

Yu Kil-Chun (1856-1914)

and the Korean Collection at PEM



I had safely arrived at
 York Central Station yesterday
 afternoon, and met Mr. Garagar
 just in time I got there.
 I had intended to write you
 immediately after I had arrived at
 Orange, but no mail could be conveyed
 until this morning
 [Dec. 25, 1889]

1296
 DEC 14 1889
 NEW BRUNSWICK

Yu Kil-Chun

Yu Kil-Chun (1856–1914)
and the Korean Collection at PEM

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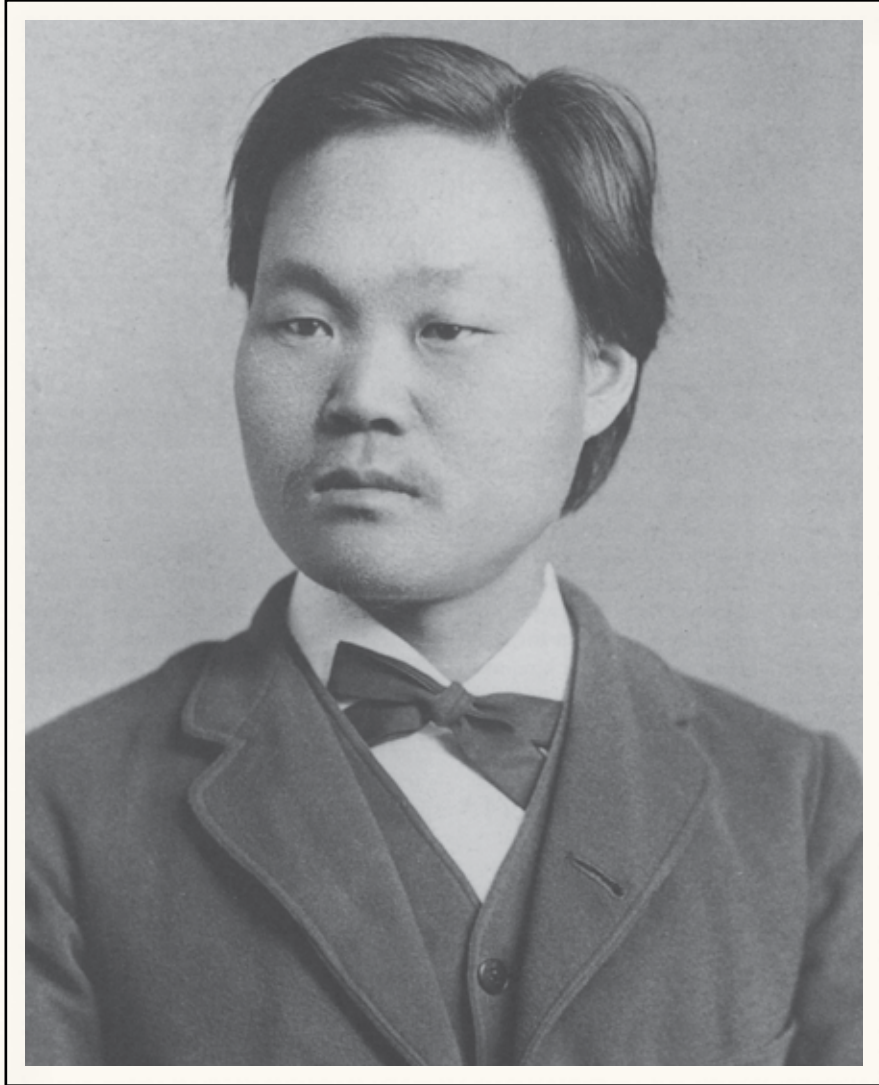
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Peabody Essex Museum
Salem, Massachusetts

Yu Kil-Chun

(1856–1914)

AND THE PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM



Yu Kil-Chun in Western attire during the time of the Korean embassy to the United States in 1883.

The Peabody Essex Museum's gallery of Korean art is named in honor of Yu Kil-Chun, a Korean diplomat, scholar, and activist who developed strong ties with the museum in the mid-1880s and who remains an honored figure in Korea today.

