International Peace, Tokyo, 1976, Vol. I, p. 69.

reluctant and dismayed government of Korea five articles of reform measures in political, financial, legal, military, and educational fields. The real objective was to secure concessions in communication, railway and mining. It was Japan's tactic to find an excuse to force reforms, and Korea, of course, refused such demands.¹² Otori notified the Korean government of Japan's intention to carry out reforms single-handedly in the interests of Japan, since Korea had rejected the Japanese proposals.

19 July 1894 was a day of great change in Korea. On this day Otori received definite permission from the Tokyo government to use force in Korea, while Yuan Shih-Kai left Seoul for Tientsin. It was thought that he was afraid of falling into Japanese hands. In the event, a break occurred in diplomatic relations between Japan and China. This led to an increase in Japanese influence and the fall of Chinese domination in Korea.¹³ Otori announced Japan's intention to construct a telegraph line between Seoul and Pusan and at the same time ordered his men to begin the telegraphic line for military use. He demanded not only the

14. Hillier, Narrative of Events in Korea, enclosure in O'Connor to Kimberley, No. 389, F.O. 17/1103; NGB.

12. Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul (History of Korea), pp. 618-9; NGB, Vol. 27, Pt. I, No. 396 and its Annex 1.

13. Morinosuke Kajima, The Diplomacy of Japan, 1894-1922, Kajima Institute of International Peace, Tokyo, 1976, Vol. I, p. 60.

withdrawal of Chinese troops from Korea but also Korea's abrogation of her commercial and trade agreements with China. Despite the fact that Korea replied within the designated date, on 23 July, Japanese troops occupied the Royal Palace and gained control of Seoul and made the King their prisoner.¹⁴ When the Korean guards clashed with the Japanese troops, the pro-Japanese party sent out a false imperial order for a cease fire. Many pro-Chinese leaders were banished and the Japanese put the Taewongun in power to establish a new government. On 24 July, a Council of State was formed with Hong-Jip Kim as its president and Otori himself as its adviser. This was called the New Government of Kap-O and was composed of pro-Japanese officials. A series of reforms were to be introduced and forced upon Korea one by one.¹⁵

On 29 July 1894, the first reform programme was introduced and adopted by the Council of State. The political and social reform programme was made up of twenty-three articles, which included :¹⁶

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14. Hillier, Narrative of Events in Korea, enclosure in O'Connor to Kimberley, No. 389, F.O.17/1198; NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. I, Nos. 419-421.
 15. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. I, No. 424.
 16. Partial text of English version in H.B. Hulbert, 'Korean Reforms', Korean Repository, II (1895), pp. 1-7; Full text in Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul, pp. 632-3.

Article II. The agreements with China shall be altered and Korean Ministers Plenipotentiary shall be sent to the various Powers.¹⁷

Article III. The distinction between patrician and plebeian rank shall be done away and men shall be selected for office according to ability, without distinction of birth.¹⁸

Article IV. The system of superiority of the scholar class over the military shall be abolished, and a form for mutual salutation shall be established according to rank.

Article V. The law which renders the family and connections of a criminal liable to punishment shall be totally abrogated. The offender only shall be punished.¹⁹

17. This article asserts a complete independence of Korea which had been recognized by Japan and other treaty Powers.

18. In Korea, a person could work his way up if he had talent, but a man of a high class, the Yangban, could not work his way down. By this change any man of the Yangban birth could engage in any occupation without forfeiting his claims to the name gentleman.

19. The law of family responsibility for a person's crime was intended as a strong criminal deterrent.

Article VI. The adoption of a child shall be permitted only when a person does not have any child from his legitimate wife or concubine.²⁰

Article VII. Early marriages are strictly forbidden. A man must be twenty years old and a woman sixteen before they can marry.²¹

Article VIII. Widows of high or low estate shall be permitted to marry as they please.²²

Article IX. The law authorizing the keeping of official or private male or female slaves shall be abolished and it shall be forbidden to buy or sell any person.²³

20. It was an acceptable custom for a man, who did not have a son, to have a concubine in order to have his successor.

21. In many cases, child marriage caused much suffering to the bride, because she was not fully grown up either physically or mentally.

22. In many cases, widows, even when they were young, remained as widows. Many of them regarded their remarriage as immoral.

23. This can be regarded as the Korean emancipation proclamation, but, although slavery had existed in Korea in ancient and medieval ages, it was in a mild form different from that which existed in Western countries. 'At no time were slaves publicly sold in Korea'. C.C. Vinton, 'Slavery and Feudalism in Korea', Korean Repository, II (1895), p. 372. The twelve articles from Article X - XXII deal with organization of government, rank and duty of officials, etc.

Article XXIII. To select men for office by literary examinations is the law of the country, but it is difficult to test ability by literary essays alone. The throne is to be memorialized to alter the method of selection and adopt rules on the subject.

These revolutionary reforms were far in advance of public opinion. To this extent they carried the seeds of their own failure.

In addition to the twenty-three articles of political and social reform, there was an economic reform which included : 1) The adoption of silver and copper for money; 2) A new system of monetary unit; 3) Centralization and uniformity of the financial system; 4) Establishment of banks; 5) Uniformity in measure and weight, etc.²⁴ The reforms of 1894 were enforced on Korea by the Japanese in their own self-interest.

At the beginning of these events, the British government was sympathetic towards China. Britain not

24. Text in Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul, pp. 633-5; Partial English version in Hulbert, 'Korean Reforms', Korean Repository, II (1895), pp. 7-8.

only gave much thought to her historical relations with China, but also considered that China would be the final victor. At the time, China, by agreeing to simultaneous evacuation, seemed to be seeking a peaceful solution of the difficulty. The British government was anxious to avert a conflict, which would naturally disturb her trade. On and after 20 June, the Chinese government requested both the British and the Russians to mediate between herself and Japan. On 24 June, the British Foreign Secretary, Kimberley, told the Japanese Minister in London, Aoki, that the British government was extremely anxious to prevent war, as it might lead to the involvement of third parties.²⁵

In the first stages, the Korean question occupied only a small part of Kimberley's attention. What concerned him most was the extent to which the situation might enable Russian influence to expand at the expense of British

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25. NGB, Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 619. June 1894.
F.O. 46/439; Kimberley to O'Connor, Tel. 44,
30 June 1894, F.O. 17/1202.
27. NGB, Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 619.
28. NGB, Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 633.
29. O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 19, Conf. 3 July
1894, F.O. 17/1204; Kimberley to Paget,
Tel. 18, 3 July 1894, F.O. 46/439;
Kimberley to O'Connor, Tel. 46, 3 July 1894,
F.O. 17/1202.

influence.²⁶ The British concentrated at first upon encouraging the Chinese and the Japanese to come to an agreement between themselves, stressing the dangers inherent in foreign intervention and trying to help them to find terms on which they could agree to start negotiations.²⁷

At the end of June, the Russian Ambassador in Tokyo urged the Japanese to comply with the King of Korea's request that they should withdraw their troops. The Japanese refused.²⁸ O'Conor, the British Minister in Peking, thought the Russians would next invite the diplomatic co-operation of the other Powers to whom the King of Korea had appealed and that the Chinese would then give all the credit for this assistance to the Russians. Kimberley told Paget, the British Charge d'Affaires in Tokyo, to press the Japanese to start negotiations again on terms which the Chinese had been persuaded to accept.²⁹

26. Kimberley to Paget, Tel. 15, 28 June 1894, F.O. 46/439; Kimberley to O'Conor, Tel. 44, 30 June 1894, F.O. 17/1202.

27. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 619.

28. NGB, Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 633.

29. O'Conor to Kimberley, Tel. 34. Conf. 3 July 1894, F.O. 17/1204; Kimberley to Paget, Tel. 18, 3 July 1894, F.O. 46/439; Kimberley to O'Conor, Tel. 46, 3 July 1894, F.O. 17/1202.

At this point, the objection of the Japanese to the preliminary withdrawal of their troops seemed to be an insuperable obstacle to negotiations. To break the deadlock, the British made an important suggestion. Kimberley suggested that the deadlock might be broken by their agreeing, instead, upon a joint occupation of Korea and he asked the Russian government to join the British in recommending this proposal.³⁰ Kimberley suggested to Aoki, the Japanese Minister in London, that 'The Chinese government, complying with my advice, are inclined to accept my plan for a joint occupation of Korea by Japan and China, that is, Japan should occupy the southern part of Korea while China occupies the northern part, with Seoul left unoccupied by either of the two countries'.³¹ However, by the time they received this proposal, the Japanese had had the Korean Royal Palace besieged and had forced Korea to accept the Japanese demands. Consequently it was unnecessary for the Japanese government to enter into such negotiations as proposed by Britain. No reply was sent by Japan to the British proposal.

As war appeared increasingly inevitable, anxiety as to the effect of a war on their trade was the first preoccupation of the British. On 22 July 1894, a week

30. Kimberley to O'Connor, Tel. 55, 14 July 1894, F.O. 17/1202; Kimberley to O'Connor, Tel. 60, 16 July 1894, F.O. 17/1202.

31. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 668.

before the outbreak of the war, Hannen, the British Consul at Shanghai, learnt that the Chinese were preparing to block the river leading to Shanghai in order to protect the city from attack by the Japanese. Shanghai was the great centre of foreign trade with China and, to avoid the complete disruption of that trade, Hannen suggested that the Japanese should be asked to refrain from attacking it in the event of war.³² The British government made the request at once and the next day the Japanese promised that if war broke out 'no warlike operations shall be undertaken against Shanghai or its approaches.'³³ Thereupon the Chinese agreed not to block the river.³⁴ Meanwhile, until the last moment, Britain endeavoured to avert the threatened war by sending notes in the interests of peace to both China and Japan.³⁵ Sir Edward Grey, the Parliamentary Under-

32. Hennen to Foreign Office, 22 July 1894, F.O. 17/1207.

33. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. II, Nos. 734-736; Kimberley to Paget, Tel. 27, 22 July 1894, F.O. 17/1209; Mutsu to Paget, 23 July 1894, Enclosure No. 2 in Paget to Kimberley, No. 28, 25 July 1894, F.O. 46/436.

34. O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 58, 27 July 1894, F.O. 17/1204.

35. Hansard, 4th Series, Vol. 27, p. 1263, Sir Edward Grey to the House of Commons, 30 July 1894.

Secretary of the Foreign Office, promised the House of Commons that every effort which could be properly be made would be used to bring about a friendly arrangement between China and Japan.³⁶

In refusing China's seemingly reasonable request that both countries simultaneously remove their troops, and in continuing to act so aggressively in Korea, at the time when Britain was working so strenuously to preserve peace, Japan made an unfavourable impression on British public opinion. On one point, however, British public opinion was in agreement with the Japanese, namely, that the Korean government was hopelessly corrupt and that the country needed a complete reformation. It was even admitted that under the control of Japan the condition of Korea would be vastly improved. But there was considerable doubt in some British quarters as to whether Japan would be successful in any attempt to force Western civilization upon Korea. 'The Times' pointed out that 'the Japanese, being so thoroughly detested by the Koreans, were certainly not the race best qualified to lead the Koreans into the blessings of Western civilization, which were badly needed in that land'.³⁷

36. Ibid., Vol. 26, p. 950, 5 July 1894.

37. 'The Times', 2 July 1894; 13 July 1894; 16 July 1894.

Again, the British were further antagonized by the sinking on 25 July of 'The Kowshing', a British steamer, which had been chartered by the Chinese to carry reinforcements. A wave of wrath swept Britain at the news of such an attack upon a vessel flying the British flag in time of peace, for neither China nor Japan had as yet declared war.³⁸

On 1 August 1894, when China and Japan finally declared war against each other, Britain issued a proclamation of neutrality. However, Britain's sympathy was with the Chinese and she had confidence in the ability of China to defend herself against the aggression of Japan. At that time, many people in Britain thought that Chinese strength was at last reviving and that she was on the verge of becoming an effective Power.³⁹ Of course, the British knew that Japan had undergone great changes since 1868 and that foreign mentors had reorganized the Japanese army and navy. They were aware that Japan had sent several military missions to Europe to study Western methods of warfare, and that large sums had been appropriated for the purpose of placing the

38. Denby to Gresham, U.S. Foreign Relations No. 32, p. 41, 28 July 1894; Captain von Hanneken's Report, Ibid., No. 36, p. 45.

39. E.V.G. Kiernan, British Diplomacy in China, 1880-85, London, 1939, pp. 300-305.

Japanese land and sea forces on a more efficient basis. But the British did not think it possible that Japan could have made such drastic changes in such a short time.⁴⁰

However, as Japan won victory after victory, starting with the Chinese rout at Pyongyang on 15 September 1894 and the naval encounter at Yalu on 17 September, China began frantically to call for help. Britain hurriedly sought to end the war, fearful that not only would defeat demoralize the Chinese market, but also that Russia would be given an excellent opportunity to step in and gain a predominant position in China and Korea. On 6 October, the Foreign Office inquired of Germany, France, Russia and the United States if they would participate in a joint intervention, having for its purpose the ending of war between China and Japan, on a basis of an indemnity for Tokyo and an international guarantee of Korea's independence.⁴¹ Britain abandoned her policy of regarding Korea as a dependency of China. Having seen that China was incapable of holding Korea, the British adopted what seemed to be the next best method of checking Russia.

40. 'The Times', 24 July 1894; Circular to H.M. Consuls in China, enclosed in O'Connor to Kimberley, No. 251, 27 Sept. 1894, F.O. 17/1198; O'Connor to Kimberley, No. 378, 15 Oct. 1894, F.O. 17/1198.

41. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 790.

Britain's suggestion was received, however, without enthusiasm by the United States and Germany. The American Secretary of State, Gresham, told that the United States could not intervene, but earnestly desired that China and Japan should speedily agree upon terms of peace alike honourable to both and not humiliating to Korea.⁴² Germany rejected Britain's proposal because her Far Eastern interests were relatively slight. Russia was agreeable to the intervention, but Britain was unwilling to take action without the support of other Powers. The peace effort of October failed because of German reluctance and the non-co-operation of the United States, coupled with the hesitancy of Britain to take joint action with Russia and France, whose aims in the Far East were so much in opposition to those of Britain. While these negotiations were going on in Europe, Britain approached Japan directly, but received the polite reply that Japan's arms have not made sufficient progress to ensure a satisfactory result of the negotiations.⁴³

It has been suggested that Britain, and possibly Russia, might have stopped the war had they used gunboat diplomacy, either singly or in concert with other Powers,

42. Gresham to Bayard, *U.S. Foreign Relations*, No. 56, p. 70, 12 Oct. 1894; Gresham to Goschen, *Ibid.*, No. 58, p. 70, 12 Oct. 1894.

43. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 806.

to force both China and Japan to evacuate Korea. Neither did so. For Britain, unilateral naval intervention was not a realistic proposition. By the eighteen-nineties both China and Japan possessed significant naval forces and in the summer of 1894 the Royal Navy could immediately deploy only the twenty-two ships of the China Squadron against the fifty-two ships of Japan or the eighty-seven assorted vessels of China. Furthermore, any unilateral naval action might have brought in the other European naval Powers in the Far East, notably France and Russia. Russia and France had both increased their squadrons in the Far East. Britain had also increased her squadron on the China Station but, though it was superior to either the French or the Russians alone, it was no longer stronger than a combination of the two. It was assumed that the recent signature of the Franco-Russian Alliance would presage their close naval co-operation in which case they might even inflict a decided reverse upon Britain.⁴⁴

Apart from the delicate naval balance in the Western Pacific, the situation did not warrant the use of naval forces by Britain. No one could foresee precisely which way a possible war might go, and all that could be predicted

44. A.J. Marder, British Naval Policy, 1880-1905, 1940, London, p. 239; J. Berryman, 'British Naval Policy and the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-5,' in Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, Vol. 43 (1970), p. 116.

was that it would be fought for the control of Korea, where Britain had virtually no commercial interests. Nor was there any indication that Britain's interests would not be protected as competently as they had been in the war between France and China in 1884-5. Moreover, Japan, with her rapidly growing armed forces, might prove to be a useful new ally to defend the British interests against Russia in the future. In such a circumstance any use of gunboat diplomacy was out of the question, and it was decided that Britain's naval squadron would be used in a strictly defensive role to protect the treaty ports and Britain's sea-borne commerce.⁴⁵

Russia also rejected the unilateral use of naval force and she too adopted a policy of guarded neutrality. But, despite the similarity of the policies adopted by Britain and Russia, joint naval co-operation between Britain, France and Russia was never seriously contemplated. There was the prospect that if Britain and Russia were to intervene they might become involved in a joint occupation of Korea, a possibility which was in itself enough to deter them from action. In such an absence of any threat to use armed force, the mere diplomatic entreaties of the Powers had been ignored by China and Japan.⁴⁶

45. J. Berryman, Ibid., pp. 116-7.

46. Ibid., p. 117.

By this time, in Korea, the Tonghak forces, recruited from all the southern provinces and numbering tens of thousands, marched towards Seoul but suffered a decisive defeat at the hands of combined Korean and Japanese forces. Some of the rebel leaders, including Chon, were executed and, for the time being, the Tonghak organization ceased to be a political force. A major factor contributing to its failure was foreign intervention. Other obvious factors were the lack of unity and discipline among the rebels and resistance from the Yangban class.

Meanwhile, on 20 August 1894, Japan forced Korea to sign the Provisional Agreement which, among other things, obliged Korea to accept Japanese advice on internal reforms. The task of advising the Korean government was entrusted to Inouye, the Japanese Minister of Home Affairs.⁴⁷ On 26 October 1894, Inouye arrived in Seoul to succeed Otori as Minister at Seoul, and immediately commenced an oppressive policy, which brought about the removal of the Taewongun's power, and a coalition government under Hong-Jip Kim and Young-Hyo Park was established.⁴⁸

47. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 442; Denny to Gresham, 3 Nov 1894, *U.S. Foreign Relations*, Appendix I, 1894.

47. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. I, No. 442, and its Annex 1.

48. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. II, Nos. 459-496.

In the meantime, Japan's overwhelming military and naval superiority resulted in repeated Chinese defeats. Japanese victories at Pyongyang and on the Yalu were followed by the landing of Japanese forces on the Liaotung peninsula, the strategically vital southern part of Manchuria. Port Arthur, the main fortified centre in the area, was taken on 21 November 1894. In the face of a mounting Japanese threat towards Peking, the Chinese sued for peace. On 3 November 1894, the Chinese Foreign Office convoked the representatives of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States and appealed to them to use their efforts to secure peace. It proposed, as a basis of negotiation, what had been suggested by Britain to the Powers on 6 October: the independence of Korea, which would be guaranteed by the Powers, and the payment of a war indemnity. However, this proposal was rejected again by the Japanese.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, in Korea, on 7 January 1895, the Japanese again forced the King of Korea to take an oath at the Ancestral Tablet to support the Fourteen Articles

49. NGB. Vol. 27, Pt. II, No. 790; Denby to Gresham, 3 Nov 1894, U.S. Foreign Relations, Appendix I, p. 73, Despatch 63.

Journal of Korean-American Relations, Vol. II, The period of growing influence, 1887-1895, 1899, of Chul. Press, 1963, p. 381.

of Great Law, which included : 1) an acceptance of the independence of Korea from China; 2) an acceptance of a new role of the King and the Court, and new regulations governing the powers and duties of the Ministers, together with a reform of the taxation system; 3) a clarification of the civil and criminal law; 4) a general opening of government offices to the talented.⁵⁰

The Oath was in reality the King's promise to support Japanese reforms and to keep down the power of the Queen Min's faction, which opposed the Japanese reforms. The Korean King pledged that he would complete and perfect the laws of the state and promote efficient administration. He announced before an assembly of the Queen, the Taewongun, and other members of the royal family and Ministers of State, that his consort and relatives would no longer be permitted to interfere in the affairs of government.⁵¹

50. Text in Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul (History of Korea), pp. 633-5; NGB. Vol. 28, Pt. I, Nos. 256-8; Hulbert, 'Korean Reforms', Korean Repository, II (1895), pp. 7-8.

51. Kuksa Kaesul, pp. 638-9; For an English rendition of the full text of the Oath, see Spencer J. Palmer (ed.), Korean-American Relations, Vol. II, The period of growing influence, 1887-1895, Univ. of Calif. Press, 1963, p. 351.

The new governmental machinery which was set up, and which excluded the Min faction, was modelled on the Japanese Cabinet system. The Cabinet met three times a week under the titular presidency of the Monarch, but in the presence of Inouye, to pass resolutions. Altogether, 421 new proclamations, decrees, and other acts directed towards reform were announced in the period between 22 November 1894 and 30 June 1896.⁵² These numerous and detailed reform measures covered almost all aspects of Korean life. The royal household was separated from the government and members of the royal family were forbidden to interfere in the affairs of the state. The King himself was to act only in consultation with and on the advice of his Ministers. The traditional Six Boards were replaced by eight Ministries (Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Military Affairs, Justice, Education, Public Works, and Agriculture and Commerce) with clearly defined responsibilities. Ministers headed these Departments of State whilst the Prime Minister presided over the Cabinet. The centuries-old discrimination against military officials was to come to an end. The monopoly of governmental offices by the Yangban class, accompanied by the discontinuation of the

52. The figure is compiled from W.H. Wilkinson, The Korean Government: Constitutional Changes, July 1894 to October 1895, Shanghai, The Statistical Department of the Inspectorate-General of Customs, 1897.

old examination system that had helped perpetuate the elitist existence of this privileged class, came to an end. There were also regulations encouraging Korean men to cut off their traditional top-knots, to wear black garments rather than the traditional white ones, and to smoke short pipes rather than long ones, and so on.⁵³

Back to the war, within six months of the start of the war, the Japanese had gained command of the sea and of the land approaches to the Chinese capital, Peking. China, eager to put an end to the conflict, made every effort to resume negotiations for peace. Eventually, negotiations between the Chinese and the Japanese were started, first at Hiroshima and later at Shimonoseki. The Chinese had been persuaded to give full powers to their delegates. They also gave way to the Japanese insistence that their Plenipotentiary should be someone of high rank and appointed Li Hung-Chang. The Japanese then told them that negotiations would be useless if the Chinese delegates were unable to negotiate on the basis of the payment of an indemnity and the cession of territory. The Chinese conceded this as well.⁵⁴

53. H.B. Hulbert, 'Korean Reforms', Korean Repository, II (1895), pp. 1-9.

54. Kimberley to O'Connor, Tel. 11, 25 Feb. 1895, F.O. 17/1242; O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 12, 2 March 1895, F.O. 17/1243.

On 21 March 1895, the Conference of Shimonoseki was opened between Li Hung-Chang and Ito Hirobumi. On 4 April, the Japanese announced their peace terms. They demanded :

1. The recognition by China of the full and complete independence of Korea;
2. The cession to Japan of Formosa, the Pescadores, and the territories of Southern Manchuria situated between the Yalu and the Leao down to the south of the Liaotung Peninsula, Port Arthur and Talienwan to be included;
3. The payment to Japan of a war indemnity of 300 million Taels (about £30 million) in five instalments.
4. The conclusion between the two countries of a new Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, and of a Convention to regulate their frontier intercourse and trade, on the basis of China's treaties with the Western Powers.
5. Most-favoured-nation treatment for Japan;
6. The opening of seven new ports to the trade, residence, industry and manufactures of Japanese subjects, and the right to station Consuls there.

7. The right to navigate the Upper Yangtze River with steam vessels from Ichang to Chungking; the Siang River and Lake Tungting from the Yangtze River to Siangtan; the West River from Canton to Wuchow; the Woosung River and the canal from Shanghai to Soochow and Hangchow.
8. Exemption from every kind of internal taxation upon foreign goods imported by Japanese subjects upon payment of a 2 per cent commutation tax. Chinese goods intended for home consumption to be free of all taxation, import duty or export duty, save the coast trade duties, when conveyed in Japanese vessels.
9. The right of Japanese subjects to establish warehouses in the interior.
10. The right of Japanese subjects to engage in all kinds of industries and to import machinery.
11. All merchandise manufactured by Japanese subjects in China to be on the same footing as imported Japanese goods in respect of exemption from taxation, etc.
12. An understanding by China to remove the Woosung bar which obstructed the water approach to Shanghai.

13. Fengtienfu to be evacuated by the Japanese after payment of the first two instalments of the war indemnity; Weihaiwei upon payment of the final indemnity. No evacuation to take place until the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation was concluded and ratified.
14. Several other minor military matters were also dealt with.⁵⁵

The Japanese introduced several modifications in their own peace proposals. Although Japan insisted that China should recognize the independence of Korea and its neutrality, and undertake to abstain from interference in the internal affairs of that country, she refused to bind herself to do so. She made practically no reduction in her territorial demands. She declined to give China most-favoured-nation treatment in Japan. She did not accept the Chinese proposals for evacuation nor for the appointment of an arbitrator in case of a dispute over the interpretation of their agreements. She insisted that there would be no evacuation

55. NGB. Vol.28, Pt.II, No.1078, Annex; China, Imperial Maritime Customs, Miscellaneous Series, No. 30, Treaties, Conventions etc. between China and Foreign Countries, Vol. II, p. 1818, The Treaty of Shimonoseki; O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 23, 4 April 1895, F.O. 17/1243; Kimberley to O'Connor, Tel. 36, 8 April 1895, F.O. 17/1242; Lowther to Kimberley, Tel. 33, 4 April 1895, F.O. 46/456.

