

## COREA.

BY THE EDITOR.

JAPAN has received the use of Chinese script, the arts, the sciences, culture, and religion by way of Corea which in the tenth century, A. D., was the seat of a highly developed civilization and the most prosperous country of Eastern Asia. Many inventions in which both the Chinese and Japanese excel to-day were made in Corea at the time of the country's golden age.

At the end of the fourteenth century a revolution broke out and Ni-Tai-Jo, a private soldier, succeeded in 1392 to the vacated throne. His successors, however, did not show great military ability, for Corea succumbed to Japan during a protracted war (1592-1598), and the independence of Corea was saved only through the intervention of China, but it was not of long duration. Very soon the Manchu invaded the country (1637) and the Korean king was obliged to swear allegiance to his warlike neighbors who soon carried their victorious army against Peking, where in 1644, the Manchu chief was crowned Emperor of China under the name of She-Tsu.

Under Manchu rule, Corea fell into decay. Foreigners were kept out just as much as from the other parts of the Chinese Empire, and thus the country became a shadow of its former prosperity.

The present emperor, I-Höng, a descendant of Ni-Tai-Jo, was born in 1852, and succeeded in 1864. Japanese influence increased and the jealousy between the Japanese and Chinese led to the Sino-Japanese war in 1894-1895. Japan was victorious, but owing to a general jealousy of the European powers, especially Russia, she could not maintain her conquests on the continent. The independence of Corea was recognized by both Japan and China, and the King of Korea assumed the title of Emperor.

M. de Nezières, a French artist, has painted I-Höng, seated on the throne in the Imperial reception hall of his palace. In the background rise the five sacred mountain peaks of Corea and above

them appear the sun and the moon, emblems of his Imperial sovereignty.

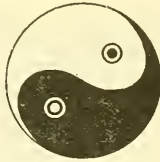
The coat of arms of Corea is a philosophical emblem, the *Tai K'ih*, the symbol of the great origin, representing the aborig-



I-HÖNG, EMPEROR OF KOREA.

inal, undifferentiated state of existence from which all things have arisen. It is composed of two portions representing the positive and the negative principles which on the Corean coat of arms are colored red and blue. This symbol of the great origin is surrounded

by four *kwas*, or trigrams, figures consisting each of three lines, some being whole, and some broken, and in the present case these four *kwas* surrounding the Tai K'ih mean the four quarters of the world, viz.:



THE GREAT ORIGIN.

☰	☷	☰	☷
<i>Ch'ien</i>	<i>K'wun</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>K'an</i>
East	West	North	South

The *kwas* or trigrams are also composed of the two principles, the positive and the negative, contained in the *Tai K'ih*, the symbol of the great origin. The entire lines represent the positive principle, the broken lines, the negative principle, and by combination of these two, all the myriad things of this world are believed to have originated.\*

The highest decoration of Corea is the order of the Golden Rule. Others are the orders of the Plum Blossom, of the National Flag, of the Purple Falcon, and of the Eight Kwas.

\* For details see Carus's *Chinese Philosophy*.