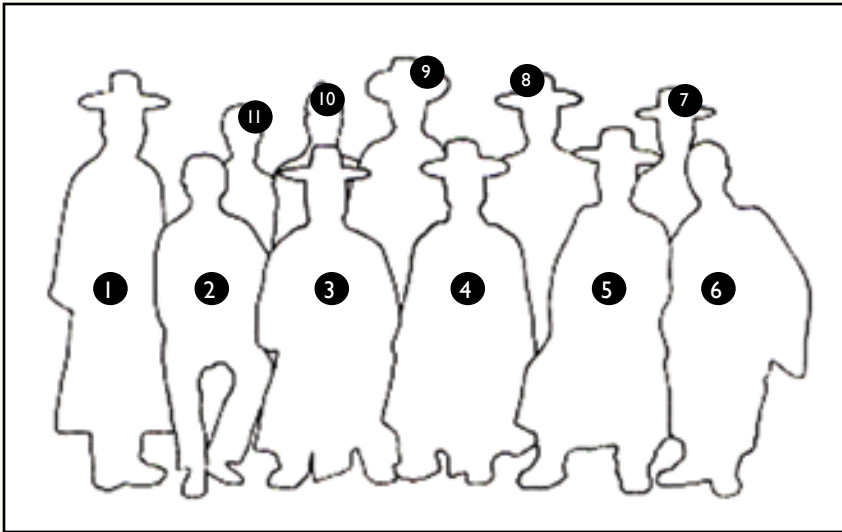


The first official Korean delegation to the United States, 1883

In 1883 the first official Korean delegation visited the United States to observe American industry and government. Yu Kil-Chun was a member of that delegation. When the delegation's mission concluded, Yu was invited to remain in the United States on scholarship. Under the mentorship of Edward Sylvester Morse, then director of the Peabody Academy of Science (now the Peabody Essex Museum), Yu studied at nearby Governor Dummer Academy (The Governor's Academy) in Byfield, Mass. With Morse, Yu Kil-Chun was among the first supporters of the museum's

collection of Korean art and objects from the late Joseon dynasty (18th–19th centuries). He helped Morse create a series of lectures on Korean culture and reviewed the first acquisitions to the Korean collection. Yu also donated his clothing and accessories, which he had put aside in favor of Western dress during his stay in America.

In 1885, Yu returned to Korea, concerned about news of a failed coup d' état undertaken by several progressive thinkers and members of the 1883 delegation. Because of association with these individuals and his sympathetic



1. Hyeon Heong-Taek
2. Percival Lowell (American)
3. Hong Young-Sik
4. Min Young-Ik
5. Seo Kwang-Bum
6. Wu Litang (Chinese)
7. Byeon-Soo
8. Ko Young-Cheol
9. Choi Kyung-Seok
10. Yu Kil-Chun
11. Jirou (Japanese)

views, Yu was placed under house arrest. While housebound, he wrote *Seoyu Gyeonmun* (Observations on a Journey to the West), the first book on the West published in Korea. Through this and other writings, and his contributions to early efforts to modernize Korea, Yu became influential in politics and social reform.

While at Governor Dummer Yu began to exchange letters with Morse. Their correspondence continued following Yu's return to Korea and his self-imposed exile in Japan in the late 1890s. Yu's numerous letters to Morse remain in the museum's collection and are reproduced in this guide.

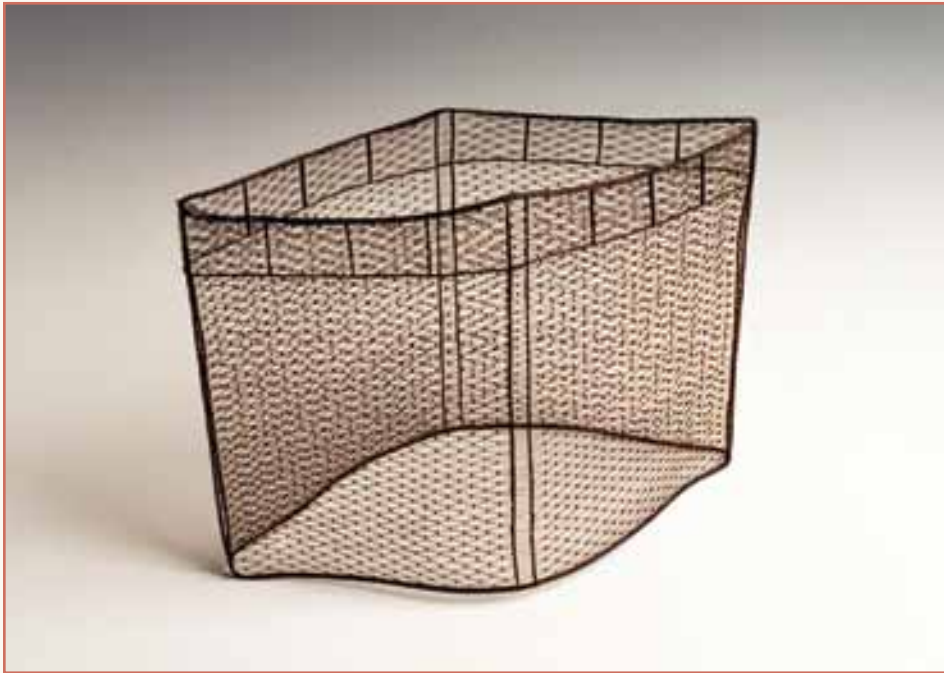
The early relationship between Yu and the Peabody Essex Museum helped to establish the museum's strong and lasting connection to Korea and its art and culture. In the early 1980s, 100 years after Yu's journey, the museum's long history with the Yu family was revitalized by the visit of Yu Kil-Chun's grandson Yu Byung-Duk, who became an ardent supporter of the museum's Korean gallery.