56. O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 30, 16 April 1895, F.O. 17/1243; O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 31, 17 April 1895, F.O. 17/1243.

until the ratification of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. The only two modifications of any importance made by Japan were the reduction of the war indemnity to 200 million Taels (about £20 million) and the withdrawal of the commutation of taxation clause.⁵⁶ The Chinese received these proposals with protest, but the Japanese were determined not to allow the Chinese to prolong the negotiations. They were anxious to arrange the peace quickly so as to avoid the intervention of the other Powers.

Japan's refusal to accept the self-denial obligations in respect of Korea was an indication of her political intentions with respect to that country. Though the peace terms of the Japanese were difficult for the Chinese, they were not only consistent with their promises to Britain and Russia concerning the independence of Korea, but were calculated to meet with the approval of the British. Japan, in spite of the comparative unimportance of her trade in China, laid claim to far-reaching commercial advantages which the British commercial community had long desired, but had so far failed to obtain. Were Japan to obtain them, then the British would also obtain them, in virtue of their most-favoured-nation status. The British trader would probably benefit more than the Japanese themselves from the advantages resulting from these

56. O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 30, 16 April 1895, F.O. 17/1243; O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 31, 17 April 1895, F.O. 17/1243.

conditions; this in view of the preponderance of British trade in China. Among these valuable concessions were: the opening to trade of towns like Shashi, Chungking, Suchow, and Hangchow; steam navigation on the Yangtze River to be extended from Ichang to Chungking, and on the Woosung River, from Shanghai to Suchow and Hangchow; the right to rent or build warehouses, and to store goods therein without taxes; the right to engage in manufacturing in China, and to import the necessary machinery, subject only to the stipulated import duties; and the assurance that all merchandise manufactured in China by foreigners would stand upon the same footing, in respect to taxation, as merchandise imported into China by foreigners. The Chinese considered these terms unduly onerous and turned to the Powers, requesting their intercession.

The Tsungli Yamen appealed to the British, Russian, French and German governments for their good offices in moderating the Japanese demands.⁵⁷ They hoped that substantial support might be forthcoming from some of these Powers. But, despite rumours of foreign intervention, the Chinese could secure no promise of military assistance in the event of their rejecting the Japanese demands. As their hope of any foreign help faded, they became more

57. Kimberley to O'Connor, Tel. 39, 10 April 1895, F.O. 17/1242.

inclined to accept the Japanese terms. The Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed on 17 April 1895. Ratification was to take place within three weeks.⁵⁸

Britain, being primarily interested in commerce, was naturally apprehensive of any nation that threatened to be a competitor in China. At first there was fear in British circles that the enterprising Japanese would injure Britain's commercial interests in the Far East. It soon, however, became clear that Japan had no desire to exclude British competition, and had no intention of securing any commercial concessions for her exclusive benefit. Hence, Britain decided to give her approval to the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Having accepted Japan's advent as a new Power and having recognized the possibility of her becoming a barrier to Russian expansion, the British government began to discuss the advisability of making an alliance with her.⁵⁹

58. Text in Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Korea: Treaties and Agreements, Washington, 1921, pp. 11-20; O'Connor to Kimberley, Tel. 28, Secret, and Tel. 29, Secret, 13 April 1895, F.O. 17/1243; Lowther to Kimberley, Tel. 37, 17 April 1895, F.O. 46/456.

59. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 will be examined in the next chapter.

Kimberley to Lascelles, Tel. 46, Secret, 8 April 1895, F.O. 25/1493.

Although Britain had decided not to intervene in the peace settlement, the other Powers were not inclined to allow Japan to occupy territory which strategically controlled Peking and hence would give her a preponderating influence over China. The Russian government had already decided that it was in Russia's best interest that the boundaries of China should remain unaltered, and that no Power be allowed to increase its territorial possessions at China's expense. Count Witte, the Russian Finance Minister, regarded Japan's presence on the Asian Continent in proximity to Korea as inimical to Russia's interests there, and as a serious menace to the plans entertained by the Russian government. The German government also became nervous about the situation which was likely to develop in the Far East in consequence of the Japanese peace terms. On 8 April 1895, the Russian and German governments suggested to Britain that the Powers should tell Japan in the most friendly manner that the acquisition of Port Arthur would form an obstacle to the maintenance of good relations between China and Japan and be a permanent menace to peace in the Far East.⁶⁰

Germany and, rather more reluctantly, by France. On 21 April The Russian and German proposal for co-operation by the Powers was formally considered by the British

60. Kimberley to Lascelles, Tel. 46, Secret, 8 April 1895, F.O. 17/1242.

63. Board of Trade to Foreign Office, 29 April 1895, F.O. 46/455.

Cabinet on 8 April 1895, and the Russian and German governments were informed that Britain's interests in East Asia were not sufficiently prejudiced by the Japanese peace terms to justify an intervention, which apparently could only be executed by force. Lord Kimberley, the British Foreign Secretary, informed O'Connor, the British Minister in Peking, that the terms did not afford grounds for interference.⁶¹ Several factors influenced Britain in this attitude. The Liaotung peninsula was not an area of direct British concern and Britain was reluctant to interfere because she was convinced that force would have to be used against Japan.⁶² Although there was some concern over the possible adverse effects of the large indemnity, Britain was drawn by the attractive nature of the commercial advantages in China which Japan had included, and which British merchants had long desired.⁶³

On 17 April 1895, the day on which the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed, Prince Lobanov, the Russian Foreign Minister, made a further overture for European intervention. This was backed eagerly by Germany and, rather more reluctantly, by France. On 23 April, the Ambassadors of Russia, Germany and France

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61. Kimberley to O'Connor, Tel. 37, Secret, 8 April 1895, F.O. 17/1242.
62. I.H. Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, London, The Athlone Press, 1966, p. 31.
63. Board of Trade to Foreign Office, 29 April 1895, F.O. 46/459.

presented to the Japanese government the friendly advice that Japan renounce the Liaotung peninsula.⁶⁴

All three governments again pressed Britain to join them. The question was raised at the Cabinet meeting on 23 April but the original decision not to intervene was reaffirmed. In the meantime, the Russians made a last effort to persuade the British to support the action. Lobanov suggested that Britain should join the protest on the secret understanding that Britain would not be obliged to join in using force if that became necessary.⁶⁵ The British Prime Minister, Rosebery, concurred in Kimberley's opinion that this arrangement was unacceptable and the British government maintained their decision to refrain from intervention.⁶⁶

The Japanese were in a difficult position. The peace was not popular in Japan and the government was afraid that withdrawal might lead to internal trouble.⁶⁷

64. Lowther to Kimberley, Tel. 42, 24 April 1895, F.O. 46/456; NGB, Vol. 28, Part II, Nos. 671-673.

65. Kimberley to Lascelles, No. 118A, 24 April 1895, F.O. 65/1489.

66. Ibid.; and Kimberley to Lascelles, Tel. 63, 25 April 1895, F.O. 65/1493.

67. Lowther to Kimberley, Tel. 46, 27 April 1895, F.O. 46/456.

They were also too exhausted to engage in a fresh conflict. Thus, Britain's attitude was crucial in deciding Japan's course of action.⁶⁸ This was a period when in Siam, Africa and on the Indian frontier, Britain was trying to work with France and Russia. This made her reluctant to refuse Russia's request for co-operation in the Far East. Even so, intervention seemed to Britain to be unjustified and also contrary to her own best interests in China. Again, when Britain was asked by Japan for support against the 'Triple Intervention', she declined because she had no wish to risk an incident which might provoke a war against them. The British, therefore, took an intermediate position, neither joining the Powers nor advising Japan to resist. When Japan inquired about the British help, Kimberley declared that it was Britain's intention not to interfere at all and that Britain could not give any tangible assistance.⁶⁹ In face of all these circumstances, at an Imperial Council, on 29 April 1895, the same day as Britain's reply, Japan agreed to modify the Treaty of Shimonoseki.⁷⁰

On 1 May, Japan acquiesced, with the reservations that she be allowed to keep the territory until the indemnity had been paid and that she retain permanently the Province of Kingchow, which included Port Arthur,

68. Lowther to Kimberley, Tel. 51, 6 May 1895 and Tel. 52, 8 May 1895, F.O. 46/456.

69. Kimberley to Lowther, No. 37, 29 April 1895, F.O. 46/449; Kimberley to Trench, 24 April 1895, F.O. 46/449.

70. Lowther to Kimberley, Tel. 51, 6 May 1895, F.O.46/456.

whereupon she was told that she must return the entire peninsula, as it had been Port Arthur which had originally caused the 'Triple Intervention'. Japan's suggestion that she be allowed some other portion of the Chinese coast in lieu of the Liaotung Peninsula was also rejected. On 8 May, an amended Treaty of Shimonoseki was ratified at Chefoo.⁷¹

Britain's decision not to join the 'Triple Intervention' against Japan was based upon considerations similar to those which had been adduced to support her policy of non-intervention before and during the war. The Japanese peace terms did not seriously threaten British commercial interests in China, and, quite apart from the fact that the diplomatic initiative was organized by Russia to serve Russian interests, Britain was still determined not to alienate a potential ally such as Japan, particularly since she had proved her military worth during the war. With the growing number of French, Russian and German warships being sent to the Western Pacific, the value of securing the powerful Japanese navy as an ally was becoming increasingly evident. Although not designed to contribute in a positive and immediate fashion to the furtherance of Britain's commercial hegemony in the Far East, the policy of non-

71. NGB. Vol. 28, Pt. II, Nos. 751, 787, 805-9.

intervention did in the long run serve Britain's interests. The 'Triple Intervention' was to remain an object of intense resentment in Japan for many years, and, if it cannot be said that Britain gained Japan as an ally in 1895, it is clear that the actions of Russia, France and Germany made it very unlikely that Japan would regard them as future allies. Seven years later the Anglo-Japanese alliance was signed.

For Korea, the Japanese victory over China did not go beyond formal recognition of the termination of age-old Chinese influence in Korea. The Japanese-inspired reform movement soon failed. Though the zeal with which the work of reform was pursued was reminiscent of the first years of the Japanese Meiji Restoration, the Korean reforms lacked the necessary support from the various strata of society. Powerful traditionalist forces within and outside the government, including commoners as well as officials and the Yangban class, objected to these sudden drastic changes. Their well-founded suspicion of the Japanese authorship of these innovations lent additional support to their opposition. Nor was the Korean government united in its commitment to the cause of modernization.⁷²

72. S.J. Palmer, Korean-American Relations, Vol. II, p. 347; Korean Repository, II (1895), p. 270; George N. Curzon, Problems of the Far East, Westminster, Constable & Co., 1896, pp. 194-5, 379.

Confronted with such difficulties in Korea and the unsettling international developments which had developed after the 'Triple Intervention', the Japanese Cabinet decided on 25 May 1895, to reverse its Korean policy and give up the year-old project of reforms in Korea. Soon the Korean King declared the resumption of his power to appoint and dismiss high officials at his will without advice from the Cabinet. At the same time, the Queen Min's faction which had been purged from the government, was granted a royal pardon. Thus the brief era of Japanese domination in Korea ended abruptly. So did the ambitious and forceful reform projects that Japan had sponsored in Korea. However, these events did not end Japanese ambitions in Korea but were a response to immediate circumstances and pressures. With the passage of time, changed conditions and growing strength, Japan would again develop a forward-policy towards the Korean Peninsula.⁷³

During this period, Britain's policy towards Korea was one of attempting to ensure that events in the peninsula did not disturb the existing stability in the Far East.

73. NGB. Vol. 28, Pt. I, No. 288; Ito Hirobumi, ed., Chosen Kosho Shiryo (Materials on Negotiations with Korea), 3 Vols. Tokyo, 1936, Vol. III, p. 112.

Korean domestic developments were only of interest within this context and therefore received little consideration. Britain's major preoccupation throughout was the avoidance of a general conflict and the maintenance of her economic and commercial interests in China. It was China's defeat by Japan that led to a new emphasis on British Far Eastern policy. China's weakness had been exposed and she thus became a target for the Great Powers. Britain's dominant role, including her large commercial and financial interests, was no longer secure. This shift in the balance of forces led her to seek a new ally which would assist her naval position in particular. This ally was to be Japan but, as will be seen, a price had to be paid.

The 'Triple Intervention' taught the Japanese that they must look to their defenses. From being elated at their successes against China, they were now utterly humiliated. They decided to lie low for a while and retire into a self-enforced isolation. They decided not to take part in foreign adventures while they built up their strength. On 3 June 1895, the Japanese Cabinet adopted a new policy: it resolved to eliminate intervention

CHAPTER 7. THE PERIOD OF RUSSO-JAPANESE RIVALRY OVER
KOREA, 1895-1904

(1) The Russo-Japanese Negotiations

During the first few years following the Treaty of Shimonoseki, Japan was exhausted and too weak to challenge Russia, while Russia was unprepared to take full advantage of the situation. Therefore, both Powers were willing to accept the status quo in Korea in a series of temporary agreements. During this time, Korea chose to seek Russian assistance primarily because of her experience with Japanese intervention. Russia enjoyed a short period of predominance in Korea. However, this did not last long and eventually a war broke out between the two rival Powers ten years later.

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as far as possible.¹ However, one of the immediate reactions to Japan's newly-adopted policy of non-intervention in Korean affairs was an open defiance of Tokyo's decision by Japanese officials in Korea. Miura Goro, newly-appointed Japanese Minister in Seoul, was a professional soldier with no diplomatic experience or sophistication. He viewed the settlement of the tangled Korean problem merely as a matter of prompt and vigorous action.²

The Korean government at the time was a coalition of the Queen Min's faction and a newly-emerging pro-Russian faction. A cordial and cooperative relationship developed between the two factions, and the pro-Japanese faction was almost without political power mainly because of Korea's experience of Japanese intervention. Miura felt that he had to act swiftly to remedy the situation, even though the Tokyo government's policy was one of extreme caution. Japan had decided to withdraw her troops from Korea except for a limited number of guards for the legation and the military telegraph lines. Rather than wait to see Russia eclipse Japan at the Korean Court, Miura decided to take matters into his own hands.

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1. NGB. Vol. 28, Pt. I, No. 298.
 2. H. B. Hulbert, The History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 286.

On 8 October 1895, a group of Soshi (Japanese civilian extremists) and plain-clothes Japanese consular guards, together with Korean adherents and members of the disaffected Japanese trained Korean army unit, protected by a screen of regular Japanese soldiers, stormed the Palace and murdered Queen Min, the central figure of the anti-Japanese policy at that time, and burned her body. The King and the Crown Prince were held captive together with the members of the Queen's family whom she had brought to power in an anti-Japanese movement.³

The King became a prisoner in his own Palace, and, in panic, yielded to all the Japanese demands. Within a few days the King had been coerced into appointing pro-Japanese individuals to key posts in the government and into issuing an edict that demoted the late Queen to commoner status.

The Japanese government immediately recalled Miura to face trial and appointed Komura Jutarō to succeed him. The Hiroshima district court later tried Miura and 47 others on the charge of conspiracy and invading the Palace. However, the court acquitted all the defendants

3. The report of Uchida, the Japanese Consul in Seoul, in NGB. Vol. 28, Pt. I, No. 424; H.B. Hulbert, The Passing of Korea, New York, 1906, pp. 129-147; For evidence of Japanese complicity, see quotations of court records of the Hiroshima trials in F.A. McKenzie, The Tragedy of Korea, London, 1908, pp. 263-7; Korean Repository, II (1895), pp. 432-4; Fred Harvey Harrington, God, Mammon, and the Japanese: Dr. Horace N. Allen and Korean-American Relations, 1884-1905, Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1944, pp. 267-271.

on the grounds of inadequate evidence regarding their actual participation in the acts of violence.⁴ The complicity of Miura had been so open that the diplomatic representatives of the foreign Powers in Seoul formed a united front against their Japanese colleagues. They organized a boycott by the entire foreign diplomatic corps of all the decrees issued by the new regime in Seoul, and provided asylum for those Koreans who feared persecution by the pro-Japanese regime.⁵

This outrage caused a revulsion in Korea against all things Japanese, and the momentary Japanese success soon vanished. Groups of anti-Japanese forces were scattered throughout the country. In some areas they successfully repulsed government troops which had been sent to crush them. There was also an unsuccessful putsch in Seoul in November. Finally, on 11 February 1896, a group of counter-revolutionaries was successful in smuggling the King and the Crown Prince out of the Palace. The Korean sovereign sought and received asylum at the Russian legation in the capital of his own kingdom. Immediately after reaching the safety of the Russian legation, the King decreed death sentences for several

4. NGB. Vol. 28, Pt. I, Nos. 353-365, Telegraphic exchanges between Tokyo and Seoul, 8-10 October 1895.

5. F.H. Harrington, God, Mammon, and the Japanese, pp. 272-5.

leaders of the pro-Japanese regime. Deprived of the royal authority that had justified their positions, the pro-Japanese Ministers were massacred almost to a man by the angry mobs. The events of 1895-6, which were provoked initially by the Japanese, placed Korea under Russian influence.⁶

Facing Russian ambition in Korea, Japan had two alternatives: making an approach to Russia or reaching an understanding with other European Powers, notably Britain. The new Salisbury Ministry, however, was certainly not inclined to involve itself in Korean affairs. Nevertheless, on 1 May 1896, Salisbury inquired whether Japan would agree to a declaration of Korean neutrality if such a proposal was advanced. The Japanese Foreign Minister, Mutsu, replied bluntly that he had already approached Britain on this subject but, having received no encouragement, the Japanese had been forced to negotiate with Russia and were now on the point of signing something. Mutsu gave Satow, the British Minister in Tokyo, a note containing four questions to be referred to London for clarification. The questions were mainly intended to discover how far other Powers were likely to accept the neutralization proposal.

6. **NGB. Vol. 29, Nos. 352-398;** Nos. [redacted] Hyun Hwang, Maecheon Yarok (Unofficial Records of Hyun Hwnag), Seoul, 1955, pp. 195-7; Korean Repository, III, (1896), pp. 81-94.

Mutsu argued that if this proposal were accepted by Japan but met with insufficient support from the other Powers, it would recoil upon Japan, causing the failure of her talks with Russia and precipitating Russia's assumption of a protectorate.⁷ Satow reported that a favourable reply from Britain might save Japan from having to accept any terms Russia chose to impose. But Salisbury replied that the object of his inquiry was simply to find out Japan's attitude and that he had not communicated with other governments. Salisbury stated that the Powers interested in Korea should combine to find a remedy for the anarchy in the country but that the initiative should be with one of those specially interested: Japan, China or Russia.⁸ Britain was interested, but only in a second degree. It was not a reply likely to encourage Japan to delay matters further with Russia. Salisbury's unexpected intervention, though trivial in itself, was revealing. However much Salisbury might protest that Britain had no primary interests in Korea and was not worried about Russia having an ice-free port there, Britain was keen to prevent a possible Russo-Japanese of the Russian legation and consulate. This agreement was

7. NGB. Vol. 28, Pt. I, Nos. 277-8; NGB. Vol. 29, Nos. 300-303; Satow to Salisbury, 4 May 1896, F.O. 46/468.

8. Kato to Mutsu, 14 May 1896, NGB. Vol. 29, No. 311; Salisbury to Satow, 13 May 1896, F.O. 46/471.

agreement or a Russian protectorate over Korea. Despite this, Britain wanted to avoid too much involvement.

The Japanese government came to the conclusion that to avert Russian ascendancy in Korea and to prevent a clash of Russian and Japanese interests in Korea, they must come to an agreement with Russia. Negotiations were started in Seoul between Waeber, the Russian Minister in Seoul, and Komura, the new Japanese Minister in Seoul, which resulted in the signing on 14 May 1896 of a joint memorandum. By the terms of this agreement, 1) the Korean King was to return to the Palace at his own discretion, 'when no doubts concerning his safety could be entertained'; 2) the present members of the Korean Cabinet, who were anti-Japanese, were to be recognized and accepted by Russia and Japan; 3) Japan was to continue for the time being to guard the Japanese telegraph line between Seoul and Pusan; 4) Japanese soldiers were to be temporarily stationed in Seoul (400), Pusan (200), and Wonsan (200) for the protection of Japanese settlements, while Russia was entitled to keep an equal number of guards at those places for the protection of the Russian legation and consulate.⁹ This agreement was in reality a Russian victory. By this memorandum Japan

9. Text in W.W. Rockhill, Treaties and Conventions With or Concerning China and Korea, 1894-1904, Washington, 1904, pp. 430-1; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 21-2; Frederick A. McKenzie, Tragedy of Korea, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1908, pp. 299-300.

formally acknowledged that Russia had as much right as Japan to be interested in Korea. Above all, in view of the great disparity between Japanese and Russian interests in Korea, and between Russian and Japanese forces in Korea, the memorandum meant that Japan must reduce her forces, whereas Russia had Japan's consent to increase hers. Furthermore, the memorandum practically represented an admission of Japanese complicity in the event of 8 October 1895 by including the provision that 'the Japanese representative on his part gives the assurance that the most complete and effective measures will be taken for the control of the Japanese Soshi'. In fact, Japan acknowledged the past wrong doings of her nationals, the Soshi.

The Komura-Waeber Memorandum, had dealt with specific issues in Korea without any agreement on the more basic question of what should be done with Korea. Japan planned a broader agreement with Russia. Late in April 1896, Marquis Yamagata Aritomo, one of the most powerful Japanese elder statesmen, left for Russia to represent Japan at the coronation of Czar Nicholas II, and in the latter part of May and in June he negotiated with the Russian Foreign Minister, A.B. Lobanov-Rostovsky, on Korean affairs. On 9 June 1896, the Lobanov-Yamagata Agreement, also known as the Moscow Protocol, was signed: both countries were to aid Korea's financial reform with loans and to leave

to Korea the formation and maintenance of an armed force for the preservation of internal peace.¹⁰ It was merely an extension of the previous Komura-Waeber Agreement, from which were eliminated a few more points on which Russia and Japan disagreed. The agreement included a secret article providing that neither Russia nor Japan would send troops into Korea unless the other nation gave its consent, and if Russia and Japan should decide at any time to send their troops into Korea, each would define the area to be occupied and would agree beforehand on the zone of operations of their troops and the neutral zone between the forces of the two Powers in order to prevent conflict between them.¹¹

There were yet other political defeats for Japan. Japan, whose economic interests in Korea were far greater than those of any other nation, willingly conceded to Russia an equal status with regard to loans for Korea. On the question of the training of the Korean armed forces, Japan's

10. Text in NGB. Vol. 29, No. 478; W.W. Rockhill, Treaties and Conventions with or Concerning China and Korea, p. 432. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 23-4.

11. Ibid .; British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 88, pp. 471-2.

objective of leaving it in the hands of a neutral Power had been frustrated, and, instead, a vague promise to leave it to the Koreans themselves was substituted in circumstances in which the final interpretation of this article would lie in the hands of the King of Korea, who was still in the Russian legation. It was merely a higher-level confirmation of the Komura-Waeber Memorandum, with the only notable and important exception of the novel and untested proposition for a partition of Korea into two spheres of influence.

