

# UNIFORM STUDY FOR JULY.

*Subject: KOREA, COUNTRY AND PEOPLE.*

*Singing.*—Hymn 204.

In the cross of Christ I glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,  
By the cross are sanctified;  
Peace is there that knows no measure,  
Joys that through all time abide.

*Scripture Lesson.*—Ezekiel xxxvii. 1-14.

*Responsive Reading.*—Psalm cxlv.

*Prayer.*—For the people of Korea, that their hearts may be opened to receive the gospel.

*Singing.*—Hymn 108. Epworth.

"Jesus is tenderly calling thee home."

**NOTE.**—Two lessons are devoted to Korea: the first on the "Country and People;" the second on the "Development of Missionary Work." This country, which has so recently emerged from its isolation, is a very interesting field for study, and much valuable information may be found concerning it.

*The country.*

*Where is Korea?*

The peninsula of Korea, 400 miles long, projects southward from the eastern part of the Chinese Empire. It is separated from China by the Yellow Sea; from Japan by the Japan Sea. It is within two days' sail of Japan, and twenty-four hours distant from the harbor of Chefoo, China. Locate it on map.

*What is the country sometimes called?*

The natives call it Cho-sun, or "Land of the Morning Calm," while from its long isolation it has received from others the title of "The Hermit Nation."

*Give brief historical sketch.*

Korea is an old nation. The people of modern Korea claim as the father of their country a man who was an ancestor of Confucius, and they profess a civilization nearly as old as that of China. The present king belongs to a family which ruled the country as far back as 1392, and Korean scholars boast of their people having a history dating back more than four thousand years. For centuries there was no political unity, and numerous states arose and flourished for a time. During the tenth century they became united. Later the Chinese, Tartar, and Japanese armies invaded the country, and reduced the country to poverty; hence they degenerated into their hermit-like seclusion.

*What is the government of Korea?*

An absolute monarchy. The king disposes of all matters as he pleases, without consulting anyone. The king is practically the government. He seldom comes out from his palace. When he does it is considered a great event, and the streets of the capital are swept for the occasion. The present king is thirty-six years old, and came to the throne in 1873; a man of progressive ideas, and under his administration the country has made great advance in civilization. The king holds his court at night. His palace is lighted with electricity. No Korean is supposed to look at the king.

*State some facts concerning the capital.*

Seoul, the name of the capital, signifies court, or seal of the king. It is the largest of the 366 cities of the country. The port of entry is Chemulpo, from

which Seoul is distant about twenty-six miles. It is surrounded by a wall eight miles long. There are four principal gates, which are closed every night at eight o'clock in winter, and nine o'clock in summer. The king's palace is located in Seoul. It is the religious, political, and educational center of the country. It is now the headquarters of nearly all missionary work.

*When was Korea opened up to the world?*

This was accomplished by American diplomacy, under Admiral Shufeldt, who, after a long period of waiting, signed the treaty in May, 1882. It was the first time in the history of our country that the stars and stripes waved over an Asiatic fortress captured by the military forces of the United States.

*People of Korea. What are some of their characteristics?*

They are tall, well-built, and have straight, clearly-cut features. In complexion they are lighter than the Japanese. They are frank and sociable, courteous and hospitable. Their costume is generally white, which is padded in winter. The hat worn by Koreans is peculiar to the country, and it is said that the hat is an emblem of man's social condition, and is an expensive luxury. They are a contented race. They are very inquisitive, sometimes to the great annoyance of foreigners.

*Have the Koreans educational advantages?*

There is little popular education worthy of a name. The nobility take care of the education of their children, and teach them when very young to read and write. Wealthy scholars and government officers have libraries; but these are not accessible to the common people. There is at present a great enthusiasm for the study of English. Dr. Griffis says: "Nothing like the number of bookstores, circulating libraries, private schools, or ordinary means of diffusing intelligence, exists in Korea as is common in China and Japan."

*What is the condition of woman in Korea?*

The women are secluded, particularly among the better classes. A Korean woman makes no visits except to most intimate friends of her own sex. She is supposed to have no moral existence. She has no name. The apartments for the better classes are similar to the zenanas of India. They are strictly kept in these apartments, nor can they look out in the streets without permission of their husbands. With her marriage a woman has nothing to do whatever, as all arrangements are made by the father.