YU'S PERSONAL EFFECTS IN THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTION

The clothing and accessories pictured here were Yu Kil-Chun's personal attire that he wore as a member of the Korean delegation to the United States in 1883 and later donated to the museum.



Gat (man's outdoor hat)
Horsehair, bamboo
5¼ x 15 in. (13.3 x 38 cm)
E1573



Bangeon (man's indoor hat)

Horsehair

6¾ x 11 in. (17.1 x 27.9 cm)

E1562

Beoseon (socks) for cold weather

Cotton

12½ x 8 in. each (31.7 x 20.3 cm)

E1572

Beoseon (socks) for summer

Cotton

13½ x 8 in. each (34.3 x 20.3 cm)

E1571

Sedodae (tasseled cord for man's outer robe)

Silk

38 in. (96.5 cm)

E1565



Gwijumeoni
(ear-shaped purse)
Silk 9½ x 6 in. (24.1 x 15.2 cm)
E1577



Summer Undershirt

Bark
32 x 12 in. (81.3 x 30.5 cm)
E1579

Tosi (wristlets) for winter

Silk
12¼ x 6¾ in. each (31.1 x 17.1 cm)
E9776

Buchae (fan)

Paper, wood, lacquer, brass
13½ x 9 in. (33.7 x 22.9 cm)
E1576

Buchae (fan)

Paper, wood, lacquer, brass
13¼ x 9 in. (33.7 x 22.9 cm)
E1575





Miseon (tail-shaped fan)

Paper, wood, lacquer, brass
14¾ x 9¾ in. (37.5 x 24.8 cm)
E1688.B

Silk Bands

Silk
91¾ x 1¾ in. each (233 x 4.2cm)
E1564

Tosi (wristlets) for summer

Horsehair
7¾ x 5½ in. each (19.7 x 14 cm)
E1563

Banggu-buchae (round fan)

Paper, wood, lacquer, brass
13½ x 9 in. (34.3 x 22.9 cm)
E1688.A





Juhgori (jacket) for summer

Ramie
27 x 55 in. (68.6 x 139.7 cm)
E1567



Tosi (wristlets) for summer

Bark
6½ x 3½ in. each (16.5 x 8.9 cm)
E1561

Heukhye (man's shoes)

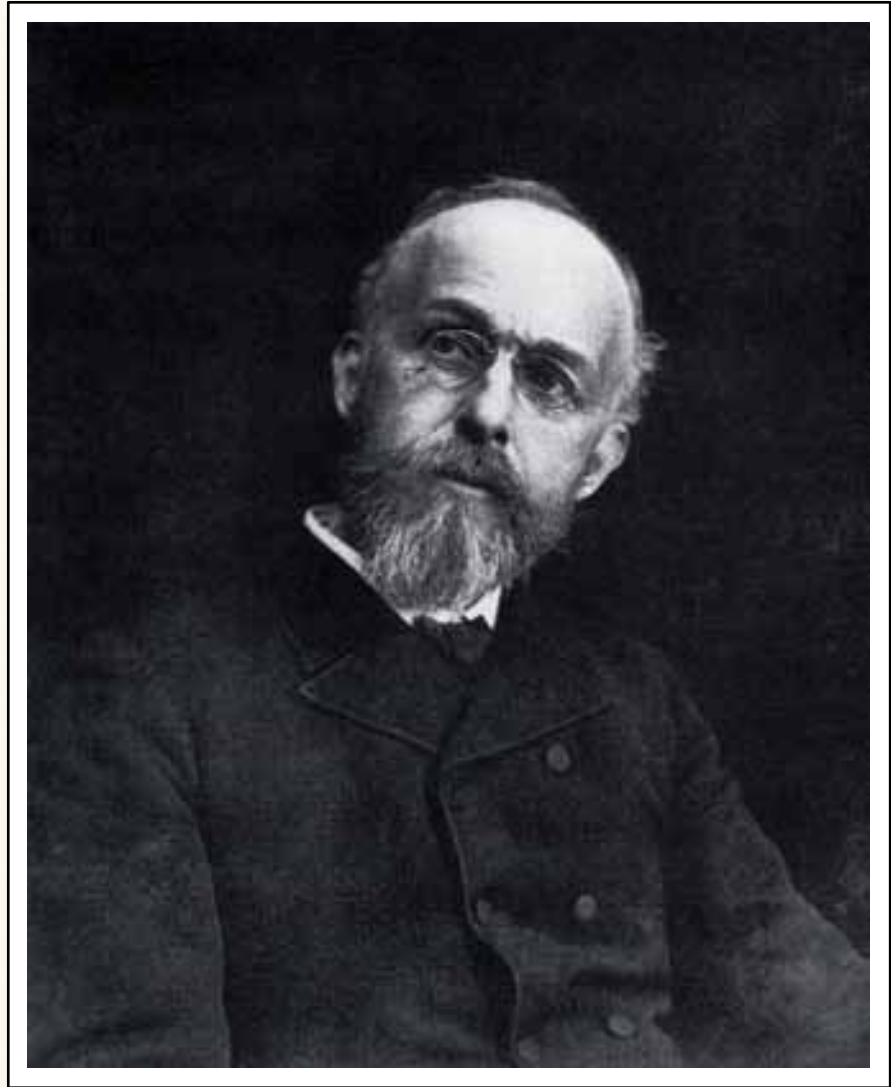
Deerskin, velvet
10 x 3½ in. each
(25.4 x 8.9 cm)
E1580