Within a month after the signing of the Lobanov-Yamagata Agreement, the Russian government was undermining the idea of a Russo-Japanese condominium. In July, negotiations were begun to bring in Russian instructors for the Korean army. In August, Colonel Strelbitskii arrived at Seoul as the Russian military agent, and D.D. Pokotilov as the financial agent of the Russian General Staff arrived with three officers and ten non-commissioned officers and began the organization of the Korean army, starting with the Palace guard. Colonel Putiata later came and became the commander of the newly-reconstituted royal guard unit. The Russian economic expert Pokotilov, together with the newly created Russo-Chinese Bank in China, concluded a secret loan agreement with the Korean government by which the Russo-Chinese Bank was to lend three million Yen to Korea, on the security of

the customs receipt, for the purpose of repaying a Korean debt to Japan. Russian economic penetration also took the form of a timber concession along the Yalu River which the Korean government granted to a Russian merchant, Iulii Ivanovich Briner, in September 1896. The Japanese government protested without effect.¹²

In the meantime, within Korean political circles, distrust of Russian influence and particularly of pro-Russian Korean collaborators began to develop. Some of the old conservative politicians and the younger, enlightened but nationalistic officials, who had been pro-Russian against the Japanese only a short time before, began to urge the King, early in 1897, to return to the Palace. The King decided to leave the Russian legation on 20 February 1897. The Korean King had stayed in the Russian legation a little over a year. Following the King's departure from the Russian legation, a series of discordant notes began to sound in Korean-Russian relations. On 7 September 1897, Carl Waeber, whose diplomatic tact had

12. Satow to Salisbury, 26 March 1898. F.O. 46/496; Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed. Komura Gaikoshi (History of Komura Jutarō's Diplomacy), 2 Vols., Tokyo, 1953, I, p. 93; I.L. Bishop, Korea and Her Neighbours, London, 1898, pp. 263-290; Kanichi Asakawa, The Russo-Japanese Conflict, Boston, 1904, pp. 262-9; Andrew Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904, Univ. of Calif. Press, 1958, pp. 89-92.

won him the royal favour and the goodwill of many foreign diplomats in Korea, was replaced by Alexis de Speyer, a young and overly aggressive imperialist. Speyer had a grandiose programme in mind. He evolved plans for timber, mining, and railroad enterprises and aimed at Russian domination of the army, the customs service, and a Russian naval base at Deer Island off the port of Pusan.¹³

The gradual growth of sentiments hostile to Russia and Speyer among those Koreans who were politically articulate and the sudden shift in Russia's own Far Eastern policy brought about a sudden collapse of Russia's predominance in Korea in 1898. At the time the Russians were concentrating their efforts on developing the ice-free ports of Port Arthur and Talien and on linking southern Manchuria by rail with northern Manchuria. Thus, Russia's interest in Korea temporarily took second place. This, combined with Speyer's tactless and overbearing behaviour, drew vigorous protests from many Korean officials and especially from the Independence Club, an organization of reformists who demanded an end to all foreign interference.¹⁴

13. F.H. Harrington, God, Mammon, and the Japanese, p. 299.

14. The reform movement by the Independence Club will be examined on pp. 208-213.

Impatient with these and other signs of resistance to Russian encroachments, in March 1898, Speyer threatened to end the service of Russian advisers unless the Korean government would unequivocally demonstrate its pro-Russian orientation by punishing anti-Russian Korean officials. When the Korean government, obviously irritated by the tactless Speyer, refused to comply, Speyer fell into his own trap and was forced to withdraw all Russian employees of the Korean government.¹⁵

During this period the necessity of placating Japan for the acquisition of Port Arthur influenced Russian actions in Korean affairs. Russia intimated a desire for an agreement with Japan to terminate continual friction in Korea on the basis of Russian recognition that Japan had greater interests in Korea than Russia. This conciliatory attitude of Russia's was partly due to her concern over Japan's hostile reaction to the Russian lease of the Liaotung peninsula, but was also a reaction to the possibility of an Anglo-Japanese alliance. Further, Russia could not afford to ignore the rapidly developing military capabilities of Japan. After the 'Triple Intervention' the Japanese peacetime army had been expanded threefold while Russian forces east of Lake Baikal were increased

15. NGB. Vol. 31, Pt. I, Nos. 122, 125, 131, 133, 143; Harrington, God, Mammon and the Japanese, p. 301.

only on a very gradual scale. By November 1897, Russia had some 40,000 men at her disposal in the Far East, in contrast to 170,000 in the Japanese peacetime army.¹⁶

The obscurity of political alignments, the numerical superiority of the Japanese army over the Russian forces in the Far East, and the delicate balance in naval forces influenced Russia and Japan to act cautiously and pushed them towards a compromise on Korea. On 17 March 1898, the Russian government made a proposal in regard to Korea, in which she expressed her intention to lease Port Arthur and to give Japan a pledge that Russia would not interfere in the internal affairs of Korea. Two days later, the Japanese government suggested an agreement by which Russia would recognize Japan's freedom of action in Korea and in return Japan would regard Manchuria as being outside her sphere of interest. This was a formula which was to be repeated by Japan at regular intervals down to 1904 and came to be known as the 'Mankan Kokan' (literally, the Exchange of Manchuria for Korea). This exchange policy was endorsed by Marquis Ito, Yamagata, and the leading Japanese statesmen, such as Nishi, Komura and Hayashi. The Russian response, however, was much firmer than Japan had anticipated. In Tokyo the Russian Minister, Rosen,

17. NGB. Vol. 31, Pt. I, Nos. 123, 144, 149, 152, 157, 167
Malozemoff, op. cit., pp. 108-9.

16. NGB. Vol. 31, Pt. I, No. 99; 9-110;
A. Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904, pp. 108-9.

declared that 'As a matter of principle, we cannot admit that Russia should divert herself of all interest in a state with which she has a common frontier'.¹⁷

For nearly a month, the Russian Minister in Tokyo, Baron R.R. Rosen, and the Japanese Foreign Minister, Nishi, continued bargaining until an agreement was finally worked out. On 25 April 1898, the Russo-Japanese Protocol, known as the Nishi-Rosen Agreement, was signed. This stated in Article I that both signatory Powers recognized the independence of Korea and pledged themselves not to interfere in her internal affairs. Article II provided for a mutual agreement not to take any measure regarding the nomination of military instructors and financial advisers, without having previously arrived at a mutual accord on the subject. The most important Article III stated: 'In view of the great development of the commercial and industrial enterprises of Japan in Korea and also of the considerable number of Japanese subjects residing in that country, the Russian Imperial Government shall not obstruct the development of the commercial and industrial relations between Japan and Korea.'¹⁸ This was Russia's first

17. NGB. Vol. 31, Pt. I, Nos. 122,141,144,150,152,157,163; Malozemoff, op.cit., pp. 108-9.

18. Text in Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Korea : Treaties and Agreements, pp. 24-25; The French and Japanese Text and an English translation also appear in NGB. Vol. 31, Pt. I, No. 164. 2-185.

recognition of the particular interest of Japan in the economic development of Korea.

This agreement came short of Japan's demand that she should be given a free hand in Korea. Russia admitted only Japan's special industrial and commercial rights in the peninsula. It made no concession on the main issue. It once again put the interests of Japan and Russia on an equal footing within an independent Korea. There was on the whole little advance for Japan over the 1896 treaty. The joint occupation would continue as before. Japan could not yet exclude Russia from Korea but had at least regained an equal status in the matter of political influence over the Korean government. Moreover, Japan had obtained Russia's reluctant admission that Japan's economic interest in Korea was large. In 1898, Japan's share in Korea's export and import trade was 79.2 per cent and 57.4 per cent, respectively, in value, while those of Russia were only 1.0 per cent and 0.9 per cent.¹⁹

19. Nohara Shiro, 'Kinsei Shina Chosen o Meguru Nichiro no Kankei' (Russo-Japanese Relations with Regard to China and Korea in the Recent Period), in Sekai Rekishi Taikei (An Outline of World History), 25 Vols., Tokyo, 1934, Vol. 9, pp. 402, 403.

Irrespective of the wording of the diplomatic documents, things were easier, in practice, for the Japanese in Korea after 1898. Japanese immigrants and traders entered Korea in large numbers and soon established themselves as the preponderant economic group in Korea. From this point onwards, Japan's struggle with Russia over Korea was made very much easier. The six years that followed the Nishi-Rosen Agreement of 1898 saw Japan and Russia co-existing in Korea but with suspicions of each other. Beginning with its occupation of Manchuria in 1900, Russia's interest in Korea had only secondary importance for its policy-makers, with the exception of a few periods of short duration. On the other hand, the intensification of Japan's political interest in Korea was accompanied by an improvement of her international position as signified by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. However, Russia refused to make a complete renunciation of its political interest in Korea. The official Russian position was that Russia could not renounce her interest in Korea altogether and that Manchuria could not be considered as a quid pro quo for Korea. The Russo-Japanese controversy that was to lead to open hostilities stemmed from such differences, thus making a Russo-Japanese conflict highly likely.

coup 29 the progressive group in 1894. After that

The other Powers had little interest in Korea and were not much worried by Japanese ambitions there. Britain wished to ensure that Korean territory and Korean harbours were not made the base for schemes for territorial aggrandizement so as to disturb the balance in the Far East and give to one Power a maritime supremacy in the Eastern Seas. Britain thought the Korean government to be incurably corrupt and doubted the country's capacity to retain its independence. Britain was not prepared to interfere actively in Korean affairs to buttress a regime which was not likely to last. Britain was interested mainly in the international implications and then only in so far as her naval and commercial interests were threatened or the peace of the Far East was likely to be broken. This British attitude towards Korea was demonstrated by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, which will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

During this period, in Korea, a nascent form of nationalism began to develop accompanied by the introduction of mass communication media and mass political movements. In January 1896, Jae-Pil Suh (Philip Jaisohn) returned to Korea after spending more than ten years in the United States. He had been a young member of the attempted coup by the progressive group in 1884. After that

failure he had fled to the United States and had become an American citizen and a physician. On returning to Korea, he started the first private newspaper 'Toknip Sinmun' ('The Independent') in April 1896. At the same time he helped a small group of 30-odd reform advocates, some in the government and many ex-officials, to organize the Toknip Hyophei (The Independence Club). He himself declined formal membership but became an adviser to the Club. The new organization began the publication of a journal twice a month to promote patriotism, reforms, and Western knowledge. They also erected a stone arch, the Gate of Independence, to arouse nationalistic pride. At first they confined their activities to discussions on issues of lesser importance, such as street lights and so on, at their weekly Sunday public debates, but these reformists were soon voicing their views on matters of greater significance. Their slogan of complete national independence was at first welcomed by the King and the Korean government headed by Hong-Jip Kim. However, Suh's untiring and outspoken advocacy of libertarian reforms and his blunt remonstrations to the Korean sovereign soon made him unwelcome to the Korean government. By this time, Suh and the Independence Club began to advocate radical changes in the political system. Their programme was ultimately to lead to some form of representative government under a constitutional monarch.

In the years of 1896-1898, the conservatives were in the ascendancy in the Korean government. In sharp contrast to the rising voice for reforms outside the government, the officials in power were gradually undoing earlier reform measures. They were devoted to the traditional absolute monarchy and viewed Suh and his reformist supporters in the Independence Club with increasing hostility.²⁰

One of the few occasions when the nationalistic reformists and the conservatives could agree was in 1897 concerning the elevation of the royal title from that of a King to Emperor. The name of the country was also changed from 'The Kingdom of Chosun (Korea)' to 'The Empire of Taehan (Great Han)'.²¹ The Independence Club soon became an active political pressure group that could

20. Philip Jaisohn, 'What Korea needs most', Korean Repository, III (1896), pp. 108-110; Sun-Keun Lee, Hankuk Toknip Undongsa (History of Korean Independence Movement), Seoul, 1956, p. 200; Philip Jaisohn, 'Korean Finance', Korean Repository, III (1896), pp. 166-168; Hulbert, History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 310; Horace N. Allen, Korea: Fact and Fancy, Seoul, Methodist Publishing House, 1904, p. 198; C.I.E. Kim and Han Kyo Kim, Korea and the Politics of Imperialism, 1876-1910, pp. 103-118.

21. Allen, op.cit., p. 201. Britain, Russia, Japan and all the Powers recognized the new title for the Korean sovereign.

22. Hulbert, History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 316; Kato to Okuma, 5 October 1898, NCS, Vol. 31, Part II, No. 550.

successfully mobilize several thousands in anti-foreign or anti-corruption rallies. In 1898, Suh had to leave for the United States because of the pressures from the Korean government. Under the leadership of the new President, Chi-Ho Yoon, the Independence Club devoted most of its attention to domestic reforms. In October 1898, it began demanding the dismissal of six high government officials and staged a mass demonstration in front of the royal Palace. The Emperor succumbed to this display of mass strength and dismissed the accused Ministers. Again, on 14 October, the leaders of the Club presented a revolutionary request that the Joongchoowon (Privy Council), which had replaced the more active Reform Council in 1894, should be reconstituted to admit 25 popular representatives who would be elected by a people's assembly.²² For the first time in the history of Korea, a demand for something approaching popular participation in the government was voiced.

On 29 October, the Club held another mass rally and adopted six resolutions which included a pledge not to rely on foreign aid, a demand for more strict control of contracts with foreigners, a demand for a fair public trial for important offenders, a demand requiring the

22. Hulbert, History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 316; Kato to Okuma, 5 October 1898, NGB, Vol. 31, Part II, No. 850.

sovereign to appoint Ministers only with the concurrence of the majority of the Cabinet, a demand for a unitary system of taxation administered by the Ministry of Finance and for publication of annual estimates and balances, and a demand for the faithful and impartial enforcement of the existing laws and regulations.²³

The Emperor had to approve the six-item resolution adopted at the mass rally and on 2 November the Privy Council was formally reorganized to provide equal representation between the government appointees and the popular delegates selected by the Independence Club. However, in reality, the government was only waiting for an opportune moment to crush the reform movement. Korean history had seen precedents in which the disciplined and militant pedlars (the Bobusang) armed with cudgels acted as para-military mercenaries in the service of the government. For nearly 200 years they had maintained a tightly knit guild organization. The government decided to use the pedlars again. On 5 November, a few days after the entry into Seoul of the pedlars, a formal decree from the throne ordered the

23. English text in Hulbert, History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 319; Japanese text in NGB, Vol. 31, Part II, No. 859.

24. Hulbert, History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 323; William F. Sands, Undiplomatic Memories, N.Y., Whittlesey House, 1930, pp. 152-4.

Independence Club to disband. The Independence Club was declared subversive and many of its leaders were arrested.²⁴ Thus ended the reform movement.

The Independence Club failed to obtain many of its objectives in spite of the massive popular support which at times was strong enough to force the government to grant political concessions. Compared to the earlier attempts at reform (The coup of 1884 and the Kap-O reforms initiated by the Japanese in 1894-5), it had the advantage of having no stigma of foreign sponsorship. Compared to the Tonghak rebellion, it had the advantage of a relatively enlightened and socially respectable leadership. Above all, the activities of the Independence Club were not encumbered by international complications that had jeopardized those earlier reform movements and popular protests against the corrupt government. Despite all these advantages it failed. It can be argued that the failure can be attributed to such causes as : organizational weakness; strategic errors; unwillingness of the reform leaders to recognize the need for drastic changes in the existing political institutions, including the monarchy.

24. Hulbert, History of Korea, Vol. II, p. 323; William F. Sands, Undiplomatic Memories, N.Y., Whittlesey House, 1930, pp. 152-4.

(2) The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902

The nineteenth century was the climax of the 'Pax Britannica'. Britain had built herself the largest Empire in the world, and could largely pursue an independent policy based on the balance of power strategy. The 'Splendid Isolation' was accepted as a sign of her strength and self-sufficiency, and became the guiding principle of British foreign policy. Towards the end of the century, however, circumstances had changed. Britain ceased to enjoy unchallenged supremacy. Two events in the last decade of the century precipitated a change: the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1894, which united Britain's two most formidable adversaries; and, partly as a result of the stalemate produced in Europe by this Alliance, a sudden enthusiasm by all the Great Powers for imperial and naval expansion. Britain was everywhere faced by new rivalries, new pressures which she had never known before.

The eastward expansion of Russia had taken place most significantly under the remarkable pro-consulship of Nikolai Nikolaevich Muraviev, the Governor-General of East Siberia between 1857 and 1861, but as the task of colonization without adequate land or sea transport

from European Russia was formidable, the Russians seemed to have concentrated until 1884 in the Near East, especially on the borders of Afghanistan, where their activities caused alarm to the authorities in British India. But as the building of the Trans-Siberian railway was inaugurated in 1891, the Russian interest shifted to the Far East. This new means of communication offered the opportunity of stepping up the rate of colonization in Siberia and it also gave Russia a channel for increasing her armed forces in the Far East. Russia could not embark on the Trans-Siberian railway project without enlisting the support of French capital. This was assisted by political events when the Russian government entered with France into, first an Entente (1891) and, later, an Alliance (1894).¹

Some elements were common to all the problems facing Britain at the turn of the century: the operation of the Dual Alliance, an extremely formidable combination,

1. A. Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, pp. 20-29, 34-39; B.A. Romanov, Russia in Manchuria, 1892-1906, Leningrad, 1928, Trans. S.W. Jones, Ann Arbor, 1952, pp. 38-44; Philip Joseph, Foreign Diplomacy in China, 1894-1900, New York, Octagon Books, 1971, pp. 146-188.

usually in practice working against Britain; the steady realization of the immense potentialities of the Russian Empire, enabling her to bring her land power more effectively to bear in Central Asia and the Far East. Communications between European Russia and her Far Eastern provinces were still bad, since the Trans-Siberian Railway was almost, but not quite, completed when the Russo-Japanese war broke out in 1904. Nevertheless, as a result of the Russian Finance Minister Witte's extensive railway programme they were improving every year. None of these would have been such a threat to the British Empire without the imperialist mood prevalent in Europe and America which drove not only France and Russia but also Germany and the United States to become great imperial and naval Powers. Never before had all the Great Powers concentrated their attention so exclusively on imperial expansion, and never before had the British been confronted with such intensive competition in every part of the world. The Powers took left North Manchuria prostrate. The Russians sent vast forces into Manchuria, and at the end of Britain had difficulties all over the world, but it was in China that they were most acute and it was over China that the battle over the future of British policy was fought. After the Chinese defeat by Japan in 1895, China was swept along in the rush for concessions as the Powers followed the German seizure of Kiaochow in 1897.

China during the period of 1895-1900, see L.K. Young, *British Policy in China, 1895-1902*, Oxford University Press, 1970; George Monger, *The End of Isolation*, London, Thomas Nelson Ltd., 1963; Philip Joseph, *op.cit.*

By 1900 each of the Powers had a sphere of influence: Russia in Manchuria, Germany in Shantung, and France in the extreme South. Britain could not bring herself to abandon her old policy altogether, and laid only a half-hearted claim to the Valley of the Yangtze as her sphere. The whole position was made still worse by the Boxer rebellion of 1900, which resulted in the occupation of Manchuria by Russian troops, sent there on the pretext of suppressing disorders.²

All these events in China during the period of between 1895 and 1900 stemmed mainly from the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-5, which influenced international relations in the Far East until 1900. The 'Triple Intervention', the Port Arthur crisis and the state of Korea and South Manchuria throughout the period owed their origins to Japan's victory in that war. The war had left China weak, and the fury of the Boxer disturbances and the revenge which the Powers took left North Manchuria prostrate. The Russians sent vast forces into Manchuria, and at the end of the relief expedition to Peking, Russia announced the removal of her armies from Peking with the implication that she proposed to occupy Manchuria and thus strengthen her grip on a territory where she had long claimed special

2. For the evolution of the Major Powers' policies in China during the period of 1895-1900, see L.K. Young, British Policy in China, 1895-1902, Oxford University Press, 1970; George Monger, The End of Isolation, London, Thomas Nelson Ltd., 1963; Philip Joseph, op.cit.

rights. This projected withdrawal of Russian troops from Peking irritated the Germans, who had a large expeditionary force on the high seas on its way to China. Britain also was always known to be suspicious of Russia. Eventually, after considerable discussions, the Anglo-German Agreement was signed on 16 October 1900. The Agreement was in the form of a joint undertaking to observe certain principles:

1. It is a matter of joint and permanent international interest that the ports on the rivers and littoral of China should remain free and open to trade and to every other legitimate form of economic activity for the nationals of all countries without distinction; and the two governments agree on their part to uphold the same for all Chinese territory as far as they can exercise influence;

2. Britain and Germany will not, on their part, make use of the present complication to obtain for themselves any territorial advantages in the Chinese dominions, and will direct their policy towards maintaining undiminished the territorial condition of the Chinese Empire;

3. In case of another Power making use of the complications in China in order to obtain under any form whatever such territorial advantages, the two Contracting Parties reserve to themselves to come to a preliminary

understanding as to the eventual steps to be taken for the protection of their own interests in China.³

The most important thing which Germany gained from its terms was an undertaking that Britain would not close the Yangtze to its commerce, and, in return, Britain hoped to obtain some assurance that Germany would co-operate against possible Russian expansion in North China and Manchuria. In the unsatisfactory compromise which resulted, the treaty became a joint undertaking, consisting partly of a restatement of open door principles and partly of a self-denying ordinance over territorial acquisitions in China. However, the vagueness of the phrase prevented the treaty becoming effective. But this Anglo-German Agreement had some effect on the later Anglo-Japanese Agreement.⁴

As shown in the last chapter, amicable relations between Britain and Japan were established at the end of the Sino-naval strength of any two other Powers. Between 1895

3. G.P. Gooch and H. Temperley, ed., British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914, London, 1926-1938, Vol. II, No. 17, Enclosure. Hereafter referred to as B.D.

4. L.K. Young, op.cit., pp. 193-213; G. Monger, op.cit., pp. 21-45; Ian H. Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Univ. of London, 1966, pp. 99-123.

⁵ 'The Times', 25 and 31 Dec. 1897, 1 Feb., 26 March, 4 April, 30 July 1898.

Japanese war, when Britain refused to intervene in the war. This bond was strengthened over the succeeding years and at the time of the Port Arthur crisis of 1898 the need for an agreement with Japan was frequently mentioned in the British press.⁵ In 1900, there was a major Cabinet re-shuffle in Britain, and the new Salisbury Ministry had Lord Lansdowne as Foreign Secretary. Sir Claude Maxwell MacDonald, replaced Sir Ernest Satow as the British Minister in Tokyo. A few months earlier, a new Japanese Minister, Baron Hayashi Tadasu, had arrived in London.

Since 1895 Britain's disadvantageous position in relation to the Dual Alliance Powers had occasioned concern, particularly when considered in terms of the country's naval self-sufficiency. At that time British naval policy was based on the Two-Power standard laid down by Lord George Hamilton in 1889. This envisaged a British Navy on a scale which would at least equal the naval strength of any two other Powers. Between 1895 and 1901, however, the naval position of the Powers was radically changed and the old formula was no longer applicable. During these years Russia, Germany, and the United States became great naval Powers, Japan an important one. In 1901, Lord Selborne, the First Lord of the Admiralty, placed a memorandum before the Cabinet

5. 'The Times', 23 and 31 Dec. 1897, 1 Feb., 26 March, 4 April, 30 July 1898.

which assessed the significance of the naval development on British policy. Moreover, with the growth in importance of the Far East after 1895, the struggle for naval superiority had been extended to those waters. Britain, with her naval expenditure already under strain, was forced either to carry this extra burden to the disadvantage of her Home and Mediterranean Fleets or to concede the position in the Far East. According to Lord Selborne's memorandum of 4 September 1901, which was on the balance of naval power in the Far East in relation to a possible alliance with Japan, by 1901, in the Far East, Russia had 5 battleships with 3 under construction; Japan 6 with 1 under construction; France 1; Germany 4; and Britain 4.⁶ Britain alone in the Far East would soon be outnumbered, and it would be impossible to provide reinforcements there except at the expense of the forces in European waters. If Japan should come to an arrangement with Russia the position would be critical, while she aligned herself with Britain the ratio would be 11:9 against the Dual Alliance Powers.

The first British tentative outline for a political agreement with Japan came when Francis Leveson Bertie, an Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, drew

6. Memorandum by Selborne, 4 Sept. 1901, F.O. 46/547; Z.S. Steiner, 'Great Britain and the Creation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance', Journal of Modern History, Vol. 31 (1959), pp. 29-31.

up a draft under the heading 'Suggestions for Agreement with Japan' which he forwarded to Lansdowne under cover of his memorandum of 2 July 1901.⁷ It appropriated to Britain and Japan, on a basis of naval co-operation, the maintenance of the principles contained in the Anglo-German Agreement. It correlated the protection of British interests in the Yangtze region with the maintenance of Japanese interests in Korea.

Bertie also raised the problem of Korea, the recognized focus of Japan's ambitions, and suggested that 'if it were a condition of British policy that Korea should not fall under Russian occupation, then it would not be much of a sacrifice to make a definite promise of co-operation to Japan for its defence'.⁸ Bertie again suggested that the possession of Korea by Russia, taken in conjunction with her supremacy in Manchuria and her hold over any Chinese government, would be such a danger to British interests that Britain would in any case be forced to intervene. — If Britain was bound to act thus in an emergency, she might as well support Japan in the ordinary course of events. Such support would have to be tangible and practical and, bearing in mind Britain's limited naval power in the Far East, would have to be restricted to naval, and possibly

12. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 113, secret, 29 Oct. 1901, P.O. 46/563.

7. Memorandum by Bertie, Suggestions for Agreement with Japan, encl. in Bertie to Lansdowne, 2 July 1901. F.O. 17/1506.

8. Ibid.

pecuniary, aid to Japan in resisting any foreign occupation of Korea.⁹

On 29 October, Hayashi, the new Japanese Minister in London, presented a memorandum for British acceptance. This read: 'In view of the preponderating interests of Japan in Corea, His Britannic Majesty's Government shall acquiesce in the adoption by Japan of suitable measures for the maintenance of those interests'.¹⁰ In effect, this meant a free hand for Japan in Korea. As Hayashi told Lansdowne on 16 October, Japan considered 'as its first and last wish the protection of its interests in Korea, and the prevention of interference by any other country in Korea.'¹¹ Lansdowne remarked that he did not like the form in which the clause had been drafted, but that he would find some means of meeting Japanese wishes.¹²

On 5 November, the Cabinet agreed on the conclusion of an alliance with Japan, and, on 6 November 1901, the

9. Ibid.; Memorandum by Bertie, 22 July 1901, F.O. 46/547.

10. Memorandum submitted by Baron Hayashi, 29 Oct. 1901, F.O. 46/563.

11. A.M. Pooley ed., The Secret Memoirs of Count Hayashi, New York, AMS Press, 1915, p. 134. Hereafter referred to as Hayashi Memoirs.

12. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 113, secret, 29 Oct. 1901, F.O. 46/563.

preliminary draft of an agreement was handed to Hayashi.