*References.*—*Gospel in All Lands*, Annual Reports of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, 15 cts.; "The Hermit Nation," by W. E. Griffis, \$3.50; "Korea, Within and Without," by W. E. Griffis, \$1.15; "A Korean Girl," HEATHEN WOMAN'S FRIEND, August, 1893; "Korean Shops," HEATHEN WOMAN'S FRIEND, April, 1890; "Korea: Its Present Condition," *Missionary Review of the World* for September and November, 1893; Leaflets "Korea," "Women of Korea," and "Little Missionary of Korea," 1 ct. each; *The Regions Beyond*, for February, 1894; "The Hermit Kingdom," *N. W. Christian Advocate*, Oct. 25, 1893.

MRS. J. T. GRACEY.

Rochester, N. Y.

Among the numerous fields of work that are before us in China, none appeals so forcibly to philanthropy and charity as the stricken victim of disease, whatever be his social standing. The Chinese women especially need our help and sympathy, because they are looked upon as inferior beings compared with the men. They are not allowed to do for themselves what we are permitted to do for them. This puts the women in a very sad position, and many a woman dies because of being neglected when sick. Sometimes the husband will allow his wife or his daughter to come to us for treatment, because while the invalid is at home she is a great burden to the family.

About nine years ago Mrs. Smith, of Oak Park, Ill., made a gift of money for the erection of a hospital in Nanking, to the Central China Mission. No one but those who are connected with the hospital, and who daily minister the needs of the patients, know what a grand work is being done among the patients, both men and women. Yearly we are enabled to help hundreds, yea, thousands of those who are in misery. In the woman's wards we can accommodate thirty patients. My work is among the women, and I daily thank the Lord for permitting me to work among the sick. In working in the wards we are able to reach a class of women who could not be reached if we did not have a hospital; because disease in China is looked upon as caused by some previous sin committed by the afflicted one either in the former stage of life or in the present life. So those who suffer from disease of any kind do not leave their homes, from fear of being jeered at by the outsiders. Generally those who have been ill a long time come and stay in the hospital for treatment. And while they are with us, receiving medical treatment, we have an opportunity to tell them of the love of Christ to man. It is such a blessed privilege to work among these women who come to us from heathen homes full of heathen superstitions, very few of them being able to read.

But if they stay with us any length of time they soon learn to repeat the Golden Text of the Sunday-school lessons and the Lord's Prayer. We have a young Christian girl to teach the women, and by careful instruction some of the women soon learn the Commandments and the Beatitudes. Those who stay with us four or five months, by being daily instructed, soon learn to read in the Gospel of John, and to repeat hymns and parts of the catechism. Many when returning to their homes are full of gratitude to us for the medical help they had received. Some say: "If I not come here for treatment I would never have heard of the true God. I know now, that idols are false, and as I go to my home I will pray to the true God for help." Others say, "We have never heard that worshiping idols is sinful." One day, while I was talking to one of the patients, she said to me: "I

never heard about this doctrine before I came here; and if I had not come to be treated I would never have heard of Jesus. Surely this is God's great love and grace to me in permitting me to receive treatment here."

Then I told her about Mrs. Smith's generous gift for the hospital building. She was very much interested to hear about Mrs. Smith. She said, "Surely this lady that you say lives in America, far away from us, is doing a grand and noble work for us poor Chinese women."

In connection with our woman's work we have a Girls' Day School in the hospital building. We have six scholars, two of which are orphans; these two are the brightest girls of the school. One of our neighbors pursues the trade of an idol maker. Two of his little girls are scholars in our school. We trust these girls may be the means of having their father change his trade. We have a Christian woman to teach the scholars. The work surely is great, but we look to God, from whence cometh our strength. We surely need the prayers of God's children in the home land.

Yours sincerely,

LAURA HANZLIK.

The population of Korea is estimated at about fifteen millions; the country is the size of Denmark.

Korea has had three women sovereigns.

The Korean alphabet has twenty-five letters.

The Koreans are a very superstitious people; they ascribe all national calamities to the anger of the spirits of heaven and earth.

Korea has a great variety of climate. Winter in the high latitude is rigorous, while in the southern part the climate is delightful. The rainy season commences in June and continues until September.

The native schools are few, and very similar. There are no schools for the education of girls.

The native currency is a copper cash; one hundred of them are equal to about nineteen cents.

The "kang" is a floor of stone or brick, heated by a network of flues that run underneath from the kitchen fire to the chimney at the opposite end of the house. This is their only method of heating their houses.

Shops and stores are found only in the large cities.

Korea is a country of fine forests. Many temples in China are built of Korean wood.

Silver and gold is to be found in great abundance in the country.

Koreans own no railroads, steamers, nor stage-coaches; they travel in chairs carried by coolies, or on horseback.

Korea gave art to Japan. Four centuries ago Japan carried away from Korea all the skilled workmen connected with porcelain manufactories.