Writing Paper

Mulberry
15¾ x 1¾ in. each (40 x 4.4 cm)
E1574





Photograph of Edward Sylvester
Morse by Benjamin Kimball of the
New York Photogravure Company.

YU'S CORRESPONDENCE

The letters reproduced and transcribed here were, unless otherwise noted, written by Yu Kil-Chun to Edward Sylvester Morse between 1884 and 1897. The letters are transcribed as written including spelling and grammatical errors except where these errors make the text unreadable. Corrections and explanatory text appear in square brackets.



Essex June 7th 1884
Dear Prof Morse

This is the first Sunday that I have passed away from your house since I have been in Salem. How can I help longing for you and your family.

I am very well and much delighted with the fresh air, salubrious climate, and kind and attentive hostess and her family. When will you come down here? If you do not, I wish to call at your house and see you and spend the next Sabbath.

Please give my kindest regards to your family and all the Brookses.

Very sincerely yours
Yu Kil Chun

to Prof E.S. Morse

Essex June 7th 1894

Dear Prof Morse

This is the first Sunday that I have passed away from your house since I have been in Salem how can I help long^{er} for you and your family.

I am very well and much delighted with the fresh air, salubrious climate, and kind and attentive hostess and her family. When will you come down here? If you do not, I wish to call at your house to see you and spend the next Sabbath.

please give my

kindest regards to your family and all the
Brookline

very sincerely yours
Yukil Chun

to Prof E. S. Morse

[Note Added: July 2, 1884]

I received your kindest present that you give me a source of the treasury of English language and science so I thank you for it extremely.

I will afford it to social use to diffuse American knowledge in connection with your kindness when I carry it go to my native peninsula and first make myself acquaintace to it in my private study while I live in here. Please give my kindest regards to your family and believe me your sincere friend.

yours truly
Yu Kil Chun

I received your kindest present that you give me a source of the Treasury of English language and science so I thank you for it extremely.

I will afford it to social use to diffuse American knowledge in connection with your kindness when

[129-1]
I canny to go to my native peninsula and first make myself acquaintance to it in my private study while I live in here. please give my kindest regards to your family and believe me your sincere friend
yours truly
yu kil bhyon
July 2nd 184

Salem Feb. [129-2]

Dear Sir
I recieved your letter that

Byfeild [Byfield] Sept 24th 1884

Dear Prof Morse

I received your kind letter yesterday and I am very glad, that, you are well and keeping your work on important essays and drawings.

I am really very sorry to be away from you, but cannot help it, for it is my duty to do so, then I must thank you for your kind management, in sending me to sush [such] a nice school as this Dummer. And puting me under Mr Perkins' care. He and his wife are very kind to me, so that I feel happy and easy.

Please give my kindest regards to your family and Mr Brooks' family and my Dear Mr Fukuzawa and believe me your sincere friend.

You Keel June
to Prof Edw. S. Morse

[Text in Korean]
Great man Morse

[1884] [1214]
Byfield Sept 24th

Dear Prof Morse

I received
your kind letter yesterday
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your work on important
essays and drawings.
I am really very sorry
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Dummer, and putting me
under Mr Perkins care.
He and his wife are

[1216]
very kind to me, so that
I feel happy and easy.
Please give my kindest
regards to your family
and Mr Brooks' family
and my Dear Mr Furbush
and believe me your
sincere friend

Yours Keel June
to Edw. S. Morse

君が階 早午
大人 毛送
Great man Morse

[Note Added: Sometime in October 1884]

Dear Prof, Morse

I thank you for your kindness in forewarding the letter sent to me, by my friend who lives in Japan and not from Korea, so I hear nothing about my native country except that, being affected by Franco-Chinese war. She suffered indirectly a great deal, upon her commorse [commerce]. Here I have an extraordinary thing, to tell you, about American boys, that we had a meeting on a trifling subject, last week, first having selecte[d] a president and secretary.