It reads:

Desirous of maintaining the present state of affairs in the Far East, of preserving the general peace, and, in particular, of preventing the absorption of Korea by another country, and of maintaining the independence and territorial integrity of China and of securing to every country equal commercial and industrial privileges in China, the governments of the two allied nations have agreed upon the following articles:

- 1) If either of the two nations shall be engaged in war with another foreign country for the object of protecting the interests mentioned in the foregoing, the allied nation shall maintain a strict neutrality and shall endeavour to prevent any other nation from supporting the hostile country.
- 2) If, in the conditions mentioned above, another foreign country shall join the enemy of the allied nation, then the two allied countries shall make common war, and peace shall only be concluded with the mutual consent of the two allies.
- 3) The allied nations shall not enter into any agreement with another country affecting the interests of the allies in Korea without mutual consent.

4) In the event of Great Britain or Japan at any time considering the interests mentioned above as being jeopardized, then the governments of the two countries shall communicate together fully and frankly without concealment.

Separate Article containing the naval provisions:

The naval forces of the two Powers shall, so far as is possible, act in concert in time of peace; and mutual facilities will be given for the docking of vessels of war of the one Power in the ports of the other and also for the use of coaling stations and other advantages conducive to the welfare and efficiency of their respective navies.¹³

While the draft had been prepared on the assumption of its limitation to China and Korea, some sections of the Cabinet preferred to extend its scope to India and the Malay peninsula. Britain was trying to guard against the opposite danger of being dragged into war with Russia, and as a consequence there was no recognition of Japan's preponderance in Korea, nor of her right to take steps to safeguard the preponderance, only a statement in the

13. F.O. 46/563; Hayashi Memoirs, pp. 137-8;
B.D. Vol. II, No. 125, pp. 114-120.

1901, F.O. 46/563; Hayashi Memoirs, pp. 137-8.

preamble that both Powers were specially interested in preventing the absorption of Korea by any foreign Power. Japan's relationship to Korea had been left unspecific in the draft. Britain deliberately omitted any such phrase. Hayashi remarked that the treatment of Korea in that draft did not sufficiently meet the requirements of Japan.¹⁴

After some delay due to a division of opinion in the Japanese government over the question of the alliance with Britain, a counterdraft was returned by Japan on 12 December 1901. Japan added two separate Articles:

Article II. Each of the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour to maintain in the Far East at all times naval forces superior in efficacy to the naval strength of any other Power which has the largest naval forces in the Far East.

Article III. Great Britain recognizes that Japan may take such suitable measures as she deems necessary to safeguard and promote the preponderating interests which she actually possesses in Korea.

15. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 6 Dec. 1901, F.O. 46/563; B.D. Vol. II, No. 115; ROB, Vol. 34, No. 65.

16. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 128, 12 Dec. 1901.

14. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 115, Secret, 6 Nov. 1901, F.O. 46/563; Hayashi Memoirs, pp. 132-4.

Japan wanted a free hand in Korea and wished to dictate Britain's naval commitments in the Far East. She refused to extend the scope of the alliance, and preferred to restrict it to a term of five years, subject to renewal.¹⁵

Lansdowne told Hayashi that some of the clauses were unacceptable. Britain's naval commitment in the Far East would have to be determined by Imperial considerations rather than with reference to purely local conditions. He also added that the Article III might have the effect of entangling Britain in war with two great European Powers all over the world on account of some comparatively trivial quarrel between Russia and Japan over matters of purely local interest. It revived British fears of being dragged into war over some trivial Japanese quarrel in Korea. As a safeguard Lansdowne suggested amendments which would specify the measures to be taken by either Power in defence of their interests.¹⁶

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15. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 6 Dec. 1901, F.O. 46/563; B.D. Vol. II, No. 115; NGB, Vol. 34, No. 65.
16. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 128, 12 Dec. 1901, F.O. 46/563; No. 129, 16 Dec. 1901, F.O. 46/563; No. 132, 19 Dec. 1901, F.O. 46/563; NGB. Vol. 34, No. 70.

Komura, the Japanese Foreign Minister, stated in two further memoranda handed over to Britain by Hayashi on 16 and 19 December that Japan and Korea having peculiar relations on account of their geographical position, their history, commerce and industry, the Japanese government considered it highly important that they should reserve to themselves a certain degree of liberty of action on the Korean peninsula. Komura also rejected the British suggestion that either Power should specify the measures it intended to take in defence of its interests, explaining that disturbances tended to arise suddenly in Korea and demanded prompt action and made consultation with Britain impossible in most cases.¹⁷

At the Cabinet meeting on 19 December, the projected alliance met with heavy criticism, but the idea of a Japanese alliance was generally accepted, and the differences of opinion were more with respect to details than to substance. Discussion centred on the naval clauses and Korea. It was felt that the agreement offered by the Japanese was much too one-sided, and that Japan's gains in Korea should be balanced by extending the alliance to cover India and Siam. The Ministers

17. NGB, Vol. 34, Nos. 70-72; Hayashi Memoirs, pp. 166-170; Lansdown to MacDonald, No. 129, 16 Dec. 1901, F.O. 46/563.

thought that Britain could not sacrifice the free disposal of her ships, and the Japanese Treaty would not repay them for the surrender.¹⁸ Lansdowne told Hayashi that it was decidedly opposed to a binding distribution of British naval forces in any part of the world and to the Korean article which was liable to be misconstrued as abetting the aggressive policy of Japan in Korea.¹⁹

On 31 December, Hayashi offered to include in the Treaty the statement that Japan had no aggressive intentions in Korea and qualify Britain's naval obligations in the Far East by the words 'as far as possible'.²⁰ Lansdowne thought that there was no halfway house between such a recognition of Japanese preponderance in Korea, and a stipulation that Japan was not to be allowed to pick quarrels with Russia except with Britain's permission and that if Japan became involved in such quarrels without

18. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 132, 19 Dec. 1901.
F.O. 46/563.

19. Ibid.; NGB. Vol. 34, No. 73.

20. Ibid.; Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 133, 31 Dec. 1901. F.O. 46/563.

21. Note by Lansdowne for the Cabinet, 23 Dec. 1901.
F.O. 46/547.

Britain's approval, the casus foederis would not be held by Britain to have arisen, and to such a stipulation Japan would not agree. Lansdowne argued in his memorandum addressed to his colleagues that better terms could not be obtained, that the Japanese should certainly not enlarge the scope of the agreement, and that the recognition of their preponderance in Korea was to them the essence of the bargain. He thought that if Japan could involve Britain in war by pursuing a general forward policy in Korea, so could Britain involve them in war by pursuing such a policy in the Yangtze.²¹

However, Lansdowne's anxiety to close the matter was not shared by the majority of the Cabinet. From mid-December 1901 until the signing of the treaty on 30 January 1902 discussions continued on the Korean question and on the naval issue. The Japanese demand on Korea was one of the main topics of greatest controversy. Indeed, Korea had served as the direct cause of the two biggest wars which had broken out in the Far East at the turn of the nineteenth century, the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5, and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, and she had always remained at the focus of the greatest controversies of the international

21. Note by Lansdowne for the Cabinet, 16 Dec. 1901, F.O. 46/547.

politics in the Far East. Since Japan's 'first and last wish' was her free hand in Korea, it was not strange that Korea once again became the main focus of the greatest controversies in the negotiations of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Eventually, most of the British Ministers were prepared, if necessary, with some misgiving, to accept the Treaty as it stood. A draft Treaty was drawn up on 14 January 1902. The Japanese amendments were returned on 18 January. To the general recognition of her special interests in Korea Japan had added specific mention of her 'political as well as commercial and industrial' interests in Korea. This was then amended by Britain to a special recognition of Japan's political and commercial interests in Korea. The Agreement was signed by Lansdowne and Hayashi on 30 January 1902. It reads:²²

The Governments of Great Britain and Japan, actuated solely by a desire to maintain the status quo and general peace in the extreme East, being moreover specially interested in maintaining the independence and territorial integrity of

22. Lansdowne to Balfour, 21 Jan. 1902, F.O. 46/563; Memorandum by Barrington, 27 Jan. 1902, F.O. 46/563; Text in Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 33-34; Also in F.O. 46/563; NGB. Vol. 35, No. 15; BD, Vol. II, No. 125.

the Empire of China and the Empire of Corea, and in securing equal opportunities in those countries for the commerce and industry of all nations, hereby agree as follows :-

Article I. The High Contracting Parties, having mutually recognized the independence of China and Corea, declare themselves to be entirely uninfluenced by any aggressive tendencies in either country. Having in view, however, their special interests, of which those of Great Britain relate principally to China, while Japan, in addition to the interests which she possesses in China, is interested in a peculiar degree politically as well as commercially and industrially in Corea, the High Contracting Parties recognize that it will be admissible for either of them to take such measures as may be indispensable in order to safeguard those interests if threatened either by the aggressive action of any other Power, or by disturbances arising in China or Corea, and necessitating the intervention of either of the High Contracting Parties for the protection of the lives or property of its subjects.

Article II. If either Great Britain or Japan, in the defence of their respective interests as above described, should become involved in war with another

Power, the other High Contracting Party will maintain a strict neutrality, and use its efforts to prevent other Powers from joining in hostilities against its Ally.

Article III. If in the above event any other Power or Powers should join in hostilities against the Ally, the other High Contracting Party will come to its assistance and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it.

Article IV. The High Contracting Parties agree that neither of them will, without consulting the other, enter into separate arrangements with another Power to the prejudice of the interests above described.

Article V. Whenever, in the opinion of either Great Britain or Japan, the above-mentioned interests are in jeopardy, the two Governments will communicate with one another fully and frankly.

Article VI. The present Agreement shall come into effect immediately after the date of its signature, and remain in force for five years from that date. In case neither of the High Contracting Parties should have

notified twelve months before the expiration of the said five years the intention of terminating it, it shall remain binding until the expiration of one year from the day on which either of the High Contracting Parties shall have denounced it. But if, when the date fixed for its expiration arrives, either Ally is actually engaged in War, the alliance shall, ipso facto, continue until peace is concluded.

In addition to the main text of Treaty, a secret Agreement was signed.³ Each Government recognizes that its naval forces should, as far as is possible, act in concert with those of its Ally in time of peace, and agrees that mutual facilities shall be given for the docking and coaling of vessels of war of one country in the ports of the other, as well as other advantages conducive to the welfare and efficiency of the respective navies of the two Powers.

At the present moment Japan and Great Britain are each of them maintaining in the Extreme East a naval force superior in strength to that of any other Power. Each ally has no intention of relaxing her efforts to maintain, so far as may be possible, available for concentration in the waters of the Extreme East a naval force superior to that of any third Power.

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was a landmark in British policy, because it was the first departure from the traditional policy of isolation. It was a means by which the burden of maintaining the 'Pax Britannica', which had been the major external force in the Far East, could be shared with another Power. It was a practical means of meeting Britain's diplomatic needs at the time. It helped to maintain British interests in the Far East without committing Britain in Europe, which appeared to be the only way in which the German arrangement could be secured. It also opposed continued Russian expansion, without involving Britain in a direct alignment against Russia. It was of unique significance for the two countries. For Japan it was her first alliance with a European Power and therefore a token that she had reached the ranks of the world Power. Furthermore, Britain could, at least, prevent Japan from seeking an alternative arrangement with Russia.

British policy towards Korea at the turn of the nineteenth century, which could be represented by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, turned out to be tragic for that small kingdom in the Far East. The problem was that the British government had no large concern for Korea, but always considered it only in relation to the balance of power in the Far East. In regard to the balance, the British sought

to have local nations, which had been China and was Japan at that time, to do the balancing, all with the grand purpose of preserving the Far East in favour of British interests, against Russia. When it became clear that sacrificing Korea's independence could effect a favourable balance, the British government did not hesitate to pay such a relatively small price. Not much earlier, when Britain occupied Port Hamilton in 1885, Britain was concerned with Korea. This was true of Britain's attitude in 1885, but it no longer held good in 1902. The spirit of Port Hamilton never returned. Indeed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was, as will be seen, the end of direct British interest in Korea.

CHAPTER 8.THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR, 1904-1905(1) The Last Stages of the Russo-Japanese Negotiations

Since the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japan had improved her position in Korea. The British representative in Seoul, Sir John Jordan, wrote in March 1902 that 'their recent convention with us seems to have perceptibly stiffened their Korean policy, which still, however, proceeds on very cautious lines where there is any risk of a collision with Russia'.¹ The improvement in Japan's standing in Korea depended on economic penetration. After the Nishi-Rosen Agreement in 1898, the Japanese infiltrated into Korea as fast as they could and proceeded to establish their commercial and industrial rights in Korea. The Russians were involved in Manchuria and left the way clear for Japan in Korea, and the other Powers had little interests in Korea and were not much worried by Japanese ambitions there. Japan allowed her nationals to leave for Korea and encouraged a great expansion of Japanese trade with Korea. The Japanese expansion of trade

1. Jordan to Bridge, 31 March 1902, F.O. 350/3.

interests, concessions, railway constructions, and exploitation of timber and fishery resources was not the result of the Japanese domination of the Korean government but resulted from the inactivity of the other Powers.

One of the aspects of Japan's Korean policy, which clearly exemplified her long range expansionist plans, was the railroad project. The Japanese had earlier purchased from an American promoter, James R. Morse, the rights for the Seoul-Inchon railway line and had provided the funds for a Japanese group headed by Shibusawa Eiichi, the President of the Daiichi Bank, to take up the project. In September 1898, Japan also secured from the Korean government the rights to construct the Seoul-Pusan line, a much more important arterial line; this through an application of strong diplomatic pressure. Japan also showed great interests in acquiring the Seoul-Wiju line which the original French concession holder had been unable to construct. Japan, at the same time, was successful in monopolizing the modern banking system of Korea. Beginning in May 1902, the Korean branch of the Japanese Daiichi Bank issued the so-called 'Shibusawa Notes' which soon became unofficial legal tender. As the only foreign bank in Korea, the Daiichi Bank Korean Branch became the virtual 'Bank of Korea' and soon secured

Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1911-1912, p. 211
For detail of Japanese economic penetration
into Korea, see Conroy, Japanese Policy in
Korea, Ch. II.

financial control as great as that of a central bank, issuing the only currency notes and making loans to the Korean Court. Late in 1902, the Japanese government decided to vote almost two million Yen for 1903 towards specified projects in Korea, of which the most important was the building of the Seoul-Pusan railway.²

The tangible manifestations of Russo-Japanese rivalry were the struggles for concessions. In 1899, Japan approached Korea for a lease of Koje Island, which was an important strategic position commanding the entrance to Masan and the Broughton Strait. Meanwhile, the Russians were seeking a strip of land near Masan, an ideal harbour site to the west of Pusan. For the Japanese, Masan was as serious as Port Arthur, because it might be the thin end of the wedge which would later enable Russia to command the Tsushima Straits. The Japanese were seriously worried and Japanese private merchants, with the certain assistance of their government, were quick and quiet in buying up all possible sites on the island. This pre-emption of the most desirable pieces of land by the Japanese and strong Japanese protest against Russian acquisition of land defeated the Russian's plan.

2. NGB. Vol. 35, No. 268; K. Asakawa, The Russo-Japanese Conflict, New York, Houghton, Mufflin and Co., 1904, pp. 282-3; A. Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904, p. 231; For detail of Japanese economic penetration into Korea, see Conroy, Japanese Seizure of Korea, Ch. IX.

Nevertheless, in 1900, the Russian Minister in Korea, A.I. Pavlov, succeeded in persuading Korea to pledge that the Koje Island in the Masan area would not be leased to any foreign Power including Japan.³ However, the most controversial of all was the timber concession granted to the Russians in 1896 for Ullung Island and for the Tumen and the Yalu River regions. After years of inactivity, in 1898, a Russian expansionist, A. M. Bezobrazov, became interested in the prospect of using the concession to develop Russian political and economic influence in the Lower Yalu region, and from then until the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, the rumours of Russian designs on Korea centred around the Yalu basin enterprise.⁴

In the battles for concessions, Japan reaped far more than Russia, and, moreover, additional evidence of Japan's success in the economic sphere was Japan's continuing predominance in Korean trade and the overwhelming numerical superiority of Japanese over Russian residents in Korea. Japan's share in Korea's foreign trade maintained a high level of over 61 per cent (in value) of imports to Korea and over 76 per cent of exports

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3. NGB. Vol. 32, Nos. 101-9; Vol. 33, Nos. 154, 166, 168, 169; Text of the Russo-Korean Agreement on Nonalienation of Koje Island, in Ibid., Vol. 33, No. 196.
 4. Malozemoff argued that Russia in 1903 had not the slightest intention of starting aggressive actions in Korea, and the prominence of Russian activities on the Yalu in the Far Eastern newspapers was due to the fact that they represented the only tangible Russian activities in Korea at that time. Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904, pp. 229-237.

from Korea in the years from 1899-1904, while Russian trade with Korea was almost negligible.⁵ In 1901, the number of Japanese residents in Korea was nearly 17,000, of which 2,360 were in Seoul. This grew to 30-40,000 by 1904.⁶

Russia's inferior economic position in Korea was partly due to her increasing commitments in Manchuria, especially after the outbreak of the Boxer Rebellion. In January 1901, Russia proposed to Japan a scheme for the neutralization of Korea under a joint guarantee by the Powers.⁷ Japan turned down this proposal because she desired to maintain and expand her preponderant position in Korea and to induce Russia to give her a free hand in Korea in return for recognition of Russian interests in Manchuria.⁸ Since the end of the Sino-Japanese war in 1895, there had been several types of solution for Korea. First, there was the division of the

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5. Nohara Shiro, Kinsei Shina Chosen o Meguru Nichiro no Kankei (Russo-Japanese Relations with Regard to China and Korea in the Recent Period), in Sekai Rekishi Taikai (An Outline of World History), 25 Vols. Tokyo, 1934, Vol. 9, pp. 402-3.
 6. Korea Review I, p. 310; Conroy, Japanese Seizure of Korea, p. 466.
 7. Rosen's proposal to Takaaki Kato, 7 Jan. 1901, NGB. Vol. 34, No. 393.
 8. NGB. Vol. 34, Nos. 393-409; Vol. 35, Nos. 181-205.

peninsula into Russian and Japanese spheres of influence which was incorporated into the Agreements of 1896 and 1898. Then there was the Russian proposal for Korea's neutralization under an international guarantee which was turned down by Japan in 1901. Also there was the 'Mankan Kokan' formula (Exchange of Manchuria for Korea) which was unofficially proposed by Ito during his visit to St. Petersburg in November 1901. It was a sign of Japan's increasing strength and ambition in Korea. In any case, however, Russia was not prepared to make the necessary concessions and the discussion was suspended. Meanwhile, the Korean government, at the news of the Russian proposal for Korea's neutralization in early January 1901, entertained some hope for an internationally guaranteed neutralization of their country and made inquiries regarding the Russian and Japanese responses. Furthermore, when it learned of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902, the Korean government feared that Japan was now ready to fight Russia with unpleasant consequences for Korea. It also feared that Japan would interfere more actively in Korean affairs than before. In August 1903, the Korean government formally requested the Japanese and Russian governments to consider Korea as a neutral country

9. NGB, Vol. 34, No. 395; Vol. 35, No. 24; Vol. 36, Pt. I, Nos. 693, 697.

10. Draft Plan for Negotiations with Russia, From the Cabinet, Resolution following the Imperial Council, 23 June 1903, NGB, Vol. 36, Pt. I, No. 1; MacDonald to Lansdowne, No. 100, 1 Oct. 1903, F.O. 46/567.

in case of war and to spare Korea from the hostile military operations of either belligerent.⁹

The decision to open negotiations with Russia was made in Japan at the Imperial Council on 23 June 1903, which was attended by five members of the Genro (the elder-Statesmen) - Ito, Yamagata, Oyama, Matsukata, and Inouye - and four Ministers including the Prime Minister Katsura and Foreign Minister Komura. The conference adopted a decision to open negotiations with Russia, and the following terms were approved as the basis for Japan's approach to Russia: a) to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of China and Korea and the principle of equal opportunity for commerce and industry there; b) Japan and Russia to recognize mutually the rights which they possess at present in Korea and Manchuria respectively and the measures which have to be taken for their protection; c) Japan and Russia to recognize mutually their rights of sending forces when they need to preserve their above-mentioned interests or to repel uprisings in these territories. Troops to be withdrawn immediately after the object of sending them has been achieved; d) Japan possesses the special right to advise and assist Korea to carry out internal reforms.¹⁰

9.. NGB. Vol. 34, No. 396; Vol. 35, No. 24; Vol. 36, Pt. I, Nos. 695, 697.

10. Draft Plan for Negotiations with Russia, from the Cabinet Resolution following the Imperial Council, 23 June 1903, NGB. Vol. 36, Pt I, No. 1; MacDonald to Lansdowne, No. 145, 1 Oct. 1903, F.O. 46/567.

The British government was notified on 3 July 1903 both of the intent and the terms of the opening demarche. Hayashi explained to Lansdowne that Japan was disposed to offer to Russia a solution of the present situation based on the clear definition of Russia's interests in Manchuria as well as Japan's interests in Korea.¹¹ On 14 July, the British Cabinet decided that a separate arrangement between Russia and Japan would indicate a weakening in the good understanding that had prevailed with Japan since 1901 and thus should be assessed with caution. Hayashi was told that the British government would not criticize in an unfriendly spirit an arrangement desired by their ally, and consistent with the interests and treaty obligations of Britain as well as Japan, but asked that the Russian negotiations should not be conducted in a manner which might suggest that the Anglo-Japanese agreement had in any way been impaired. Japan agreed to keep Britain informed of the course of negotiations.¹²

On 28 July, Komura instructed Kurino, the Japanese Minister to Russia, to acquaint the Russian Foreign

11. Lansdowne to MacDonald, 3 July 1903, F.O. 46/564; NGB. Vol. 36, Pt. I, No. 2.

12. Lansdowne to Hayashi, 16 July 1903, F.O. 46/572.

Minister, Lamsdorf, with the Japanese intentions. Lamsdorf agreed to the negotiations and received the Japanese note on 12 August. On 3 October, the first Russian counter-proposals were delivered and these added the following three articles : a) Mutual engagement not to use any part of the territory of Korea for strategic purposes nor to undertake on the coast of Korea any military works capable of menacing the freedom of navigation in the Korea Strait. b) Mutual engagement to consider that part of the territory of Korea lying to the north of the 39th parallel as a neutral zone into which neither of the contracting parties shall introduce troops. c) Recognition by Japan of Manchuria and its littoral as being in all respects outside her sphere of influence.¹³

The next Japanese counter-proposals were handed over on 30 October and were a compromise. Japan suggested the establishment of a 50 kilometre neutral zone on both sides of the Korean frontier with Manchuria into which troops should not be sent. With regard to Manchuria, Japan was prepared to recognize Russia's commercial rights and special interests on the basis of the 'Mankan Kokan' formula, but wished to have

13. Text in MacDonald to Lansdowne, No. 113, 2 Nov. 1903, F.O. 46/568.

assurances about Japan's existing treaty rights there. Russia's reply was handed over in Tokyo on 11 December. Russia would not depart from her privileged position in Manchuria and made no concessions on Korea beyond those given to Japan in 1898. Most of the text dealt with Korea, reintroducing the 39th parallel clause and the mutual agreement not to use any part of Korean territory for strategical purposes. The Japanese answer followed on 23 December in a note verbale, which asked the Russian government to reconsider its position on the subject.¹⁴

Britain had to consider the possibility that war might occur. Britain wanted to avoid doing anything to encourage the Japanese to go to war over Korea and Manchuria where she was much less hostile to Russia than they were, even while she was sympathetic to Japan. Britain had to reconcile the conflicting objectives of her European and Far Eastern diplomacy, to support its ally and to avoid alienating France and Russia. The British government had already made approaches from the spring of 1903 towards France, Russia's ally, in order to minimize the chances of future trouble with that country.

Vol. II, No. 259, p. 224.
 16. Lansdowne to MacDonald, Tel. 78, 30 Dec. 1903, F.O. 46/568; NGB, Vol. 36, Pt. I, No. 51.

14. Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904, pp. 240-244.

But, if war came about, Britain and France might be dragged in under the terms of their respective alliances. If this were to be avoided, it was essential for Britain to pursue negotiations with France and not let relations with Russia deteriorate. On 11 December 1903, Britain and France agreed that it was the duty of Britain and France to pour as much cold water as possible upon the embers and to exercise a moderating influence upon the disputants.¹⁵

Britain stood aloof from the developing crisis in the Far East. The Japanese made efforts to obtain some tangible sign of British sympathy, but without success. On 29 December, Hayashi explained to Lansdowne the course of negotiations with Russia and inquired whether Japan might expect support from Britain in the event of war and in what direction. Lansdowne merely replied that the Alliance would not apply to a war between Japan and Russia alone, and that Britain intended to follow a policy of strict neutrality.¹⁶

15. Lansdowne to Monson, 11 Dec. 1903, in B.D. Vol. II, No. 259, p. 224.

16. Lansdowne to MacDonal, Tel. 78, 30 Dec. 1903, F.O. 46/568; NGB. Vol. 36, Pt. I, No. 51.

17. B. Dugdale, *Arthur James Balfour, Prime Minister of Great Britain*, 2 Vols. London, 1910, Vol. I, pp. 374-383.

18. NGB. Vol. 36, Pt. I, No. 51.

19. Lansdowne to MacDonal, 1 Jan. 1904, F.O. 46/568.

20. A. Chamberlain to Lansdowne, 7 Jan. 1904, F.O. 46/568.

Hayashi then suggested that Britain could help by means of a loan. The Japanese were aware of the inadequacy of their financial resources for war. This proposal was also rejected by Lansdowne.¹⁷ Britain decided that a loan to Japan would be as near as possible an act of war, and that she was already in considerable financial difficulties and must harvest her resources in case she was brought into the war herself.¹⁸ However, the Japanese government, crippled by financial weakness, decided to ask Britain again for a loan on 24 December, and, on New Year's Day, Hayashi passed over a message. It stated that Japan would feel more secure if the British government could offer financial assistance before the war broke out, and if Japan was successful in the war, the results of her efforts would be equally shared by all those with commercial interests in Manchuria.¹⁹ Lansdowne did not close the door completely but he held out little hope either of giving Japan a loan from government sources or of guaranteeing a private loan.²⁰ In the face of repeated appeal the Japanese were told of Britain's inability to offer financial aid in any form.²¹ While

17. Lansdowne to MacDonal, Tel. 78, 30 Dec. 1903, F.O. 46/568; Lansdowne to MacDonal, 31 Dec. 1903, F.O. 46/564.

18. B. Dugdale, Arthur James Balfour, First Earl of Balfour, 2 Vols. London, 1936, Vol. II, pp. 376-383.

19. NGB. Vol. 36, Pt. I, No. 51.

20. Lansdowne to MacDonal, 1 Jan. 1904, F.O. 46/576.

21. A. Chamberlain to Lansdowne, 4 Jan. 1904, F.O. 46/585.

they were not convinced that Britain could not get the money if she really wished to do so, the Japanese gave up the idea of securing a loan with a British government guarantee.²² Britain's decision was made not only for economic but also for political reasons. Britain wanted to avoid giving the impression that she was departing from neutrality and offering active encouragement to Japan.²³

In the meantime, on 6 January 1904, Russian Minister Rosen passed over the third Russian counterproposals to Komura: Russia would admit Japan's position in Korea provided Japan would agree not to fortify the northern border, but in Manchuria Russia would practically exclude the Japanese in common with all foreigners, and Russia would not renew the pledge to respect the integrity of China. The Japanese government resolved that Russia had made no adequate concession over Korea but had even refused to enter into negotiations over Manchuria, and decided to send Russia an ultimatum.²⁴

22. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 14 Jan. 1904, F.O. 46/577; B.D. Vol. II, No. 268-9.

23. Lansdowne to MacDonald, 6 Jan. 1904, F.O. 46/576.

24. NGB. Vol. 37, Pt. I. No. 44.

On 13 January, the fourth and last Japanese proposals were given to Rosen at Tokyo, which indicated that these were final conditions. The proposals called for the suppression of the Article concerning the neutral zone and the elimination from the Russian counterproposal of the clause 'not to use any part of Korean territory for strategic purposes'. On 3 February, the Japanese Cabinet with five Genro present discussed the situation and decided to wage war against Russia. On the following day, at the imperial council, the decision received imperial sanction. On 5 February, Admiral Togo received orders to begin operations, and on 6 February Japan broke off diplomatic relations with Russia. On 8 February, the Japanese naval squadrons attacked Russian fleet in Port Arthur, and on 10 February the Japanese imperial rescript declaring war was issued.²⁵

Britain did nothing at this stage because Japan was absolutely opposed to intervention. The Japanese considered the issues at stake to be confined to Russia and Japan and that Russia was trying to build up an alliance of European Powers against Japan, as in 1895. The Japanese government issued an official statement of

25. NGB.Vol.37,Pt.I. Nos.45,117-23; Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 52-3.

policy on mediation: Japan would not agree to mediation at this juncture, since Russia, in seeking or accepting good offices, did so only for the purpose of gaining time in order to strengthen and consolidate her position in the Far East without any desire to come to a complete and permanent understanding on the questions. Any offer of mediation had to be made in the face of this explicit statement. Britain took the line that she would assist only if desired to do so by Japan and the Japanese never asked Britain for such help.²⁶ were almost daily after the war had begun. Meanwhile, British were reaching Seoul to protect foreign nationals and interests and a Japanese descent on the Korean coast was expected at any time. It was in these circumstances that Korea made a last desperate appeal for support for her projected neutralization. The appeal was dated 21 January 1904 and was transmitted to Japan as well as the Western Powers. Transmitting messages to the west was difficult since the Japanese controlled the telegraph lines within the country, so it was transmitted through the French Minister from Chefoo in China. However, the response from the Western Powers was indecisive.

26. — Lansdowne to MacDonald, 5 Jan. 1904, F.O. 46/576.

1. For the text of the Korean neutrality declaration, see NGB. Vol. 37, Pt. 1, No. 332.

(2) The Russo-Japanese War

By January 1904, the position of Korea had become desperate. At Seoul the Russians were intriguing to neutralize the country as a bulwark against Japanese aspirations and encouraging Korea to seek international acceptance for such a policy. Simultaneously, the Japanese were trying desperately to achieve a treaty foundation for the special position they claimed in Korea, an endeavour in which they were successful only after the war had begun. Meanwhile, guards were reaching Seoul to protect foreign nationals and interests and a Japanese descent on the Korean coast was expected at any time. It was in these circumstances that Korea made a last desperate appeal for support for her projected neutralization. The appeal was dated 21 January 1904 and was transmitted to Japan as well as the Western Powers. Transmitting messages to the West was difficult since the Japanese controlled the telegraph lines within the country, so it was transmitted through the French Minister from Chefoo in China. However, the response from the Western Powers was indecisive.¹

1. For the text of the Korean neutrality declaration, see NGB. Vol. 37, Pt. I, No. 332.0-311.

Finally, on 8 February 1904, the Russo-Japanese war broke out and the Japanese won a first naval encounter in Korean waters outside Inchon harbour. At the same time, the Japanese attacked the Russian fleet in Port Arthur and succeeded in disabling the Russian ships and bottling up the whole squadron. Soon after, Japanese troops landed on Korean soil and advanced northward consolidating their supply lines by constructing a railway from Pusan to Wiju. This occurred despite the Korean declaration of neutrality of 21 January.

The Japanese rapidly gained military control of Korea and the government in Seoul soon had to accept Japanese demands. On 17 February, Ito reached Seoul, and, on 23 February, a Protocol was signed; that permitted Japan to take measures to combat any threat to Korea caused by foreign aggression or by an internal disturbance; Korea was obliged to provide full facilities to the Japanese army and to allow Japanese occupation of such places as might be necessary for strategic purposes. The Protocol of February 23 was a first cautious step toward the erasure of Korea as a national state. However, Article III expressed the view still necessary at this early stage of the war: 'The Imperial government of Japan definitively guarantees the independence and territorial integrity of the Korean Empire'. Nevertheless, at the same time, the Protocol also obliged Korea to accept

Japanese political control over the Korean government in two important areas: concerning internal affairs, Korea was obliged to place full confidence in the Japanese government and accept advice and assistance in improving its administration (Article I). Furthermore, concerning foreign affairs, Korean freedom of action was circumscribed by the stipulation that arrangements with third Powers that were contrary to the principles of the present Protocol were not to be made except by the mutual consent of both Korea and Japan. This provision prevented Korea from seeking any outside assistance in an attempt to defy Japan.²

At this stage, it might be mentioned that there appeared to be two alternative views of the Russo-Japanese War. The first sees the conflict as being about Korea and Manchuria and having little reference to European affairs. It sees the Far Eastern problem as overshadowing all other issues and becoming the touchstone of European and international inter-state relations. The second view sees the Russo-Japanese War as having its roots in Europe and as being an extension, involving Japan in European conflicts of interest. It sees the Russo-Japanese War as the 'back-door' of European politics

2. Text in NGB, Vol. 37, Pt. I, No. 383; -6; Jordan (Seoul) to Lansdowne, Tel. 107, 19 May 1904, F.O. 17/1661; Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 36-7.

and lays stress on the existence of a struggle between two Power alignments: a Franco-Russo-German bloc vs. Anglo-Japanese-American bloc. One might argue that these differences are really a matter of stress and emphasis and that the need is to attempt to examine the international web as a whole.³

Whereas during the Sino-Japanese War Britain had attempted mediation to restore peace, she did not do so in response to the Russo-Japanese War and the Japanese occupation of Korea. Her position of neutrality was strongly influenced by her conclusion of an agreement with France on 8 April 1904.

The significance of the Anglo-French Entente for its two partners lay in their respective needs for security. In the case of Britain this had been forcibly brought to her attention during the Boer War, which had revealed Britain to be without a genuine friend among the States of Europe. The British went out to meet the growing danger with a triple plan. They would make the alliance with Japan, they would come to an agreement with

3. William A. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1935, Vol. 1, p. 385; T. Dennett, Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War, Massachusetts, Peter Smith, 1959, p. 9.

France, and they would work as rapidly as possible for an agreement with Russia. When this plan was accomplished two Triplicates of Powers would offset each other: the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy would be faced by Britain, France, and Russia. After the Anglo-German Agreement of 16 October 1900, which soon failed in its purpose and revealed the movement of German policy away from Britain, Germany appeared to have concluded that she could gain more by pushing Russia into the Far East than by joining with Britain and Japan to oppose her. Germany was actively as well as passively opposed to Britain. The ambitious German navy was seeking practical equality with that of Britain. The only practical alternative for Britain was France with whom negotiations had been commenced in the Spring of 1903. Moreover, in the early stages of the Russo-Japanese war there was a reasonable doubt that Japan would win. Britain might, therefore, be forced to intervene to prevent the deterioration of her entire Far Eastern position. From this point of view, France loomed as moderating influence against a vindictive Russia. Like Britain, France wanted to avoid being drawn into a possible war and was seeking guarantees against both the weakening and strengthening of Russia, although France's interest in an Entente had its roots in her policy of counterbalancing the Powers and of

4. NGB. Vol. 37, Part II, Nos. 1260-5; J.A. White, *The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War*, Princeton Univ. Press, 1964, pp. 170-184; T. Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, pp. 42-61; George Monger, *The End of Isolation*, London, Thomas Nelson, 1963, pp. 104-163.

promoting her external expansion, particularly in Morocco. For the prosecution of French plans in North Africa, particularly in Morocco, an agreement with Britain became necessary. Now Russia's involvement in a war in the Far East deprived France of a support upon which she had long depended. So came the Anglo-French Entente. The Anglo-French Entente dealt with a widely scattered collection of geographical localities representing points of existing and potential discord between the signatories. The main focus of the agreement, however, was in North Africa. Britain's primary interest in Egypt and France's in Morocco were clearly defined and recognized. But the terms had to be carefully limited. On the one hand, France was allied to Russia, and, on the other, Britain was allied to Japan, and now Russia and Japan were at war. Therefore, while the Entente was concerned exclusively with colonial matters, and reached as far as the borders of Siam, it completely ignored China and Korea. Indeed, the agreement contained no reference to the current war, but, in so far as it removed causes of tension between Britain and France, it made both countries even less keen to take part in the war and thus had the effect of combining the war to the two contestants.⁴

4. NGB. Vol. 37, Part II, Nos. 1260-5; J.A. White, The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War, Princeton Univ. Press, 1964, pp. 170-184; T. Dennett, Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War, pp. 42-61; George Monger, The End of Isolation, London, Thomas Nelson, 1963, pp. 104-163.

Meanwhile, as has been mentioned at the outbreak of the War, part of the Russian fleet in Port Arthur was severely damaged and the rest contained. The Japanese attack at Port Arthur continued, supported by land as well as sea forces. At the same time, the Japanese victory in the first land battle on the Yalu resulted in the exclusion of Russia from Korea and the penetration of Japan into Manchuria. With this victory on the Yalu and the landing of Japanese forces on the Manchurian coast, including the Kuantung Peninsula, the Japanese began the preparations for the isolation of Port Arthur.

As the course of the war was favourable enough for Japan to consider taking a further and more audacious step, the Japanese Cabinet met on 31 May and formulated a fundamental policy regarding Korea. The objective was the gradual establishment of protectorate rights over Korea with the ultimate goal of bringing Korea under the sovereign control of Japan. This had to be done in such a way as to avoid arousing, if possible, either internal rebellion or the suspicions or objections of the other Powers. This objective was to be carried out by gradually gaining control of the administration as well as the broader areas of Korean life. Japan would seek control over the political, economic, military, and diplomatic affairs of Korea, and as a first step seek to obtain the direction of all means of communication. In other words,

Japan was to establish a de facto protectorate. Also decided at this meeting were specific steps to implement the above objectives: The military occupation of Korea would continue even after the conclusion of peace with Russia; Korea's conduct of foreign affairs would be subject to Japanese supervision and veto, and Japan would make the Korean government hire an adviser for foreign affairs who would in turn take his orders from the Japanese Foreign Office; Korea would employ a Japanese adviser on financial affairs; Japan would construct and manage major railway lines and the telecommunications system and would encourage her farmers to emigrate to Korea; It would also acquire additional forest, mining and fishery concessions in Korea.⁵

This decision was put into operation by an Agreement signed on 19 August, whereby Korea was to employ advisers on financial and foreign affairs as recommended by the Japanese government. The former post was occupied by a Japanese national and the latter by a national of a third Power.⁶ Tanetaro Megata, head of the Bureau of Revenue of the Japanese Ministry of Finance, was appointed as the Financial Adviser, and he immediately began to take measures looking toward Japanese-Korean economic unity.

5. NGB. Vol. 37, Pt. I, No. 390. 1-356.

6. Text in NGB, Vol. 37, Pt. I, No. 410; Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 37-8.

One of his first steps was the withdrawal of the old Korean coins from circulation and the minting of new ones which would correspond with the Japanese currency system. Late in 1904, an American employee in the Japanese legation in Washington, Durham W. Stevens, was appointed by the Japanese government as the adviser to the Korean Foreign Office.⁷

Japan's special concern over the possibility of Korea's secret dealings with foreign Powers was certainly manifested in another Agreement on 22 August 1904. The new Agreement stipulated that Korea would consult the Japanese government in advance in concluding treaties and conventions with foreign Powers and in dealing with other important diplomatic affairs, such as the granting of concessions to or contracts with foreigners.⁸ In short, by these agreements Japan was permitted to control Korea's financial and diplomatic affairs.

Meanwhile, in August, the Russian fleet in Port Arthur made an attempt to escape but was thrown back with five of its six battleships seriously damaged. In late August and early September, the Japanese again won a major land victory at Liaoyang in Manchuria. Subsequently

7. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 151, 26 Sept. 1905, F.O. 46/590; Hulbert, The Passing of Korea, pp. 208-9; Conroy, The Japanese Seizure of Korea, pp. 450-1; Nelson, Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia, pp. 254-5.

8. Text in NGB. Vol. 37, Pt. I, Nos. 417-8; 9; Lansdowne to MacDonald, 26 Sept. 1905, F.O. 46/590.

there were no less than six other battles around Port Arthur.

At this stage, the major danger for Japanese sea power was that the Russian fleet would be augmented from Europe. The Russian Black Sea Fleet might be moved through the Dardanelles. Even before the war had broken out, when Hayashi had asked what Britain would do if this happened, Lansdowne had replied that he could not give a specific undertaking but that he would certainly regard such an action as a grave violation of treaty engagements.⁹ The least Britain could do would be to refuse the Russian ships coaling facilities and to deny them the right of using the Suez Canal. Britain had decided that if Russia showed signs of preparing to move the Black Sea Fleet, Britain would hamper its participation in the war.¹⁰

However, the progress of the Baltic Fleet which had set off for the Far East on 15 October was in a different category. The British government decided that it would refuse to grant coaling facilities to these ships, but, on the other hand, Britain realized that nothing could be

9. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 12, 11 Jan. 1904, F.O. 46/576.

10. Lansdowne to Scott, 30 Jan. 1904, in B.D., Vol. II, No. 285, pp. 241-2; *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, Nos. 41-60, pp. 48-68.

done to prevent the ships making for the Far East. The Baltic Fleet continued on its way, creating international tension whenever it came near land. On the evening of 21-22 October, the Dogger Bank Incident took place. On entering the North Sea, the Baltic Fleet encountered some small British fishing craft of the Hull fishing fleet in the Dogger Bank area. They were mistakenly taken for Japanese torpedo boats and fired upon. One ship sank and others were damaged, causing several deaths. The Russian ships continued on their way without pausing to pick up the British survivors, and through the Straits of Dover and finally halted at Vigo in Spain. This incident caused serious international complications. Britain decided that, unless Russia gave satisfactory assurances, the British navy would prevent the Russian fleet from proceeding to the Far East. The Channel fleet and all available destroyers assembled at Gibraltar.¹¹ The Russian fleet was in fact bottled up by the British fleet in Vigo harbour, a situation which might well have led to war. However, despite naval and public opinion which would have favoured a battle, the British government had no wish for a show-down with Russia. The Russian government

11. B.D. Vol. IV, Nos. 5-40, pp. 5-48.

13. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 23 Nov. 1904, F.O. 46/579.

promptly expressed its regret for the Incident and promised financial reparations on a liberal scale. It was jointly agreed that the case be referred to an international court of inquiry under the Hague Convention.¹² However, the entire situation was soon transformed by the course of the war. Since Port Arthur was the only port in the Far East to which the Baltic Fleet could safely go, all depended on whether it would fall before the new fleet could reach it. It was defended with great stubbornness and at the end of November the Japanese army was ordered to take it no matter at what cost.¹³ On 1 January 1905, the Russians surrendered to the Japanese leaving Port Arthur in possession of Japan. The Baltic Fleet, without a base in Chinese waters, might now turn back. The Japanese were now winning the war. The Battle of Mukden, the capital of Manchuria, began on 23 February, and ended in the complete rout of the Russian forces on 10 March. While the war at sea could not be decided until the Baltic Fleet was defeated, the capture of Mukden gave Japan a victory which might lead the way to peace-making. At about the same time the internal

12. J.A. White, The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War, pp. 179-184; A.S. Hershey, The International Law and Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War, N.Y. 1906, pp. 235-245; B.D., Vol. IV, Nos. 5-40.

13. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 23 Nov. 1904, F.O. 46/579.

discontent in Russia burst into the open. The Czar was forced to promise reforms on 28 December, but could not allay the discontent which fermented by Bloody Sunday on 22 January, grew until it reached the dimensions of a revolution. Moreover, despite their victories, the Japanese military leaders were also aware of their own shortage of men and munitions and were in favour of peace.¹⁴

Four different methods of peacemaking were advocated: an international conference; mediation through Britain and France, the allies of the belligerents; mediation by the United States; and direct negotiation between Russia and Japan. Both Japan and Russia feared intervention, and a direct negotiation between the two belligerents through the mediation of a neutral seemed most desirable. In November 1904, Theodore Roosevelt had been re-elected as the American President, and was keen to take on these tasks. The fall of Port Arthur and the uprisings in Russia seemed to create an atmosphere suitable for mediation. But the Japanese were still unwilling and the possibility of mediation continued to be discussed intermittently in February without either of the belligerents seriously calling

14. MacDonald to Lansdowne, No. 84, 24 March 1905, F.O. 46/591.

for peace. After the Battle of Mukden, on 21 April, the Japanese Cabinet decided to seek a favourable peace through American mediation and requested the President's good offices on 25 April.¹⁵

Meanwhile, in Korea, as the Japanese enforced their aggressive policies, they were meeting resistance from the Korean people. While the governmental reorganization aroused the upper levels of Korean society, the colonization and other economic measures aroused other groups of the population as well. Personal property was seized and severe punishments for resistance were meted out by Japanese military courts. Discontent and disorder began to spread. Japan held a tight military control over Korea. The Japanese army and navy occupied and constructed many military establishments throughout the country. The Japanese gendarmes began to exercise police power in suppressing any anti-Japanese agitation. Japanese policemen were assigned to supervise the Korean police organization at national and provincial levels. Simultaneously, the Korean troops were, in the name of budgetary economy, reduced to six battalions and three companies, with 311 Officers and 8,214 men.¹⁶

15. Roosevelt to Taft, 27 Apr. 1905, in E.E. Morison, The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, Cambridge, 1951, 8 Vols. Vol. IV, No. 1165.

16. NGB. Vol. 37, Pt. I, Nos. 574-584, 690-734; Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 696-738; First General Report on Korean Finance, enclosed in Morgan to Root, 27 Nov. 1905, The U.S. Dept. of State, Korea: Dispatches, 22.

Having driven the Russians out of Korea and having brought the entire peninsula under her military control, the Japanese on 1 April 1905 forced another Agreement on Korea that gave Japan the desired control over the telephone, telegraph, and postal facilities.¹⁷ This was followed on 16 May by an Agreement which permitted Japan complete freedom of navigation in all the coastal and inland waters of Korea.¹⁸

On 27-28 May, the major actions of the war closed in the great naval battle of Tsushima with a complete victory for the Japanese fleet under the command of Admiral Togo. The result of this great battle was the annihilation of the Russian fleet. The battle was the culmination of Japanese victories which had been altering the world balance of naval power. Russia ceased to be an effective force at sea, while Britain regained a position of superiority at sea which she had not enjoyed since the 1880's. For Britain, the Japanese victories solved not only her problems in the Far East but also the strain on her Navy which had beset the British government for many years.

17. Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 38-40.

18. Ibid., pp. 44-5; NGB, Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 216-230.

The movement to bring the belligerents together for peace discussions was resumed immediately after the Battle of Tsushima. On 31 May, Komura formally requested Roosevelt to undertake mediation. On 8 June, Roosevelt issued formal invitations to the belligerents, and Japan and Russia accepted the invitation on 10 and 12 June respectively.¹⁹

One of the major reasons that made both Russia and Japan seek peace was financial difficulties. By this time, both countries were exhausted and Japan, especially, had great financial difficulties. During the war Japan had raised several loans from Western syndicates. In May 1904, the Japanese reached an arrangement with a London syndicate, consisting of Parrs Bank and the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank, and a New York syndicate, consisting of Kuhn Loeb and the National City Bank, to raise a loan of £10 million at 6 per cent interest. In November, the Japanese again signed the contract for a second loan of £12 million at 6 per cent with the same Anglo-American syndicate as before. Shortly after the Battle of Mukden,

19. NGB. Vols. 37 and 38, Supplement on the Russo-Japanese War, Pt V, No. 207; Roosevelt to Lodge, 5 and 16 June 1905, H.C. Lodge, Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918, New York, 1925, 2 Vols. Vol. II, pp. 130-131.

in March 1905, a further loan was arranged between the Yokohama Specie Bank and the Anglo-American syndicate for £30 million at 4½ per cent. Later the German bankers, supported by their government, tried to break the monopoly of loan operations. In July 1905, a fourth loan of £30 million at 4½ per cent, in which Britain, America and Germany shared, was concluded. The British government was careful to avoid offering any active assistance in raising these loans, which it treated as a commercial transaction. However, without such financial help from Britain, though it was not a British government aid, the Japanese could not have financed the war.²⁰

The Portsmouth Conference started on 10 August between Witte as the Russian Plenipotentiary and Komura as the Japanese representative. There were twelve sessions of the conference and a few private conversations between Witte and Komura. The issues discussed and tentatively settled in the first eight conferences, up to 18 August, were: 1) peace and amity between Russia and

20. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 25 Nov. 1906, F.O. 371/85.

21. J.A. White, The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War, Appendix 2, Issues Discussed at the Portsmouth Conference, pp. 359-364.

Japan; 2) Japan's place in Korea; 3) the evacuation and restoration of Manchuria; 4) the freedom of China to take measures to develop the commerce and industry of Manchuria; 5) the transfer of the leased area from Russia to China, subject to the consent of China; 6) the transfer of the greater part of the southern section of the Chinese Eastern Railway and the mining concessions to Japan, Russia retaining the Chinese Eastern Railway, that is, the segment of the Trans-Siberian system in northern Manchuria which provided a short cut to Vladivostock; 7) mutual engagement not to exploit the Manchurian railways for strategical purposes; 8) agreement to enter into a separate convention for the regulation of railway services. However, it was always extremely doubtful from the start up to the last moment, whether the conference would succeed. Neither antagonist was completely committed to peace and there were groups in each country determined to obstruct peace if it required too great a sacrifice.²¹

The British government was trying to encourage Roosevelt, but there were times when America had to be warned of Britain's responsibilities towards Japan. Britain was opposed to encouraging America to force on had already given general approval to the Japanese demand;

21. J.A. White, The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War, Appendix 2, Issues Discussed at the Portsmouth Conference, pp. 359-364.

22. B.D. Vol. IV, Nos. 51-2, p. 86; E.E. Morison, The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, Vol. V, No. 3671; H.F. Beale, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956, p. 303.