We then discussed the affairs, which shall hereafter go on, finally two boys among them, each of whom, offered some opinions, and it was to be decided by a vote. Of course, there are some different merits between them, and one must be superior to the other, because heterogenenity is the nature of things, and it is very difficult for boys, awalys [always] to vote the right one out of many complicated ways. Yet the boys here, unanimously voted for the better offer, except the boy who made the opposit motion. I was astonished by it, and learn something myself by it, because they were so intelligent, conscientious, and independent.

If the boys, here, the best of the United States, then? if not, how can they be like those which I mentioned above?

They are, on the average, as good as any other boys in the world, I suppose, and this was the astonishing subject to my mind, that, the people of the United States, has a higher percent of natural discernment, public spirit, and independent judgment than the human race of any other nation on the

natural discernment,
public spirit, and
independent judgment
than the human race
of any other nation on
the globe. So the boys
influenced by this tide,
which spread over the
northern part of the
western hemisphere
under the star spangled
banner, and so I think,
not only these boys, here,
possessed such an im-
portant gift, but that
every one of United States
boys will be just
same, and as there can
not be a nationality

Somerset in (129h)
October 1854

Dear Prof. Morse
I thank you
for your kindness in
forwarding the letter,
sent to me, by my fri-
end who lives in Japan,
and not from Korea, so
I heard nothing about
my native country, except
that, being affected by
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suffered indirectly a great
deal, upon her commerce.
Here I have an extraordinary
thing, to tell you, about
American boys, that we
had a meeting on a
trifling subject, last.

globe, so the boys influenced by this tide, which spread over the northern part of the Western hemisphere under the star spangled banner, and so I think, not only these boys, here, possessed such an important gift, but that every one of United States boys will be just same, and as there can not be a nationality without children, and the national characters are depend on the nature of citizens, because the nationality is composed of individual citizenship, and every citizen must pass through a childhood, so the children of to-day, will be citizens of their after years,

Now, then, the boys of america, are the elements, of which the United States were built up, before you was born, are exist with you, in which you are a partener, and shall never perished from the surface of our planet with your decendancy.

week, first having selected a president and secretary

We, then discussed the affairs, which shall hereafter go on, finally two ^{boys} among them, each of whom, offered some opinion, and it was to be decided by a vote. Of course, there are some different merits between them, and one must be superior to the other, because heterogeneity is the nature of things, and it is very difficult for boys, always to vote the right one out of many complicated ways, yet the boys, here, unanimously voted for the better

[129L]

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Of the boys, here, the best of the United States, then? if not, how can they be like those which I mentioned above?

They are, on the average, as good as any other boys in the world, I suppose, and this was the astonishing subject to my mind, that, the people of the United States, has a higher percent of

[1297]

without children, and the national characters are depend on the nature of citizens, because the nationality is composed of individual citizenship, and every citizen must pass through a childhood, so the children of to-day, will be citizens of their after years.

Now, then, the boys of america, are the elements, of which the United States were built up, and ^{are} exist, before you was born, are exist with you, in which you are a partner, and shall

[129]

never perished from
the surface of our planet,
with your decedancy

[Late April, 1884, Translated from Korean, presumably the letter referred to in Yu's October 1884 letter to Morse]

Now at the end of April it will soon be May. How do you like staying far from home? Your cousin is well. It is said that the Korean cadets who were trained in Japan are now at home (back in Korea). I (your cousin) have learned the police regulations but even so I wonder if the government will use it. If the Koreans are ever modernized someday it may be used. I am thinking of learning another subject. In Korea people are talking about Japan after the military coup d'état in 1882. Mr. Inoue[?], the Japanese Minister, was back in Korea in late May.

I am dreaming of returning to my home but I am thinking of the idea of studying something else. Have you any ideas? My uncle passed the Government (civil service) exams and we are very pleased.

Good blessings while you are in a foreign country.

[Note Added: To Yu-Kil Chun, who lived at 33 Sommer St., Salem, in 1884]

사별외지는 오직 외무총부에서 오디
목이생물사외

여종외지수제외무총부에서 오디
외무총부에서 오디

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외무총부에서 오디

(22)

(23)

Byfeild [Byfield] Nov. 3th 1884

Dummer Academy

Dear Prof. E. S. Morse

I have recieved your kind note, and the letter, which was sent by my father containing interesting matter, and I will tell you in full, that, His Majesty of Korea had issued a manifesto on the subject of the change in the style of the garment, throughout the whole nation, which the Koreans were at present day: Nobody opposed it, but the Prime Minister and the Ministers at the head of some department were greatly discontended [discontented] because of it, and then place every hinderence in its way, by persuading His Majesty to give up his purpose, so that His Majesty became angry with them, and said to them "This is not the time for discussion, We must conform to modern civilization by successive changes, of which this is the first.