Japan a solution not of her own choosing. No official advice was given by Britain to the Japanese about the settlement. Japan had to act for herself and independently. Britain contented herself with a passive role in the peace-making because she felt that the less interference by outside Powers the better for Japan. Britain was sometimes criticized by Roosevelt for her lack of co-operation in the cause of peace. Britain might have thought that her true interests would be better served by the war continuing until Russia was fully exhausted.²²

The fundamental issues confronting the Portsmouth Conference were those pertaining to Korea and Manchuria, two places long associated with one of the principal fulcrums of power in the Far East and with the sources of discord that led to the Russo-Japanese War. Moreover, Korea and Manchuria were the specific issues over which the military forces had contended and their relative positions might, consequently, be expected to be largely determined by the outcome of the war.

The Korean question was discussed at the Portsmouth Conference on 12 August. The Russian counter-proposals had already given general approval to the Japanese demand: 'The Imperial government, recognizing that Japan possesses

22. B.D. Vol. IV, Nos. 81-2, p. 86; E.E. Morison, The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, Vol. V, No. 3671; H.F. Beale, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956, p. 303.

in Korea preponderant political, military and economic interests, are ready to engage neither to obstruct nor interfere with the measures of direction, protection and control which Japan may consider it necessary to take in Korea.' In spite of this seemingly complete agreement, there were some strong reservations on the part of Russia. The Russian delegation made an attempt to include in the treaty a guarantee for the sovereign rights of Korea. Russia contended that the sovereignty of Korea ought to be recognized and that whatever measures were taken by Japan in Korea ought to be taken in full accord with the Korean government. Count Witte, the chief Russian delegate, confided to his Japanese counterpart that Russia wished to avoid the onus of any collusion with Japan against the independence of Korea, and that the sovereignty of Korea was an international question, and that this sovereignty could not and should not be cancelled out by a bilateral act on the part of Russia and Japan, and that the principle of signing a treaty which violated the sovereignty of another country was one that Russia could not approve, and that unless the sovereignty of Korea were specifically recognized in a treaty, criticism could be expected from other nations. Japanese Foreign Minister, Komura Jutarō, representing his government at the peace conference, summarily rejected Witte's proposal. On this occasion, Komura made a significant remark to the

effect that Korea had already suffered a partial loss of her sovereign rights as a result of the agreements between Japan and Korea signed in 1904. He argued that Japan could not agree to acknowledge Korean sovereignty as it had been hitherto, since Japan was already in control of the foreign affairs of Korea, the sovereignty of the country was severely qualified, and that this issue was not mere formality but one touching on serious Japanese interests. A compromise was reached on the matter, and instead of either fully recognizing Korean sovereignty in the treaty itself as the Russians had wished or avoiding any mention of it as the Japanese had hoped, it was decided to express the Russian idea in the protocol only: 'The Japanese Plenipotentiaries declare that it is understood that the measures which Japan may find it necessary to take in Korea in the future and which impair the sovereignty of that country will be taken in accord with the Korean government.'

23. NGB. Vols. 37 and 38, Supplement on the Russo-Japanese War, Pt. V, No. 294, (pp. 315-538).

24. Ibid.

The second issue concerning Korea was the rights that Russia and Russian subjects would enjoy in Korea under the new dispensation. The Russian demand for most favoured nation treatment was accepted by Japan: 'It is understood that Russian subjects will be treated in exactly the same manner as the subjects or citizens of other foreign Powers, that is, they shall be on the same footing as the subjects or citizens of the most favoured nation'.²⁴

The third issue was one that had been one of the irritants between the two countries before the war. It was the fear that military development on a joining territory by one country should present a threat to the other. The freedom of action that Japan had reserved for herself to take such measures of guidance, protection, and control in Korea as she deemed necessary, increased Russian fears.²⁵ In the end, this matter was also the subject of a compromise expressed as follows in the same Annex to the Protocol that dealt with the most favoured nation question: 'It is further understood that, in order to remove all causes of misunderstanding, Japan and Russia will mutually abstain from taking measures on

24. Ibid .

25. Hardinge to Lansdowne, Telegram No. 151, 25 Aug. 1905, P.O. 65/1706.

27. President Roosevelt to Durand, 21 August 1905, in B.D. Vol. IV, No. 97, p. 104.

the Russo-Korean frontier, which might menace the security of Russian or Korean territory.'²⁵

In the final course of the meetings, a sudden disagreement raised the danger of a prolongation of the war. Russia and Japan were in almost hopeless disagreement over the questions of indemnity and the cession of Sekhalin, which Hardinge, the British Minister in St. Petersburg, warned Lansdowne would make a settlement impossible if the Japanese pressed it.²⁶ But Lansdowne continued to remain in the background and refused to bring pressure on Japan. Even a direct appeal from Roosevelt failed to move him. He argued that British advice would not be taken and would be resented by the Japanese.²⁷

After Roosevelt proceeded to bring pressures on both sides, the agreement was finally reached on 29 August. It was agreed that Sekhalin should be divided into two, with the 50th parallel as the boundary, without indemnity being paid. The Treaty of Portsmouth was

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25. Ibid.; For details, see the useful Appendices in J.A. White, The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War, pp. 349-378, Appendix 1) Russo-Japanese Diplomatic Exchanges, 1901-1904; Appendix 2) Issues Discussed at the Portsmouth Conference; Appendix 3) Russo-Japanese War Chronology.
26. Hardinge to Lansdowne, Telegram No. 153, 25 Aug. 1905, F.O. 65/1706.
27. President Roosevelt to Durand, 23 August 1905, in B.D. Vol. IV, No. 97, p. 104.

then formally signed on 5 September 1905.²⁸

The Treaty provided: 1) For recognition of Japan's paramount political, military and economic interest in Korea; 2) For transfer of the rights of Russia in the Liaotung peninsula to Japan; 3) That the Southern section of the Manchurian railway be ceded to Japan; 4) That the portion of Sakhalin south of the 50th parallel be ceded to Japan; 5) That Russia and Japan should withdraw their troops from Manchuria but retain railway guards; 6) That neither Japan nor Russia should obstruct any general measures common to all countries which China may take for the development of the commerce and industry of Manchuria; 7) That railways in Manchuria be exploited purely for commercial and industrial, and in no way for strategical purposes except in the Liaotung peninsula.

The peace, by ceding to Japan the lease of Port Arthur and recognizing her exclusive control over Korea, imposed a decisive check on Russia's ambitions in the Far East, and the international situation in the Far East was fundamentally changed. After biding their time for ten years since the 'Triple Intervention', the Japanese had driven the Russians out of the Liaotung

28. Text in Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 46-52; BD. Vol. IV, No. 101, pp. 107-111.

peninsula, and in reality Korea was arbitrarily awarded to Japan as a means of settling the Russo-Japanese War. The War brought Japan into the international arena as one of the great world Powers and it also brought an end to Korea's sovereignty which was finally, formally lost later in 1910. One of the most important factors which contributed to the Japanese victory over Russia was the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Although Britain had kept strict neutrality, without the Alliance Japan could not carry out her aggressive policy in the Far East, let alone her victory over Russia in the war. Furthermore, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance partly paved the way for the eventual Japanese annexation of Korea. In the second Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which had been negotiated between two countries during the war, confirmed the 'free hand' of Japan in Korea.

Since the 'Triple Intervention' of 1895, Japan had been working for her freedom of action in Korea. By the late autumn of 1905, after the victory over Russia, the danger of foreign interference with the Japanese plans in Korea seemed to have been eliminated. By the Treaty of Portsmouth Russia was removed from the Korean peninsula. China had already been eliminated from the Korean scene by the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Britain

and America had both become something short of allies of Japan. With this free hand recognized, Japan could now move towards her final step of the annexation of Korea.

These developments were embodied not only in the Treaty of Portsmouth but also in the Taft-Katsura Memorandum which clarified the American-Japanese relations, and also in the second Anglo-Japanese Alliance to which it is now necessary to give some attention.

On the whole, the British now had a confidence in the future of the Far East which they had not felt for many years. It was at this time that they agreed to take a decisive step - the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Because of the rapid transformation wrought in the Far East by Japan's victories, the original Alliance was no longer wholly relevant, especially since it had guaranteed the independence of Korea, and required to be adjusted. Although the 1902 Treaty was not due to expire until 1907, it was being discussed in Britain as early as the Spring of 1905.

One of the reasons which made an approach by Britain to Japan a matter of urgency was the fact that other Powers were scouring the unexpectedly powerful Japan. There were worries that Japan would be persuaded to enter a Russo-German system.¹ Lansdowne brought the

1. Hardinge to Lansdowne, No. 651, 7 Dec. 1904, F.O. 65/1587.

(3) The Renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1905

In early 1905, Britain's international position in the Far East had been transformed. Her ally Japan was inflicting a series of crushing defeats on Russia, the foe she had most dreaded, and if France and Germany intervened to aid Russia it was likely that the United States would come to the support of Britain and Japan. None of this had been foreseen only a couple of years earlier. On the whole, the British now had a confidence about the future of the Far East which they had not felt for many years. It was at this time that they agreed to take a decisive step - the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Because of the rapid transformation wrought in the Far East by Japan's victories, the original Alliance was no longer wholly relevant, especially since it had guaranteed the independence of Korea, and required to be adjusted. Although the 1902 Treaty was not due to expire until 1907, it was being discussed in Britain as early as the Spring of 1905.

One of the reasons which made an approach by Britain to Japan a matter of urgency was the fact that other Powers were courting the unexpectedly powerful Japan. There were worries that Japan would be persuaded to enter a Russo-German system.¹ Lansdowne brought the

1. Hardinge to Lansdowne, No. 651, 2 Dec. 1904, F.O. 65/1682.

subject before the Cabinet on 23 March, and on the following day he told the Japanese Minister in London, Hayashi, that, although it was perhaps unusual to anticipate the date set in the Treaty for a discussion of its renewal, he felt that immediate consideration was justified by the exceptional circumstances of the present case. He proposed that the alliance should be renewed and hinted that it should also be extended in scope.²

On 8 April, the Japanese Cabinet agreed that its interests would be best served by the continuation of the alliance on the same lines as 1902. It felt that the Treaty did not require any change except for an adjustment to meet changed circumstances in Korea after the war. At the same Cabinet, Japan decided to assume protective rights in Korea and decisions were taken to bring political strategy into line with military strategy. It was therefore necessary for this Korean stipulation to be included in the new alliance and for Britain's approval to be obtained.³ On 16 April,

2. Lansdowne to MacDonald, 24 Mar. 1905, F.O. 46/673; scope to NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, No. 1.

3. NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 10, 250.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 38, Pt. I, No. 11.

5. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 73, 19 April; No. 80, 3 May; No. 83, 10 May 1905. P.O. 46/673.

6. MacDonald to Lansdowne, Tel. 124, 25 May 1905, F.O. 46/673.

Komura sent Hayashi telegrams, in which the most significant clause stated that it might be necessary for Japan to take steps to preserve her special political interests in Korea. The provision for Korean independence, which had been inserted in the 1902 Treaty, was to be dropped, and all the safeguards, which Britain had included to ensure that she was not associated with any acquisition of Korean territory, were omitted.⁴

On 12 April, the Committee of Imperial Defence discussed the subject, and the needs of the Indian frontier came up for discussion. Lansdowne informed the Cabinet on 3 May that the British idea of extending the scope of the alliance had been explicitly rejected by the Japanese, and it was agreed to let the matter lie until the Japanese alter their views.⁵

On 25 May, the Japanese Cabinet, and subsequently the Genro and the Chiefs of Staff, decided to accept the British proposals, altering the present treaty to an offensive-defensive alliance and agreeing to extend the scope to cover India and countries to the east.⁶

4. Ibid., Vol. 38, Pt. 1, No. 11.

5. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 73, 19 April; No. 80, 3 May; No. 83, 10 May 1905. F.O. 46/673.

6. MacDonald to Lansdowne, Tel. 124, 25 May 1905, F.O. 46/673.

On 26 May, Hayashi passed over the Japanese proposals, containing 6 Articles and 3 separate Articles of which the latter were to be kept secret. Clauses extended the scope of the agreement to apply to India and to cover an offensive-defensive alliance. Japan also introduced two new clauses dealing with Korea: Article IV. The right of Japan to take such measures as she may deem right and necessary in order to safeguard her special political, military and economical interests in Korea is fully recognized by Britain. Special Separate Article III. In case Japan finds it necessary to establish a protectorate over Korea in order to check the aggressive action of any third Power and to prevent complications in connection with the foreign relations of Korea, Great Britain engages to support the action of Japan. These clauses were to be Japan's price for agreeing to Britain's wishes on the other points.⁷

Unlike in 1902, when Lansdowne had kept the negotiations a closely guarded secret, they were in 1905 publicly discussed in advance. On 31 May, Lansdowne circulated a draft treaty to the Cabinet. The objects of the alliance were declared to be the preservation of China's integrity and the maintenance of the open door throughout her Empire and the protection of the rights

7. Lansdowne to MacDonald, 26 and 27 May 1905, F.O. 46/673; NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, No. 20; B.D. Vol. IV, No. 118, pp. 128-31.

of the two Powers in Eastern and Southern Asia including not only their own possessions but also those areas contiguous to their own possessions. If, in defence of these objects, either Power was involved by aggressive action in war, its ally would come to its aid. After the end of the war, each Power should endeavour to maintain at all times available for concentration in the Far East a naval force superior to that of any third Power. Unlike the Treaty of 1902, the new arrangements met with no opposition, and the British proposals were presented to Hayashi on 10 June.⁸

Britain had admitted that Korea might have to forfeit her independent status and that a protectorate under Japan seemed to be preferable to a corrupt Korean Court, rife with Russian intrigue. This was the general view of Britain's professional advisers in the area.

The British representative in Seoul, John Jordan, had written to MacDonald, the British Minister in Tokyo:

'but I feel certain that nothing short of a protectorate will ever save the situation here. In the interests of the Koreans

8. Minute by Lansdowne, 31 May, 5 June 1905.
F.O. 46/673; Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 101,
10 June 1905, F.O. 46/673.

themselves this is the only possible solution, and the people, as distinguished from the officials, would, I believe, infinitely prefer it to the Government they have had during the last ten years of nominal independence.'⁹

MacDonald also had told Lansdowne that :

'from my experience of the country and people I am entirely in accord with the views here put forward by Sir John Jordan. But whether we are right or wrong a Japanese protectorate over Korea will certainly be established after the war'.¹⁰

Britain sacrificed the Korean independence on the ground that she had had the opportunity to turn herself into a modernized, independent state but had failed to introduce effective reforms. Since Korea, in her weakness, seemed to be a ready victim for Russia, the Japanese were entitled to intervene more conspicuously. The Japanese gave up acknowledging Korea's territorial integrity and moved towards a policy of territorial expansion in the peninsula, while Britain accepted this change and tacitly

9. Jordan's private letter to MacDonald, 7 July 1905, enclosed in MacDonald to Lansdowne, No. 188, secret, 15 July 1905, F.O. 46/673.

10. Ibid.

supported Japanese ambitions there. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was transformed from an essentially benevolent instrument designed to maintain the status quo into something which condoned expansion. Nevertheless, it was likely that Japan would have gone ahead with her plans, even without British support. Japan's object was to secure a renewal of the Alliance which would specify Britain's recognition of her changed status in Korea, and since this was something which Britain would only reluctantly concede, it would require some worthwhile concession from Japan. Britain's demands were only to be granted in return for her recognition of Japan's position in Korea. Japan stated that:

'As a Japanese protectorate of Korea issued after the war was absolutely essential to the future peace of Japan, the Japanese government had considered what quid pro quo they could offer to Great Britain in order to induce her to acquiesce in such a protectorate and to nullify the declarations respecting the independence of Korea contained in the Preamble and Article I of the existing Agreement'.¹¹

11. MacDonalld to Lansdowne, No. 170 and 171, 8 July 1905, F.O. 46/673; NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, No. 19.

After receiving the Japanese counter-proposal of 6 July, the British Cabinet discussed the topic of Korea again on 11 July. The main problem was to define treaty rights. Britain had no desire to prevent Japan from obtaining a protectorate over Korea but was afraid that the rights which existing treaties conferred on other Powers were likely to be interfered with by the proposed protectorate. The British Cabinet discussed the issue again on 19 July and decided not to accept a treaty obligation to assist Japan in any quarrel arising out of existing treaty arrangements between Korea and other countries. On the same day, Lansdowne asked Hayashi for an undertaking that the Article on Korea did not imply the adoption of any measures in violation of established treaty rights and Japan did not consider herself entitled to call upon Britain to come to her assistance in support of such measures.¹² Britain's object was not to prohibit Japan from violating established treaty rights but to ensure that it was not dragged into any quarrel which those rights might occasion. Britain was concerned about the effect of the Alliance, particularly, on her relations with the United States.¹³

12. Lansdowne to MacDonal, No. 124, 18 July 1905; No. 125, 19 July 1905, F.O. 46/673.

13. Note by A.J. Balfour, 19 July 1905, Ibid.

14. Lansdowne to Durand, No. 109, 29 July 1905; Durand to Lansdowne, 4 Aug. 1905, F.O. 46/673.

15. Lansdowne to Durand, No. 125A, 31 July 1905, F.O. 46/673.

Britain was thinking not so much of her own treaty rights, since British commercial interests in Korea were minimal, but of the wider problems. Britain found it desirable to inform the United States of the forthcoming Alliance and to explain her particular difficulty. The British Ambassador in Washington, Sir Mortimer Durand, explained to Roosevelt at Oyster Bay on 3 August about the Alliance and assured him that Britain could not be compelled to go to war say with the United States in event of a violation of established treaty rights.¹⁴

On 28 and 29 July, Lansdowne revealed the Korean question to F.B. Loomis, the American Assistant Secretary of State, and Senator Lodge, Roosevelt's special adviser, who were then in London, and found them both strongly in favour of giving Japan a free hand there. He was assured by both of them that the United States would have no objection to the establishment of Japanese preponderance in Korea. Roosevelt was as much prepared to forego Korea as was Britain and was not unduly worried about her treaty rights.¹⁵

President Theodore Roosevelt had favoured Japanese control of Korea even before the Russo-Japanese war. As early as 1900, Roosevelt had written to his German

14. Lansdowne to Durand, No. 109, 29 July 1905; Durand to Lansdowne, 4 Aug. 1905, F.O.46/673.

15. Lansdowne to Durand, No. 195A, 31 July 1905, F.O. 46/673.

friend, Speck von Sternburg, that he would like to see Japan have Korea because Japan deserved it in order to check Russia. In May 1904, he again advised von Sternburg to inform the Kaiser that the United States was willing to see Japan take Korea.¹⁶ In January 1905, when the Japanese Minister in Washington, Takahira, communicated Japan's wish to provide protection, supervision and guidance to Korea, he fully concurred, and he told the Japanese Minister that Japan had the right to place Korea under its sphere of influence.¹⁷ 'We cannot possibly interfere for the Koreans against Japan. They could not strike one blow in their own defence', he wrote in a brief note to Secretary Hay on 28 January 1905.¹⁸

Roosevelt informed Durand of Taft's interview with Katsura in Tokyo in July 1905. On

16. Howard Beale, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956, p. 314.

17. Komura to Takahira, 22 Jan. 1905; Takahira's conversation with Roosevelt, 24 Jan. 1905, in NGB. Vol. 37,38, Supplement, Pt.V, Nos.192-3.

18. NGB. Supplement on the Russo-Japanese War, V, Nos. 186, 188; T. Dennet, Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War, p. 110.

19. Text in NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 189-193, Dennet, Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War, pp. 117-4. Beale, Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power, p. 157.

29 July 1905, American War Secretary, William H. Taft, as a personal representative of President Roosevelt and not as a member of the Department of State, negotiated a secret Memorandum in Tokyo. In the secret Memorandum, Katsura, the Japanese Premier, disavowed any aggressive Japanese designs against the Philippines and emphasized Japan's resolve that a complete solution of the Korean question should be made as the logical consequence of the war. Taft admitted the justness of Katsura's comments and remarked that: 'the establishment by Japanese troops of a suzerainty over Korea to the extent of requiring that Korea enter into no foreign treaties without the consent of Japan was the logical result of the present war and would directly contribute to permanent peace in the East'. 19

Roosevelt completely confirmed Taft's statement. The United States approved Japan's suzerainty over Korea in return for a Japanese disavowal of any aggressive intentions towards the Philippines. Katsura also suggested that America should join the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. He recommended a good

19. Text in NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 189-193, Dennet, Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War, pp. 112-4. Beale, Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power, p. 157.

understanding between the three governments of Japan, the United States and Great Britain in the Far East. Katsura well understood the traditional policy of the United States in this respect and perceived fully the impossibility of their entering into a formal alliance of such a nature with foreign nations, but suggested some good understanding or an alliance in practice, if not in name. Taft told Katsura that this was impossible and Roosevelt did not hold out any hope that any active identification of the United States with the Alliance was possible.²⁰ To assert that the Taft-Katsura Agreement made the United States an unsigned member of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance might be valid only in that the United States, like Britain, had given way before the imperialist ambitions of Japan on the Continent of Asia in order to secure its own imperial Asiatic possessions elsewhere.

As all the information that Britain had gathered led to the impression that Roosevelt was prepared to accept the disappearance of the Korean Sovereignty, Britain came to the conclusion that there was not much likelihood of her being tied to Japan in a quarrel with the United States over treaty rights in Korea. More-

20. NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 189-193.

F.O. 46,672. Text in *Korea, Treaties and Agreements*, pp. 40-42; B.D. Vol. IV, No. 155, pp. 164-168; NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 57-60.

over, the Japanese government gave an undertaking that it would not disregard the treaty rights of other Powers in Korea and that it recognized the binding force of Korea's existing treaties.²¹ The Agreement was now ready for signature, and, on 12 August 1905, the second Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed by Hayashi and Lansdowne in London. It was an Agreement of eight Articles with no secret clauses or diplomatic notes, and it was decided not to publish for the moment.²² It reads :

PREAMBLE

The Governments of Great Britain and Japan, being desirous of replacing the Agreement concluded between them on the 30th January 1902, by fresh stipulations, have agreed upon the following Articles, which have for their object:

- (a) The consolidation and maintenance of the general peace in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India;

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21. MacDonald to Lansdowne, No. 184, 3 August 1905, F.O. 46/673. A discussion of the negotiations of the existing treaty rights follows in the next chapter.
22. Lansdowne to MacDonald, No. 101. 12 August 1905. F.O. 46/672. Text in Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 40-42; B.D. Vol. IV, No. 155, pp. 164-169; NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 57-60.

(b) The preservation of the common interests of all Powers in China by insuring the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China;

(c) The maintenance of the territorial rights of the High Contracting Parties in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India, and the defence of their special interests in the said regions :

ARTICLE I. It is agreed that whenever, in the opinion of either Great Britain or Japan, any of the rights and interests referred to in the preamble of this Agreement are in jeopardy, the two Governments will communicate with one another fully and frankly, and will consider in common the measures which should be taken to safeguard those menaced rights or interests.

ART. II. If by reason of unprovoked attack or aggressive action, wherever arising, on the part of any other Power or Powers either Contracting Party should be involved in war in defence of its territorial rights or special interests mentioned in the preamble of this Agreement.

Agreement, the other Contracting Party will at once come to the assistance of its ally, and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it.

ART. III. Japan possessing paramount political, military, and economic interests in Korea, Great Britain recognizes the right of Japan to take such measures of guidance, control, and protection in Korea as she may deem proper and necessary to safeguard and advance those interests, provided always that such measures are not contrary to the principles mentioned in the present Agreement, and the means by which such assistance is to be made available, will be arranged by the Contracting Parties, who will from time to time consult one another fully and freely upon all questions of mutual interest.

ART. IV. Great Britain having a special interest in all that concerns the security of the Indian frontier, Japan recognizes her right to take such measures in the proximity of that frontier as she may find necessary for safeguarding her Indian possessions.

ART. V. The High Contracting Parties agree that neither of them will, without consulting the other, enter into separate arrangements with another Power to the prejudice of the objects described in the preamble of this Agreement.

ART. VI. As regards the present war between Japan and Russia, Great Britain will continue to maintain strict neutrality unless some other Power or Powers should join in hostilities against Japan, in which case Great Britain will come to the assistance of Japan, and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with Japan.

ART. VII. The conditions under which armed assistance shall be afforded by either Power to the other in the circumstances mentioned in the present Agreement, and the means by which such assistance is to be made available, will be arranged by the Naval and Military authorities of the Contracting Parties, who will from time to time consult one another fully and freely upon all questions of mutual interest.

ART. VIII. The present Agreement shall, subject to the provisions of Article VI., come into effect immediately after the date of its signature, and remain in force for ten years from that date.

In case neither of the High Contracting Parties should have notified twelve months before the expiration of the said ten years the intention of terminating it, it shall remain binding until the expiration

of one year from the day on which either of the High Contracting Parties shall have denounced it. But if, when the date fixed for its expiration arrives, either ally is actually engaged in war, the alliance shall, ipso facto, continue until peace is concluded.

It was a typical diplomatic quid pro quo arrangement - a Japanese Korea for a British India. A significant omission from the treaty text was any mention of Korea's independence and her territorial integrity which had been explicitly recognized in the first Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902.²³

The renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1905 provided the guarantee Japan desired for her new course in Korea.

23. The Korean Government expressed its disappointment with the terms of the new Alliance and its concern about the future. Jordan to Campbell, 3 Oct. 1905, F.O. 350/3.

Whereas in the first Treaty Korean independence had been implicit, in the second Treaty the loss of Korean independence was explicit. Japan was ready to enter the final phase of her policy which was to lead to annexation. In September, the Japanese announced that they had no alternative but to take charge of Korea's external relations. Lansdowne, in reply, stated that Britain was entirely favourable to the development of Japanese influence in Korea and that she was not likely to encounter any difficulties from Britain in giving effect to her policy.

On 27 October 1905, the Japanese Cabinet, recognising that the British Alliance and the Russo-Japanese Treaty clearly laid down that Korea must inevitably come under the tutelage of Japan, decided to act and adopted a draft treaty with Korea. Additional troop reinforcements were to enter Seoul before the negotiations with the Korean government, and the General in command of the Japanese forces in Korea was ordered to provide the necessary assistance for successful consummation of the negotiations.

1. Lansdowne to MacDonald, 26 Sept. 1905, F.O. 45/590.

2. The text of decision in NIS, Vol. 50, Pt. 1, No. 259.

CHAPTER 9. JAPAN ANNEXES KOREA, 1910

By the late autumn of 1905, Japan was ready to enter the final phase of her policy which was to lead to annexation. In September, the Japanese announced that they had no alternative but to take charge of Korea's external relations. Lansdowne, in reply, made it plain that Britain was entirely favourable to the development of Japanese influence in Korea and that Japan was not likely to encounter any difficulties from Britain in giving effect to her policy.¹

On 27 October 1905, the Japanese Cabinet, recognizing that the British Alliance and the Russo-Japanese Treaty clearly laid down that Korea must inevitably come under the tutelage of Japan, decided to act and adopted a draft treaty with Korea. Additional troop reinforcements were to enter Seoul before the negotiations with the Korean government, and the General in command of the Japanese forces in Korea was ordered to provide the necessary assistance for successful consummation of the negotiations.²

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1. Lansdowne to MacDonald, 26 Sept. 1905, F.O. 46/590.
 2. The text of decision in NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, No.259.

Ito Hirobumi was appointed as special ambassador to negotiate the treaty and arrived in Seoul on 9 November 1905. When Ito presented a draft treaty of protection and demanded immediate acceptance, the Korean Emperor and his Ministers tried in every possible way to avoid taking the steps being forced upon them. The Korean officials tried to dissuade the Japanese from imposing the formal protectorate when Korea had already been deprived of any substantive freedom of action in foreign affairs. The Korean Prime Minister, Kyu-Sul Han, strongly refused to give approval. However, when they realized that Japan would insist upon her major demand, they tried to reduce as much as possible the all-inclusiveness and the finality of this step. They could succeed only in minor ways. They were able to persuade Ito to remove the words 'entirely to herself' from the phrase 'Japan shall take over entirely to herself'. Also, the Korean desire for some commitment on the part of Japan as to a termination of the protectorate was weakly reflected, as a vague and ineffectual time limit for the duration of the treaty, in the Preamble which stated that the Agreement was 'to serve until the moment arrives when it is recognized that Korea has attained national strength'. And another ambiguous word 'primarily' was added to the effect that

and on the development of the Korean independent movement, New York, P. H. Revell Co., 1921, p. 55.

the Japanese Resident-General was to function primarily in the area of diplomatic affairs.³

The Protectorate Treaty, officially dated 17 November 1905, was signed in fact at one o'clock in the morning of 18 November, after a stormy session lasting from two o'clock in the afternoon of 17 November until early the next morning under the threat of Ito, accompanied by the Commanding General of the Japanese troop, Hasegawa Yoshimichi, sword in hand. The Japanese soldiers and gendarmes surrounded the Palace where the Cabinet meeting was being held. The very court yard of the Palace was filled with gleaming bayonets of the soldiers, and the rattling of the swords could be heard in the Cabinet Chamber. The Ministers were not given the necessary time to discuss nor any chance to inform or appeal to the people or foreigners.⁴ The Treaty, which contained five Articles, was essentially the same as the original Japanese draft: Japan, through the Japanese Foreign Ministry, was to have control and direction of the external relations and affairs of Korea,

3. NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 264-9; Conroy, The Japanese Seizure of Korea, p. 334.

4. Henry Chung, The Case of Korea: A Collection of Evidence on the Japanese Domination of Korea and on the Development of the Korean Independent Movement, New York, F.H. Revell Co., 1921, p. 55.

and the diplomatic and consular representatives of Japan will have the charge of the subjects and interests of Korea in foreign countries (Article I); Korea was to make no international agreement except through the medium of the Japanese government (Article II); The enforcement of this control was to be in the hands of a Resident General who was to reside at Seoul and have direct access to the Korean Emperor. Japan was to station Residents at the treaty ports and other places in Korea wherever necessary, where they were to exercise the powers and functions hitherto appertaining to Japanese Consuls in Korea (Article III); Article VI contained Japanese pledge to maintain the welfare and dignity of the Korean imperial house.

A Japanese declaration of 22 November announced the new relationship to the world.⁵

During the short negotiation, the Japanese exercised uncontested military control over Korea including the capital, Seoul, which was virtually under Japanese

5. Text in Communication by Hayashi, 22 Nov. 1905, F.O. 46/600; Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul, p. 660; NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 264-9; Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 55-6.

Kaesul, pp. 671-673.

martial law. Because of the speed of the treaty making process and the secrecy that surrounded it, anti-protectorate demonstrations did not take place until after the signing of the treaty.

Following the announcement, however, the indignant Koreans used various means to abrogate the forced Agreement of Protectorate. A large number of officials, including the prominent members of the ruling elite, submitted passionate memorials to the throne, in which they denounced the treaty. They organized vigils outside the Palace gates. Having failed in their efforts, such patriots as Byung-Se Cho, a former Prime Minister, Young-Hwan Min, a highly respected young official, Man-Sik Hong, Sang-Chul Lee, Byung-Sun Song, Bong-Hak Kim committed suicide, leaving behind impassioned pleas for independence. The news of these suicides caused spontaneous public rallies in the streets. The popular sentiment was violently anti-Japanese and there were movements against Japan by the Korean soldiers in the various provinces. These protests produced more patriotic martyrs but could not alter the Japanese plan.⁶

6. F.A. McKenzie, Tragedy of Korea, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1908, pp. 131-141; Kuksa Kaesul, pp. 671-673.

7. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 17 Nov. 1905, F.O. 46/600.

8. Minute by Lansdowne, 4 Nov. 1905, F.O. 46/600.

Official notifications of the treaty were sent to the governments of Britain, the United States, Germany, France, and other foreign Powers on 22 November, but the British government was confidentially informed in advance on 17 November. The British government thought that the perilous situation in Korea had rendered necessary the conclusion of this treaty, and had no objections as long as the treaties existing between the Powers and Korea were respected by Japan, and all proper commercial and industrial interests enjoyed by the Powers in Korea were not injured.⁷

However, this did not mean that Britain was prepared to condone Japan's annexation straightaway. The British government view was that, while in the last resort it would not object to annexation, it hoped that Japan would be content with a protectorate. Lansdowne had written of his desire that Japan would not force the pace too much.⁸ Britain was committed in general terms to supporting Japan's policy in Korea, but not to the exact form which that policy took. None the less, Britain's attitude was a narrowly commercial one. She would not criticize the Japanese actions, provided the open door was

7. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 17 Nov. 1905, F.O. 46/600.

8. Minute by Lansdowne, 4 Nov. 1905, F.O. 46/600.

maintained and the trading position of the British was safeguarded. Whereas Britain might have wielded some influence, she preferred to leave matters to take their own course.

The Japanese protectorate of Korea, however, had some practical implications for Britain. There were two Britons who opposed the Japanese protectorate. One was the financial adviser to the Korean government, John McLeavy Brown, who had formerly belonged to the Chinese Maritime Customs Service. On the eve of signing the Protectorate Treaty, the Japanese tried to arrange with Lansdowne for Brown's retirement. The Japanese asked the British government to smooth the path of Brown's release by arranging for his inclusion in the next Honours List. But the British government declined to do so since Brown was not its employee. The Japanese proceeded to negotiate directly with Brown and he left Korea on 30 November 1905.⁹

9. NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 798-810;
I.H. Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance,
pp. 351-2.

Another case was that of E.T. Bethell, the editor of the English language 'The Korean Daily News', whose critical articles were a thorn in the flesh of the Japanese authorities. There were seven daily newspapers in 1909 published in Korea. Among them only a few newspapers could manage to adopt openly anti-Japanese editorial policies. 'The Hwangsung Sinmun', for example, printed just after the Protectorate Treaty of 1905 an inflammatory article against the treaty and asked if it was worthwhile for any of the Koreans to live any longer since all Koreans had become the slaves of others.¹⁰ But E.T. Bethell's English language paper, 'The Korean Daily News', and its sister paper in Korean language, 'The Daehan Maeil Sinbo', which was most widely circulated at about ten times more than any others, were particularly outspoken in criticizing the Japanese administration of Korea. As a citizen of Britain, the Japanese ally, Bethell enjoyed extraterritorial rights in Korea. After failing in many attempts to suppress Bethell's papers, Japan

10. Kankoku Genji ni Okeru Chiho Jinshin no Jokyo (The Present Condition of the Public Opinion of the Local Populace in Korea), 1 Nov. 1909, The Japanese Archives in Korea, 1894-1910 series, No. 305, pp. 42-45; McKenzie, Tragedy of Korea, p. 140.

took the matter up with the British government. During the summer of 1906, the Japanese authorities had several articles from 'The Daehan Maeil Sinbo' translated and sent to the British government. They repeatedly insisted that the British government do something about Bethell. Finally in September 1907, Henry Cockburn, the British Consul-General in Seoul, summoned Bethell to appear before a British Consular Court to answer the charge of adopting a course of action likely to cause a breach of the peace. Bethell was convicted and ordered to enter into recognizance of £300 to be of good behaviour for six months. In June 1908, Bethell was again brought into the British Consular Court and sentenced to imprisonment for three weeks and required subsequently to give security for good behaviour during six months or to be deported. Shortly afterwards Bethell permanently left Korea.¹¹ On these two occasions, Britain had not interfered with the fulfilment of Japanese plans in Korea by standing up for her own nationals.

On 21 December 1905, Ito was appointed as Resident-General, and the Japanese Residency-General was formally opened in Seoul on 1 February 1906, replacing the Japanese legation that had been in existence since 1880. As the new de facto ruler of Korea, Ito's administration in Korea was characterized by the introduction of Japanese advisers into virtually every office of the Korean government at the national and the local levels. Foreign affairs,

11. NGB. Vol. 38, Pt. I, Nos. 825-830; McKenzie, Tragedy of Korea, pp. 120, 224; C.I. Kim and H.K. Kim, Korea and the Politics of Imperialism, pp. 181-188; For details, see Bonar's Reports in F.O. 371/877.

military defence, and communications were placed directly under Japanese management and control. The Residency-General was an ever-growing bureaucracy, and, by early 1907, it became a miniature government except for military affairs. Behind these civilian organizations, stood the Japanese army in Korea that could be ordered into action by the Resident-General. The Korean Emperor had been reduced to a protesting but powerless figurehead. Ito's policy in Korea was controlling the Korean government through advisers without instituting any sudden drastic innovations in its structure.

On the whole, Ito chose the strategy of gradualism and tried to maintain the outward status quo in the central structure of the Korean ruling oligarchy. In an effort to secure the peaceful assimilation of the peninsular nation into the Japanese Empire, Japan tried to utilize the prestige of the Korean Emperor, and at each important step in the annexation process, Japan obtained new treaties and agreements sanctioned by the Korean sovereign. Until the actual annexation in 1910 the outward integrity of the Emperor and his Court was preserved. This maintenance of the outward status quo in the central structure of the government was designed to minimize popular antipathy to Japanese rule and to obtain the collaboration of the ruling oligarchy in the Japanese consolidation of their position. Ito sought the co-operation of the ruling oligarchy in Korea

by preserving its personal interests and by maintaining an outward appearance of governmental stability.

The Protectorate Treaty met no opposition from the Powers, since it was a formal declaration of what had already been approved in the second Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the Portsmouth Treaty and the Taft-Katsura Memorandum. In late 1905, no foreign country was sufficiently powerful and interested in Korea to check Japan. In this situation, the Korean Court made a futile appeal to the Powers. Deserted by the Powers, forced to have his kingdom become a Japanese protectorate, and being a prisoner of the Japanese, the Emperor of Korea secretly led an opposition to Japan with the help of the Court party and the patriots throughout the nation. The only and the last hope for Korea's salvation did appear in the summer of 1907 when the Second World Peace Conference was held at the Hague, Holland. It was this World Conference at which the Emperor and the people of Korea hoped to lay their case before the eyes of the world, and to appeal for help from the Powers to free their country from Japanese control. The Korean Emperor, in an attempt to win international support for his cause, decided to send a delegation of his own to the Hague Peace Conference. On 20 April 1907, Joon Lee, former Police Magistrate of the Supreme Court and one of the Emperors favourites, with a secret letter

from the Emperor left Seoul for Vladivostok, where he informed Sang-Sul Lee, ex-Vice Premier, of the imperial mission. The two then went via the Trans-Siberian railway to the Russian capital, St. Petersburg, where they met Wi-Jong Lee, ex-secretary of the Korean legation at St. Petersburg, and then the three headed for The Hague. On 27 June 1907, the three uninvited Korean envoys presented the credentials of their Emperor to the Hague Conference and called the attention to the fact that independent Korea did not receive any notification of the conference, and that the Korean delegate had a right to attend the conference, and asked for the recognition of their credentials. When they were told that Korea had lost her qualifications to attend the Conference because of the Treaty of Protectorate which gave the control of Korea's foreign affairs to Japan, the Korean mission replied that the Protectorate Treaty was forced on Korea at the point of sword having no signature of the Emperor of Korea, and therefore, it was illegal and should be nullified. However, as their credentials were refused in spite of their repeated appeals, the only thing they could do was just to try to mobilize world opinion for the cause of Korean independence, but without success.¹²

This episode only hastened the further Japanese control over Korea. Japan decided to seize this

12. For the details of the petition to the Hague Conference by Korean delegation, see Donald G. Tewksbury, Source Materials on Korean Politics and Ideologies, N.Y. International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1950, pp. 34-35; Seoul National University, Kuksa Kaesul, pp. 675-679; Byung-Do Lee, Kuksa Daekwan, p. 485.

opportunity to strengthen her control, and Ito forced the abdication of the Korean Emperor. After many complications, on 19 July 1907, the Emperor reluctantly decreed that he would order the Crown Prince to act in his stead, but he explicitly denied that his decision was that of abdication. However, Ito chose to interpret the decree as one of abdication and held a court reception on the next day at which occasion the new Emperor received congratulatory salutations from high government officials and foreign Consuls in Seoul. While the ceremony was being conducted, a large Japanese guard protected the Palace because of violent anti-abdication demonstrations in the street which resulted in the numerous clashes. The ceremony for the crowning of the new Emperor, Sunjong, was conducted later on 27 August 1907.¹³

A few days after the coronation of the new Emperor, Ito presented the draft of a new Agreement by which Japan was to extend its control over the internal affairs of Korea, and got the approval on the same day.¹⁴ By this

13. NGB. Vol. 40, Pt. I, Nos. 473-497; Shakuo Shunjo, Chosen Heigoshi: Chosen Saikinshi (History of Korean Annexation: Modern Korean History), Keijo, 1926, pp. 347-367.

14. Text in Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 58-59.

Agreement of 24 July 1907, Korea consented to act under the guidance of the Resident-General in all administrative matters, and to appoint Japanese as high officials. Judicial affairs were to be set apart from ordinary administration. At the same time, a Memorandum on the same date bound Korea to appoint Japanese judges and prosecutors to all the courts of law throughout the country, and to appoint Japanese nationals as Vice-Ministers in each Ministry of the government, such as the Chief of the Police Bureau in the Home Ministry, as the Chief Secretary of the Cabinet, and other officials in key posts at national and provincial levels.¹⁵ With this appointment of Japanese Vice-Ministers, judges, police chiefs, and so on to replace the Japanese advisers, Korea's loss of its independence was virtually complete.

By this Agreement the Japanese Resident-General in Seoul became a virtual Regent in Korea. This Agreement transferred all internal administration of Korea to the Japanese, while that of 17 November 1905 gave external control to them. This Memorandum also bound Korea to

15. Ibid.

disband her army. Ito forced the new Korean Emperor to announce the dissolution of the Korean army, except for one battalion to guard the Palace, on the grounds of economic retrenchment and reform. This caused a nationwide revolt by the Korean soldiers against Japan. Most of the soldiers in the provinces escaped with weapons and joined guerrilla movements.

There had been guerrilla movements of Ei-Byong (the Righteous Army) operating in the mountainous areas. They disguised themselves as farmers and attacked Japanese passers-by, settlements, and small units of Japanese troops. Until July 1907, this Righteous Army existed in name only because of the Japanese suppression, but it was revived through the addition of new recruits from among the recently disbanded Korean soldiers. Furthermore, the brutal Japanese suppression caused many Korean farmers to sympathize with them. Ei-Byong rose all over the country against the Japanese and their numerical strength increased and their attack became more rampant. The Righteous Army, despite all difficulties and the relentless use of force by the Japanese, continued their active resistance until the middle of 1910. In 1910, the British representative in Seoul, Bonar, reported that there were a considerable number of insurgents in organized form and in bands numbering up to 80.¹⁶ Even after the

16. Bonar to Grey, 28 March 1910. F.O. 371/877.

annexation in 1910, Ei-Byong, aided by Korean patriots, continued to resist and much later helped the March 1st. 1919 Independence Movement.¹⁷

Meanwhile, in Japan, there had been many vociferous advocates of an early annexation, represented by the chauvinistic Kokuryukai (the Amur Society) and Uchida Ryohei. They wished for a speedy and complete absorption of Korea. Uchida, the guiding spirit of Kokuryukai and the chief Japanese agent in Korea for the early annexation, became an adviser to their collaborators in Korea, the Ilchinhoi (a pro-Japanese society in Korea). The Japanese backed Ilchinhoi, which was supported by a very small number of pro-Japanese Koreans, and its leaders like Byung-Joon Song and Yong-Koo Lee, together with Uchida, worked vigorously for the Japanese scheme for annexation of Korea. Most Korean peoples accused them of being national traitors wanting to sell their country to Japan.¹⁸

The Russo-Japanese conversations in 1907 marked the beginning of Japan's effort to obtain final foreign approvals for the annexation of Korea. After months of protracted negotiations, which had begun in February 1907, the Russian Foreign Minister, A.P. Izvolsky,

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17. For the details of Ei-Byong, see C.I. Kim and H.K. Kim, Korea and the Politics of Imperialism, pp. 196-206; McKenzie, Korea's Fight for Freedom, New York, F.H. Revell Co., 1920, Ch. VII-IX.
18. Kuzu Yoshihisa, Nikkan Gappo Hishi (Secret History of the Merger of Japan and Korea), 2. vols., Tokyo, 1930, Vol. I, pp. 41, 55-56, 74-95.

and the Japanese Minister in St. Petersburg, Motono Ichiro, signed a Convention, a secret Convention, and an additional secret Article on 30 July 1907.¹⁹ The first contained declarations of mutual obligation to honour each other's rights in China and to uphold the open door principles in China; the second was prefaced by an expression of the mutual wish to eliminate any cause of misunderstanding or conflict between Russia and Japan concerning Manchuria, Korea and Mongolia. The Convention showed clearly Russia's willingness to let Japan annex Korea in return for Japan's renunciation of any interest in Outer Mongolia.

The Japanese annexation of Korea became a matter of timing and method. As Ito resigned the post of the Resident-General in Korea and Sone Arasuke, the Vice-Resident General in Korea, succeeded him in June 1909, the Japanese government reached a definite decision on the question of annexation. Detailed plans were formulated by the Japanese Foreign Office and were approved by the Cabinet in July 1909. They stipulated that, at the time of annexation an imperial decree should be promulgated setting forth the reasons for the action and also guaranteeing full protection of foreign interests in Korea; that the imperial family of Korea should be accorded honour and pension in a manner similar to the members of the Japanese imperial clan.²⁰

19. NGB. Vol. 40, Pt. I, No. 182.-175.

20. NGB. Vol. 42, Pt. I, No. 144.-180.

At this time, an incident occurred in October 1909, which provided the long awaited excuse for the militarists and annexationists in Japan to act. Ito left Japan on 16 October 1909 to tour the Kwantung leased territory and Harbin for a few weeks. On 26 October, Ito arrived at the Harbin railway station, where he was greeted by Russian Finance Minister, Vladimir Kckovtsov, and the Mayor of the City. While he was reviewing the Russian guards, a Korean patriot, Choong-Kun An, shot Ito dead. The assassin was immediately arrested and was executed later on 26 March 1910. His execution once again climaxed the anti-Japanese sentiment of the Korean people as the British representative in Seoul, Bonar, reported : 'Many Koreans would gloat over the man who had done so much harm to Japan by depriving her of a remarkable statesman'.²¹ This incident was a direct result of Korea's resentment against Japanese oppression but became the tragic prelude to the immediate Japanese action for the complete annexation of Korea.²²

21. Bonar to Grey, 28 March 1910, F.O. 371/877.

22. NGB. Vol. 42, Pt. I, Nos. 156, 177.

23. NGB. Vol. 43, Pt. I, No. 347.

24. Minutes by Grey, in Bonar to Grey, 28 March 1910, F.O. 371/877.

The Japanese government was determined to push through the annexation by force, if necessary. On 30 May 1910, the powerful War Minister, General Terauchi, was appointed as the new Resident-General in Korea, in addition to his present office, replacing the civilian Sone Arasuke. On 3 June 1910, the Japanese Cabinet adopted an outline for future Japanese role in Korea. Korea was to be ruled by a Governor-General who would be responsible directly to the Japanese throne. Drafts of a treaty of annexation, of imperial edicts to promulgate at the time of annexation, and of public announcements were prepared and adopted by the Cabinet on 8 July 1910.²³

Meanwhile, Britain had been carefully watching the Japanese movement in Korea. Britain did not oppose the consolidation and strengthening of the Japanese position in Korea. Britain was only concerned about the economic matters. On 4 July 1910, the British Foreign Secretary, Grey, frankly wrote that: 'On what grounds other than commercial can the other Powers object to the Japanese annexation of Korea? I am not aware that we have any other grounds for objecting to annexation'.²⁴

23. NGB. Vol.43, Pt.I, No.547. 660.

24. Minutes by Grey, in Bonar to Grey, 28 March 1910, F.O. 371/877.

25. Bonar to Grey, No. 35, Very Confidential, 20 June 1910, F.O. 371/877.

When the annexation seemed imminent in July 1910, the British government began to worry that the application of the Japanese tariff to Korea after annexation would create economic problems. When the Japanese annexation of Korea took place all treaties between Korea and the other Powers would lapse, extraterritoriality would be abolished, and there were some possibilities that the existing customs tariffs would also be changed. The British worried about the possibilities of the wholesale enforcement of the tariff system of Japan and the Japanese restrictions on manufacture and industry and the ownership of land by foreigners in Korea.