Notwithstanding this statement, they still refused to comply with His Majesty's expressed desire; Thereupon the Prime Minister recieved his dismissal and some of other Ministers exile; I think this affair will cirtaintly [certainly] be very curious, and arbitrary to you to hear from a mere saying, but it is really better for His Majesty has such a power to do so on the present condition of our country, and I hope it will not continue for a long period,

I had an examination on the (theory) theories and consequences of the volcanoes, earthquakes, geysers, and arrangement of relief forms of continents, got 94 percent and twenty questions of Arithematic, 100 percent,

Please believe me your faithfully You Keel June

to Prof Edw. S. Morse

[129j]
Byfield Nov. 3rd 1884
Dummer Academy

Dear Prof. E. S. Morse
I have received your kind note, and the letter, which was sent by my father containing interesting matter, and I will tell you in full, that His Majesty of Korea had issued a Manifesto on the subject of the change in the style of the garment, throughout the whole nation, which the Koreans were at present day. Nobody opposed it, but the Prime Minister and the Ministers at the head of some department were greatly discontented

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(129k)

arbitrary to you to hear from a mere saying, but it is really better for His Majesty has such a power to do so, on the present condition of our Country, and I hope it will not continue for a long period.

I had an examination on the ~~theory~~ theories and consequences of the volcanoes, Earthquakes, geysers, and arrangement of relief forms of continents, got 94 percent and twenty questions of Arithmetic, 100 percent. Please believe me your faithfully yours, Edw. Morse

To Prof. E. S. Morse

[c. November 1884]
Byfield Friday

Dear Prof Morse

I am very happy to tell you about that, because it please you, and you are always anxious to see my improvement on my study.

I have an examination yesterday afternoon, and get 87 percent that was 16 percent higher than anybody else and 13 percent less than hundred

Teachers, at first, told me that, they would excuse me, For I do not take an examination, because I am a newcomer, and forien born, moreover fresh studend. So I answer them, that I would and ought to have an examination like another student

Then they say "all right, and very glad to have me" and I commece [commence] to feel anxiety so got to study somewhat a little harder than last week and fortunately make no mistake except one, that I have not studied yet

Please give my kindest regards to your family and Mr Brooke and believe me your faithful obedience

Yu Keel June

to Prof. Edw, S. Morse

Byfield Friday

You will find

to Prof Edw. S. Morse

Dear Prof Morse

I am very happy to tell you about that, because it please you, and you are always anxious to see my improvement on my study. I have an examination yesterday afternoon, and get 17 percent that was 16 percent higher than anybody else and 13 percent less than hundred Teachers. at first, told me that, they would excuse me, for I do not take an examination.

because I am a new comer, and forion born, moreover fresh student. so I answer them, that I would and ought to have an examination like another student. Then they say "all right, and very glad to have me" and I commue to feel anxiety and some do get to study somewhat a little harder than last week and fortunately make no mistake except one, that I have not studied yet. Please give my kindest regards to your family and Mr Brooks and believe me your faithful obedience

South Byfield Dec. 17th 84

Dear Prof. E. S. Morse

I will do as you wrote me to do. Prof, how can I helping myself from this heart-breaking grief. Sinse I have heard that calamitous tidings

Whether it is true or not, it is very hard for me to endure without any suffering from agony, I should go to your place at once, from the moment I heard it, to ask for your kind advice, but I deemed it best to wait for a letter from Japan, which would convey true report to me

I am yours faithfully
You Keel June

[Presumably regarding the *coup d'état* in Seoul, December 4, 1884]

South Byfield Dec. 17th 84

Dear Prof. C. S. Morse

I will do as you wrote me to do.

Prof. how can I help myself from this heart-breaking grief. Since I have heard that calamitous tidings

whether it is true or not, it is very hard for me to endure without any suffering from agony. I should go to your place at once, from the moment I heard in, to ask for your kind advice, but I deemed it best to wait for a letter from Japan, which would convey true report to me

I am yours
faithfully
You will find

[Postcard stamped December 25, 1884]

Prof. Edw. S. Morse
Salem Mass.

I had safely arrived at New York Central Station yesterday afternoon and met Mr. Ferazar [Everett Frazer] just in time I got there.

I had intended to write you immediately after I had arrived at Orange, but no mail could conveyed until this morning

Yu kil June

POSTAL CARD



NOTHING BUT THE ADDRESS CAN BE PLACED ON THIS SIDE.

Prof. Edw. S. Morse
Salem
Mass.

[1297] 11 DEC 1 P M 84
NEARANS

I had safely arrived at
York Central Station yesterday
afternoon, and met Mr. Terzag
just in time I got there.