By 1910, the annual British trade in Korea amounted to \$930,000. Even though the British merchants in Korea could still be numbered 'on the fingers of one hand', the British trade in Korea had been diligently worked up since 1885 and was mainly in Manchester goods. Iron and other manufactures also had been imported in considerable quantities. The direct British trade took about 18 per cent of the total import trade into Korea. But when considering the German merchants in Chemulpo operating largely in British goods, and the Chinese merchants importing British goods from China into Korea, the British took at least more than one quarter of the total import trade into Korea.²⁵

25. Bonar to Grey, No. 36, Very Confidential, 20 June 1910, F.O. 371/877.

Nearly half of the British trade in Korea consisted of cotton manufactures: (1909)

	<u>British Share</u>	<u>Korean Total Import</u>
Grey shirtings	£115,393	£115,864
White shirtings	£150,811	£152,512
T - cloths	£ 1,195	£ 20,002
Cotton drills	£ 7,773	£ 8,777
Cotton satins and Italians	£ 43,801	£ 44,447
Cotton prints	£ 2,006	£ 3,467
Cotton Victoria lawns	£ 7,005	£ 7,137

Next to the cotton manufactures, was the British iron and machinery trade valued at £87,902 out of the total Korean import of £110,213 in 1909. This covered: iron pipes and tubes, brass bars and rods, galvanised wire, nails, and galvanised sheets. In addition, British machinery for waterworks and mining machinery were also imported into Korea.²⁶

Again, although the British trade in railway material in 1909 was small, it had amounted to £200,000 in 1904 out of a total £472,951. Considering the Korean

27. Ibid.

26. Memorandum, enclosed in Ibid.

government's project for future railways of 200-300 miles, the prospect for the future of British trade in railway material was encouraging. The British also enjoyed nearly one quarter of the total Korean cigarettes trade. The British-American Tobacco Co., which had a factory in Chemulpo, took 25 per cent of £103,247 of the total cigarettes trade in Korea in 1909. Britain was also interested in the import of candles, woollen cloth, steel, tin, lead, brass, cement, paint and oils.²⁷

The existing Korean tariff on the most of the above trades was 7½ per cent. Further, in fact, they entered into Korea in many cases duty free under special arrangements between Britain and Korea. The British had enjoyed by treaty and custom, or more properly stated 'tacit recognition of the Korean government', great privileges in Korean trade.²⁸ After the annexation, the Japanese would apply the Japanese tariff, which would be in most cases at least more than 20 per cent. This application of the Japanese tariff would be a severe damage to British trade in Korea.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

Besides trade, a desire mainly for concessions, mining principally, had been the motive of the foreign capitalists in Korea since the opening of the country. However, the history of foreign mining in Korea was disappointing. It is difficult to estimate the actual investment of British capital in Korean mines, but by 1910 it probably did not fall far short of one million pounds.²⁹ In the summer of 1910, Henry Bonar, the British representative in Seoul, repeatedly pointed out the dangers which would probably ensue to British rights in property, mines, missions, which would follow on the Japanese annexation. He argued that: 'yet if Korea is to occupy the status of a colony, a special regime which would preserve to Great Britain and other countries commercial advantages equal to those of Japan, might be possible of attainment'.³⁰ He suggested that Britain should enter into a special convention with Japan confirming all property and industrial rights acquired by British subjects in Korea, including the rights of purchasing and renting land, concessions as to mines and waterworks, and certain mining rights, and guaranteeing fresh acquisition of similar rights in future.³¹

29. Ibid.

30. Despatches by Bonar, Nos. 35, 36, 41, 44, F.O. 371/877; Bonar to Grey, 24 July 1910, F.O. 371/877; MacDonald to Grey, 22 July 1910, F.O. 371/878.

31. Ibid. Communication by Hayashi, 22 Nov. 1905, F.O. 46/600.

Britain had had a similar experience before. When France established her protectorate over Madagascar, the French government informed Britain that the protectorate would not change existing treaties between Madagascar and other countries. But after the annexation the French government applied the French tariff in Madagascar and did not admit their obligation not to interfere with other countries' existing commercial treaty rights with Madagascar. The case of Korea was very similar, as the Japanese government, in taking charge of Korea, on 23 November 1905, undertook to maintain and respect the treaties of Korea with other Powers. The Japanese had declared in November 1905 that: 'In bringing this Agreement to the notice of the Powers having Treaties with Corea, the Imperial Government declare that, in assuming charge of the foreign relations of Corea and undertaking the duty of watching over the execution of the existing Treaties of that Country, they will see that those Treaties are maintained and respected, and they also engage not to prejudice in any way the legitimate, commercial and industrial interests of those Powers in Corea'.³²

If Japan annexed Korea, France would be debarred from appealing to Britain to join in a protest on economic

32. Communication by Hayashi, 22 Nov. 1905, F.O. 46/600.

grounds as a result of having rejected the British view on Madagascar. But the United States and European countries other than France might, having regard to the British action respecting Madagascar, appeal to Britain to join them in protesting against Japan's proposed action in Korea, which would place Britain in a difficult position. On 14 July 1910, Grey explained this to Takaaki Kato, the Japanese Minister in London, and expressed the hope that the Japanese government, whenever they annexed Korea, would, by stating that Japan would maintain for a long term of years the present tariff of Korea as guaranteed by treaties, prevent the British government from being placed in such a difficult position.³³

The first Japanese reply came on 19 July. When annexation took place, Korea would become part of Japan, and the treaties between Korea and other countries would be extinguished. But Japan had in view the economic interests of Powers who had treaties with Korea, and she desired to preserve their status quo in economic matters. Therefore, when the time came to annex Korea, Japan would, previous to annexation, make a declaration to the Powers concerned on three points: 1) that existing

33. Grey to MacDonald, 14 and 19 July 1910, F.O. 371/877.

tariffs between Korea and the Powers would continue in force for a considerable time. The import and export duties at Korean ports and the tonnage duties on shipping would be maintained at existing rates 'for the present'. The customs laws of Japan would be applied to Korea. Exports from Korea to Japan, imports from Japan to Korea, and Japanese shipping would be subject to the same rates in Korean ports for the present as applied to foreign goods and shipping. 2) that the coasting trade between Korean open ports would continue as also coasting trade between Korea and Japanese ports. 3) that all existing open ports of Korea would be left open with the exception of Masampo while a new open port would be made at Shinwiju. Japan also declared that all commercial, industrial and property rights, mining and land ownership, foreign settlements and perpetual leases in Korea would not immediately be disturbed by annexation but would form the subject of later discussion with the Powers, and, on the other hand, annexation would put an end to all treaties between Korea and foreign powers and to extra-territorial jurisdiction.³⁴

34. Grey to MacDonald, 19 July 1910, F.O. 371/877;
MacDonald to Grey, 21 July 1910, F.O. 371/877.

35. Grey to Macdonald, 19 July 1910, F.O. 371/877;
MacDonald to Grey, 21 July 1910, F.O. 371/877;
MacDonald to Grey, 22 July 1910, F.O. 371/878.

In view of the fact that the Japanese had not given any definite period for the continuance of the present economic conditions in Korea, Grey observed that the term 'for the present' was very indefinite in its application to the maintenance of existing economic conditions. The Japanese replied that it was difficult to fix a definite period but they would be willing to give a guarantee that the period would be a considerable one, and not merely a period of one or two years, and that if approached by British government, they would fix specific terms of years only to Britain but not to the other Powers provided it was not too long. MacDonald suggested asking for ten years.³⁵

In his reply on 19 July, Komura, the Japanese Foreign Secretary, also explained the necessity for the immediate annexation of Korea. He argued that the peace of the East and the tranquility of Korea were so important to Japan that she had had to establish a protectorate over Korea to improve the state of that country in 1905. But tranquility was not yet established and the people of Korea looked upon things as being in a temporary condition and were unsettled.

35. Grey to MacDonald, 19 July 1910, F.O. 371/877.

35. Grey to Macdonald, 19 July 1910, F.O. 371/877;
 Macdonald to Grey, 21 July 1910, F.O. 371/877;
 Macdonald to Grey, 22 July 1910, F.O. 371/878.

Therefore they had to decide to introduce radical reforms to prevent future difficulties.³⁶ Britain did not oppose the Japanese intention of annexing Korea, she only worried about the treaty rights of the Powers in Korea. Since it is quite natural that, in case of the absorption of one state by another, all the treaties between the absorbed state and foreign Powers come to an end, and all the rights and privileges enjoyed by those Powers cease and determine, the British even considered the Japanese intention to make a declaration to the Powers that the existing treaty rights would continue for a considerable time after the annexation was 'an act of grace'.³⁷

When MacDonald merely asked Komura why the actual act of annexation had been decided upon in such a hurry, Komura replied that events in Korea had progressed much more rapidly than anticipated, and doubt and uncertainty prevailed in Korea, and that the Japanese government had to decide to put in force without further delay a policy which they had, as the world must be aware, intended from the first to carry out, as the only one possible under

36. Grey to MacDonald, 19 July 1910, F.O. 371/877.

37. Minutes by G. de Bernhardt, ibid.

38. MacDonald to Grey, 22 July 1910, F.O. 371/878.

39. Minute by Francis Campbell, in Bonar to Grey, 24 July 1910, F.O. 371/877; MacDonald to Grey, 22 July 1910, F.O. 371/878.

40. Grey to MacDonald, 5 August 1910, F.O. 371/877.

the circumstances.³⁸

However, Bonar suggested to MacDonald that the proposed declaration of Japanese government would be inadequate. Upon Bonar's suggestions, MacDonald told Komura on 21 July that it was also important that British subjects in Korea should know what would be the fate of the commercial, industrial and property rights which they had acquired in Korea in the matter of mines, missions and land-ownership in general. Komura replied that no change would be made at the time of annexation but all these points would be subsequently discussed with the Powers concerned. MacDonald then mentioned the advisability of making a special convention regarding these points prior to annexation. Komura said that the other nations would wish to make similar conventions and there would be no end to the matter, and as the annexation was imminent it was impossible that such a special convention could now be made. MacDonald did not insist. The British, as Campbell, the Assistant Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office, said, 'could hardly see what more they could require of the Japanese'.³⁹ Grey stated clearly in his telegram to MacDonald on 5 August that Britain accepted the principle of the annexation of Korea by Japan.⁴⁰

38. MacDonald to Grey, 22 July 1910, F.O. 371/878.

39. Minute by Francis Campbell, in Bonar to Grey, 24 July 1910, F.O. 371/877; MacDonald to Grey, 22 July 1910, F.O. 371/878.

40. Grey to MacDonald, 5 August 1910, F.O. 371/877.

After consultation with the Board of Trade about the best means of protecting British commercial interests after annexation, on 3 August the British government proposed that the existing tariffs between Korea and the Powers should continue in force for ten years, and that not only Shinwiju but some other ports should also be opened to foreign trade.⁴¹

Meanwhile, Japan moved quickly and positively for the annexation of Korea. The new Japanese Resident-General in Korea, Terauchi's greatest concern was the prevention of any serious uprising or other violent opposition to the annexation. On 24 June, before Terauchi's departure for Korea, the Japanese forced an Agreement on Korea by which they obtained a complete transfer of police powers from the Korean government.⁴² Five days later, on 29 June, by the Imperial Ordinance No. 196, the Inspectorate-General of Police was to be established in Seoul. The Inspector-General of Police should be the Commander of the gendarmerie, under whose direction all the law enforcement agencies in Korea were unified.⁴³

Thus, by the end of June 1910, as over ten thousand law prevailed.

41. Grey to Kato, 3 August 1910, F.O. 371/877.

42. Text in Korea: Treaties and Agreements, p. 61.

43. Ibid., pp. 61-63.

policemen and gendarmes were placed under the direct command of a major-general in the Japanese army, the whole of Korea came under strict control in preparation for the final step.

On 8 July, the Japanese Cabinet completed a proposed Treaty of Annexation of Korea, and on 12 July, Prime Minister Katsura held a farewell reception in honour of the departing Terauchi. On 15 July, Terauchi left Tokyo and arrived at Seoul on 23 July, amidst an impressive display of Japan's armed might. Upon his arrival at Seoul, Terauchi cleaned out all officials from the government who were not ardent supporters of annexation. A reign of terror descended upon Korea. All political discussion and assembly was banned. All newspapers that criticized the Residency-General or carried any story on the annexation were suspended. Individuals suspected of being dangerous to the Japanese regime were arrested. All Korean organizations were placed under constant police surveillance. Streets in Seoul were patrolled by gendarmes and policemen. In fact, unproclaimed martial law prevailed.⁴⁴

44. Midori Komatsu, Chosen Heigo no Rimen (Background of the Japanese Annexation of Korea), Tokyo, 1920, pp. 543-547.

It took only a week after the formal presentation of the Japanese draft to conflate the Treaty of Annexation. The entire process of negotiation and deliberation in the Councils of both Governments had been conducted in absolute secrecy and with deliberate haste for fear of violent reactions from the Koreans. The Korean-Japanese Treaty was signed in the afternoon of 22 August 1910 between Wan-Yong Lee, the Korean Prime Minister, and Terauchi Masakata, the Japanese Resident-General.⁴⁵ Thus, the Yi dynasty of Korea, after five hundred and nineteen years of existence, came to an end. The Treaty contained eight Articles: the Japanese Emperor accepted the Korean Emperor's cession of all rights of sovereignty; appropriate honour and maintenance were to be provided for members of the Korean Court and other Koreans who had given meritorious service; and the entire government and administration was assumed by the government of Japan. The Treaty which was formally made public on 29 August 1910 was followed by a barrage of imperial edicts and official proclamations. The Treaty reads as follows :

45. Text in Enclosure in Kato to Grey, 23 August 1910, F.O. 371/878; B.D. Vol. VIII, No. 400, pp. 498-9; NGB. 43, Pt. I, Nos. 576, 579; Korea: Treaties and Agreements, pp. 64-67.

Article I. His Majesty the Emperor of Korea makes complete and permanent cession to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan of all rights of sovereignty over the whole of Korea.

Article II. His Majesty the Emperor of Japan accepts the cession mentioned in the preceding Article and consents to the complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan.

Article III. His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will accord to Their Majesties the Emperor and Ex-Emperor and His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Korea and their consorts and heirs with such titles, dignities and honours as are appropriate to their respective ranks and sufficient annual grants will be made for the maintenance of such titles, dignities and honours.

Article IV. His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will also accord appropriate honour and treatment to the members of the Imperial House of Korea and their heirs other than those mentioned in the preceding Article and funds necessary for the maintenance of such honour and treatment will be granted.

Article V. His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will confer peerages and monetary grants upon those Koreans who, on account of meritorious services, are regarded as deserving such special recognition.

Article VI. In consequence of the aforesaid annexation the Government of Japan assumes the entire government and administration of Korea and undertakes to afford full protection for the persons and property of Koreans obeying the laws there in force and to promote the welfare of all such Koreans.

Article VII. The Government of Japan will, so far as circumstances permit, employ in the public services of Japan in Korea those Koreans who accept the new regime loyally and in good faith and who are duly qualified for such services.

Article VIII. This treaty, having been approved by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan and His Majesty the Emperor of Korea, shall take the effect from the date of its promulgation.

On 25 August, Kato informed Grey that the Treaty of Annexation had been concluded on 22 August between Korea and Japan. Kato also transmitted a copy of the translated text of the Treaty and the text of the Declaration of Japan. Japan declared to the foreign Powers that: 1) all treaties hitherto concluded by Korea with foreign Powers would cease to be operative, and Japan's existing treaties with them would apply to Korea; 2) foreigners in Korea were to enjoy the same

rights and immunities as the foreign residents in Japan and become subject to Japanese jurisdiction;

3) the existing rates of export and import duties and tonnage dues for Korea's foreign trade were to remain in force, applicable to both Japanese and foreign nationals, for a period of ten years; 4) foreign vessels would be permitted to engage in coastal trade between the open ports of Korea and between those ports and any open ports of Japan for a period of ten years; 5) the existing open ports of Korea would remain open except for Masampo, while Shinwiju would be newly opened.⁴⁶ The Japanese Declaration reads as follows :

Notwithstanding the earnest and laborious work of reform in the administration of Korea in which the Governments of Japan and Korea have been engaged for more than four years since the conclusion of the Agreement in 1905, the existing System of Government in that country has not proved entirely equal to the duty of preserving public order and tranquility; and, in addition, the spirit of suspicion and misgiving dominates the whole peninsula.

In order to maintain peace and stability in Korea, to promote the prosperity and welfare of Koreans, and at

46. of Japan Ibid. The Imperial Government of Japan is ready to

the same time to ensure the safety and repose of foreign residents, it has been made abundantly clear that fundamental changes in the actual regime of Government are absolutely essential. The Governments of Japan and Korea, being convinced of the urgent necessity of introducing reforms responsive to the requirements of the situation and of furnishing sufficient guarantee for the future, have, with the approval of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan and His Majesty the Emperor of Korea, concluded through their respective plenipotentiaries a treaty providing for complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan. By virtue of that important act which shall take effect on its promulgation on the 29th of August, 1910, the Imperial Government of Japan undertakes the entire government and administration of Korea, and they hereby declare that the matters relating to foreigners and foreign trade in Korea shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules :

ports of Korea.

1. Treaties hitherto concluded by Korea with foreign Powers ceasing to be operative, Japan's existing treaties will, so far as practicable, be applied to Korea. Foreigners resident in Korea will, so far as conditions permit, enjoy the same rights and immunities as in Japan proper, and the protection of their legally acquired rights subject in all cases to the jurisdiction of Japan. The Imperial Government of Japan is ready to

consent that the jurisdiction in respect of the cases actually pending in any foreign consular court in Korea at the time the Treaty of Annexation takes effect shall remain in such court until final decision.

2. Independently of any conventional engagements formerly existing on the subject, the Imperial Government of Japan will for a period of ten years levy upon goods imported into Korea from foreign countries or exported from Korea to foreign countries and upon foreign vessels entering any of the open ports of Korea the same import or export duties and the same tonnage dues as under the existing schedules. The same import or export duties and tonnage dues as those to be levied upon the aforesaid goods and vessels will also for a period of ten years be applied in respect of goods imported into Korea from Japan or exported from Korea to Japan and Japanese vessels entering any of the open ports of Korea.

3. The Imperial Government of Japan will also permit, for a period of ten years, vessels under flags of the Powers having treaties with Japan to engage in the coasting-trade between the open ports of Korea and between those ports and any open port of Japan.

4. The existing open ports of Korea, with the exemption of Masampo, will be continued as open ports and in addition, Shinwiju will be newly opened so that vessels foreign as well as Japanese, will there be admitted and goods may be imported into and exported from those ports.

On the notification of the annexation, Grey told Kato that Britain had no political objection to the annexation of Korea by Japan, and that Britain was satisfied with the ten years term for the maintenance of the old tariff, which was in accordance with American precedent in the Philippines, and that Britain would reserve other questions, such as mining rights, perpetual leases, and so on, for future discussion.⁴⁷

The foreign Powers raised no problems in connection with the annexation. They only had shown concern lest the annexation might jeopardize the rights and interests of their nationals. Japan accommodated the wishes of these foreign Powers, except for the termination of

47. Grey to MacDonald, 25 August 1910, F.O. 371/878; Grey to O'Beirne, 8 September 1910, F.O. 371/878.

extraterritorial rights for foreigners in Korea.

Later, in October, the Japanese Prime Minister, Katsura, expressed Japan's gratitude to Britain for the friendly and sympathetic manner in which annexation had been received by the British government.⁴⁸

At this moment, with the Japanese annexation of Korea, there came to an end an era of British policy towards Korea which dated back to the early 1880's of the last century. It is now possible to consider, in the final short chapter which follows, what principles, if any, motivated the British policy towards Korea during the period of 1882-1910.

This manifested itself in the Anglo-Japanese relationship. It was to see Britain's policy towards China strong enough to sustain treaty and trade obligations. Above all, it was to see Britain as a bulwark against Russia, one Power which could challenge Britain throughout the century. The collapse could uncover the northwest Pacific to say nothing of the balance of power in the East and enormous losses to Britain.

48. MacDonald to Grey, 10 Oct. 1910, F.O. 371/878.

CHAPTER 10. CONCLUSION

The first British relationship with Korea in the early 1880's (there had been minor earlier contacts) occurred at the height of the British imperial expansion, but also at a time when she began to perceive and understand the challenges and rivalries coming from the other Great Powers. Britain was no longer in an absolutely dominant position globally.

Thus Britain's policy towards Korea has always to be analyzed within the framework of global imperial interests rather than in terms of a mere Anglo-Korean relationship.

This manifested itself in the Anglo-Chinese relationship. It was in the British interest to have China strong enough to maintain order and fulfill treaty obligations. Above all, it must serve as a bulwark against Russia, one Power which constantly challenged Britain throughout the period. China's collapse could uncover the northeast frontier of India, to say nothing of the balance of power in the Far East and enormous losses to Britain's China trade.

This also manifested itself in Britain's first approaching Korea only through the Chinese intermediary: this given the historic Sino-Korean relationship. (Britain never attempted to open a

treaty relationship with Korea until after Korea was opened by the other Powers).

Even the British occupation of Port Hamilton during the first active phase of the British-Korean relationship was not the result of her direct interest in Korea but of her broad global consideration: in this case Britain's check on Russia in the Near East and Central Asia at that time. Moreover, throughout the incident, Britain again negotiated with Korea only through the Chinese mediatory, treating Korea as if she was a part of China.

After her opening by the Powers, Korea became a bone of contention among the Powers of the Far East, because of her geographic location. The widening Sino-Japanese rift over Korean affairs was further complicated by the great Anglo-Russian discord. Britain had no large concern for Korea and always considered it only in relation to the balance of power in the Far East, all with the grand purpose of preserving her interests in the Far East against Russia.

It was Britain's strategy to let one or other local Power balance the forces in the Far East - China and Japan. At first, the British chose to support and strengthen China's position in Korea and encouraged the Chinese claim of suzerainty over Korea, mainly for the purpose of thwarting Russia. However, China proved a feeble ally, as revealed by the Sino-Japanese War.

Britain shifted its weight to Japan's side soon after the Japanese victory.

The global situation had been complicated for Britain by the rise of other imperial Powers, for example, the Western European Powers and the United States and, above all, by the Russo-Japanese ambitions and rivalry in Korea.

Further, Britain's Far Eastern policy was also conditioned by both her position in Europe and her overall imperial interests both of which were much more important than the Korean peninsula.

The thesis has endeavoured to trace out the evolution of British policy towards Korea through such major turning points as the Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese War.

But, by the early part of the twentieth century, Britain's global need for the Anglo-Japanese Alliance became the dominant factor. After the Sino-Japanese War and the 'Triple Intervention', the shift in the balance of forces in the Far East led Britain to seek a new ally, departing from her traditional policy of isolation. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, among other things, acknowledged implicitly Japan's 'free hand' in Korea and partly paved the way for the eventual Japanese annexation of Korea.

The renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance at the end of the Russo-Japanese War manifested Britain's willingness, however reluctant, to sacrifice the independence of Korea and to some extent her relatively small economic interests in Korea in the interest of her broader, global, naval, strategic, political objectives.

The final conclusion one reaches is that Korea, as such, was never more than a minor interest in British policy and that British policy towards Korea in the period under consideration, including Korean domestic developments, can only be evaluated in the light of overall global British imperial objectives.

relating to Korea was until 1905 maintained as part of the Chinese series (F.O. 17); thereafter it became part of the Japanese files (F.O. 46).

- 1) Foreign Office, General Correspondence, China: F.O. 17

This series, containing China dispatches to and from the Foreign Office, includes dispatches to and from the British representatives in Korea, together with enclosures pertaining to the Korean affairs. Since no separate diplomatic series was started for Korea, F.O. 17 is the main source for British diplomacy towards Korea.

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Documents relating to Korea are diversely included in many different classifications, but most British diplomatic correspondence relating to Korea was until 1906 maintained as part of the Chinese series (F.O. 17); thereafter it became part of the Japanese files (F.O. 46).

- 1) Foreign Office, General Correspondence,
China: F.O. 17

This series, containing China dispatches to and from the Foreign Office, includes dispatches to and from the British representatives in Korea, together with enclosures pertaining to the Korean affairs. Since no separate diplomatic series was started for Korea, F.O. 17 is the chief source for British diplomacy towards Korea.

- 2) Foreign Office, General Correspondence,
Japan: F.O. 46

The British diplomatic correspondence relating to Korea after 1906 is contained in this series. In accordance with the rearrangement of Foreign Office filings, the files for Japan after 1906 are contained also in the series F.O. 371.

- 3) Foreign Office, Embassy and Consular
Archives, China, Correspondence: F.O. 228

This series contains bound correspondence maintained by the British legation in Peking and includes some dispatches and enclosures missing from F.O. 17. China Vol. 1 (1834-1930) is of particular interest.

A separate series for Korea was started in 1891 (F.O. 523) which consists of 13 volumes covering the years to 1909. This is mainly a collection of reports and papers on Christian missionary activities in Korea.

- 4) Foreign Office, Embassy and Consular
Archives, Japan, Correspondence: F.O. 262.

This series contains bound correspondence maintained by the British legation in Tokyo.

5) Foreign Office Documents relating to Korea are also included in many other different classifications, as follows :

i) F.O. 410 (Japan): Confidential Print for 1859-1957 (but available only up to 1914).

ii) F.O. 405: Foreign Office, Confidential Prints. F.O. 405/35-37 (Correspondence Respecting the Temporary Occupation of Port Hamilton) and F.O.405/65, 70-73, 80, 88 are of particular interest.

iii) F.O. 231: Embassy and Consular Archives, China, Peking: Registers. F.O. 231/40 (Miscellaneous and Corea) is of particular interest.

iv) F.O. 233: Miscellanea. F.O. 233/119-120 (Sino-Japanese War) and F.O. 233/119. 122-3, 128-9, 131-2 (The Trans-Siberian Railways and the Manchurian Railways) are of particular interest.

v) F.O. 262 (Japan): the Embassy and Consular Archives, Japan, Correspondence.

2. Tongli Wang Shan [?] [?] Records of the Korean Foreign Office.

This series was started in 1857.

- vi) F.O. 798 (Japan): the Embassy and Consular Archives, Japan, Correspondence.
- vii) F.O. 181 (Russia): the Embassy and Consular Archives, Russia, Correspondence.
- viii) F.O. 418: Foreign Office, Confidential Prints, Russia and Soviet Union.
- ix) F.O. 350/3: Correspondence with Foreign Office, Letters Index.

6) Foreign Office files for other countries related to Korean affairs were also consulted as required :

- i) Russia (F.O. 65): F.O. 65/931-940
- ii) France (F.O. 27): F.O. 27/2161-2165
- iii) The United States (F.O.5): F.O. 5/1723-4, 1728.
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Vols. 22, 28, 29, 129, 186 are of particular interest.

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