I had intended to write you
immediately after I had arrived at
Orange, but no mail could be conveyed
until this morning
Yr. Kilgore
[Dec. 25, 1884]

New York Dec. 27th 84

Dear Prof. Edw. S. Morse

It is a matter of congratulations, as well as pride to me, to put myself under the influence and care of you and I am thankful to Mr Lowell because he was so clear-sighted and kind-minded in guiding me. I am consciously felt as above since I came to this commercial city.

I was greatly relieved by seeing this news, that is the German Minister to Korea has received a tranquilizing telegram regarding the situation in Korea I read this paper [paper] this morning and thought it is very important to your theory

Yours faithfully

You keel June

[1296]

New York Dec. 27th 84
Dear Prof. Edwin S. Morse

It is a matter of
congratulation, as well as pride
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the influence and care of you
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this news, that is the German
Minister to Korea has received
a tranquilizing telegram regard-
ing the situation in Korea

I read this paper this morning
and thought it is very important
to your theory. Yours faithfully
You'll find

South Byfield Mass. Jan. 28th 1885

Prof. Edw. S. Morse

The term of this school will be closed at the end of next March. I am ant [not] anxious about myself at all, I am very much discouraged by the preposterous management of our aged people.

I have a Son-like duty and affection toward you which were and are and evermore shall not be changed by any superstitious and bad influences though. I should have occasionally been offended your feelings by my innate carelessness

Yours faithfully
You Keel June

South Byfield [129k]

Mass. Jan. 28th

1895

Prof, Edw. J. Morle

The term of
this school will be closed
at the end of next March.
I am not anxious about
myself at all, I am very
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preposterous management of
our aged people.
I have sonlike duty and af-
fection toward you which
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though I should have occasion-
ally been offended your feelings
by my inate carelessness

[129k]

Yours faithfully,
You Kool June

South Byfield Mass. Feb. 3th 85

Dear Prof. Edw. S. Morse

I thank you very much for your kindness and anxiety about our people, and also I feel greatly to Mr, Lowell for his kindest helps to such a poor and helpless fellow I am now. I cannot stop my thinking of the self-degraded condition and encroaching danger from without, which our country is at, and apt to receive

I head is awfully tired by the constant thinking, but I can see no remedy, except thinking of a future hope which shall be made by self-action and a kind advice which must received from an honest and scientific man like you or other who are interested in our country.

I am earnestly like to be in Salem on every Sunday, as I always got something for my knowledge, every time I hear your talking.

I will certainly come to your house on next Saturday

Yours gratefully
You Keel June

To Prof. Edw. S. Morse
Salem, Mass.

South Byfield [129W]

Mass. Feb. 3th 85

Dear Prof. Edu. S. Morse

I thank you very much for your kindness and anxiety about our people, and also I feel greatly to Mr. Sowell for his kindest help to such a poor and helpless fellow I am now. I cannot stop my thinking of the self-degraded condition and encroaching danger from without, which our country is at, and apt to receive.

I head is awfully tired by the constant thinking, but I can see no remedy, except thinking of a future hope which shall be made by self-action and

a kind advice which must [129X]
received from an honest and scientific man like you or other who are interested in our country.

I am earnestly like to be in Salem on ^{Friday} Sunday, as I always get something for my knowledge every time I hear your talking.

I will certainly come to your house on next Saturday.

Yours Gratefully
Your K. S. L. Jewell
to
Prof. Edu. S. Morse

Salem
Mass.

South Byfield Mar. 20th [1885]

Dear Prof. Morse

I received your letter, and thank you for the forwarding of the letter which came from Japan.

This term of this School is going to be closed next week Wednesday. So I shall come home at that time and bring my books

Yours gratefully
You keel June
To Prof Edw. S. Morse

South Byfield 129cc
Mar. 20th

Dear Prof. Morse

I received
your letter, and thank you
for the forwarding of the
letter which came from
Japan.

This term of this
School is going to be
closed next week wednes-
day. So I shall come home
at that time and bring
my books

Yours gratefully
You Kael June
To Prof. Edu. S. Morse

Onboard of Hiro-Sima-Maru, Dec. 2d. 1885

Dear Prof. E. S. Morse

Your letters of the 3d and 13th of Oct. and those of 13th of Oct. by Miss Edith and Mr. John G. Morse, of 18th of Oct. by Miss Margaratt Brooks, reached me today in Yokohama, by the kind, prompt, and sincere delivery of Dr. Begelow [Bigelow].

The Korean letter, you send me, enclosed your letter of the 3d of Oct. was from my brother, and a letter from our King, which authorized me to borrow money for my expences as far as up to ten thousand—10000 Dollars, but I could not help a laughing, when I read that letter. for his considering himself a king of Korea, not thinking of myself being left in America, to the Charity of my friend, though I am thankful for his kind remembrance even a mere word like that, as I have received from him,

I was very much surprised by reading my brother's letter, that, the Korean government had thought I was connected with the revolution of last year, and they disclosed my letters to my friends in Korea, as they thought, they would find some-thing to against me.

Fortunately, I had not written a suspicious letter to my friend, since I have heard the revolution, and I was sure they would do something like that, so I had written many letters to my parants and friends, saying that, the revolutionists were good friends of mine, when they were loyal to the king, and true to the nation, but they are, now great enemy of mine, because they were traitors and did great Harm to our country

On board of Hiro-Sima ^[129m]

Maru. Dec. 2d. 1865

Dear Prof. E. S. Morse

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by Miss Edith and Mr.
John S. Morse, of 18th Oct.
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The Korean letter,
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This statement has taken away the suspicion from the Korean government and has pleased the King of Korea, and my parants.

I cannot write many letters on this board, for this ship is shaking too much, and I would not have a time to write many letters. When I reached Kobe, for the mail steamer will leave there by the time of the arrival of this ship to the said place.

Please tell Mr. John and Miss Edith and Maragaratt that I will answer them when I reached my native country which shall reached them by the next mail

I must ask you again, to take the trouble for me, in telling John, that three Cheers for America, three more for Mass. [Massachusetts] three more for Puritan, and three more for John G. Morse.

from Yu Kil Chun
yours most Faithfully
Yu Kil Chun

[1290] 2

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[1290] 3

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[129p] 4
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[129f] 6
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from Yu-pil Chun

Yours most
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[ca. September 1885]

My homeward voyage is taken suddenly, rather unexpectedly, So I have no time to excute my will, except the preparation of my journey, even so necessary as to pay you visit for bidding you a farewell.

I am exceedingly sorry that, I am not able to have the pleasure of seeing your family on my departure, and that I leave the land of the free, and the home of the brave, with my immature knowledge.

I hope you will believe me as ever as a lover of you. For I am very thankful to your kindness, and grateful to your instruction, so much so. I wish also to be truthful to you.

Well I remember the day, when I have heard a revolution broke out in our country , and came down to you, with a variation of cloudy sentiment, and uncertainty of waving thought, which were buried together in a feeling of our national calamity.

I said to you that, the Christianity was best, as a religion, and I would like to propose to our people, to introduce that religion to our Country, for the sake of our Country, although I was not a believer of any religion in the world, because I thought the people of Christendom were never revolt to. their government, and always lived in a peaceful life

Ever since then, I have a constant looking, continue questioning, and occational reading about the matters which mostly concerned in religion.

Finally to my surprise I found that, the Creation, Salvation, Judgement, Reward and Punishment, and even the

were all of which, ^{were 2 or 3 thousand years ago} once in a state of existence in China and India, and some of them which are still continued to present day, with the old claim to divinity, and as to monality, it still does ^{same in every religion}.

So I think, as it is, there are not need ^{to} be added for the substitution of our Paganism, because, if introduced, it will ~~be~~ merely be a repetition of old fashion idea and aggregation of ^{renewal} ancient practices.

Above all I am surprised to read the phrases "take no thought of to-morrow" ^{religion just for itself?} It is not practiced in any country whose religion was Christianity, and strangely practiced among our people, because as you understood, we lost all its business activity, and consequence was become every week.

[179d]

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We must take a thought in learning how to gain activity for our nation, and how to provide justise for others evil

Subsequently I came to conclusion that, there are no remedies in any religion but activity, and activity is to take an earnest thought in preparing for future, So I will propose to our people as what I have recently concluded to be good for nation, when I go back to my native land, and I am on my way home now

I write this to you, because I wish to be truthful, and I think also, without this letter, you would doubt me as an untruthful person

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Please excuse me for my coarseness in writing

Port Said 8th 1885 Egypt
On board of Denbeighshire

Dear Prof. Edward S. Morse Tomorrow we shall reach the Port Said, but I think I shall not have a sufficient time for writing a letter, as the Steamer will not stay more than 2 or 3 hours, letter

I write this letter for my preparation, on the day just before the arrival of the port, and past it, just on the moment I reached here,

This steamer dose not go to Alaxandria, but she will go to Singapore, and Hong-kong, thence to Japan.

It will take me about seven weeks to reach Japan, but I am not weary about this long journey, because it will give me a pride by saying round the world, and besides, I will see many things which will be all new to me; I have already traveled {through}, in regions, from Temperature [temperate] to Tropic, and in seasons, from Winter to Summer, in so short a space of time

I thank very much for your kind advice in last letter, and I wish to give it to our people,

This scape [scrap] of newspaper, is the proof of my correct observation in London, I found it a news paper, the day after I had written to you about the system of London Omnibus. I hope you will believe that I am a good observer in a strange land, even though sometime as careless as I am; It is really a grateful expression for your daily instructions, which enabling me to be something in the world; and not a mere boast of my observation.

Yu Kil Chun

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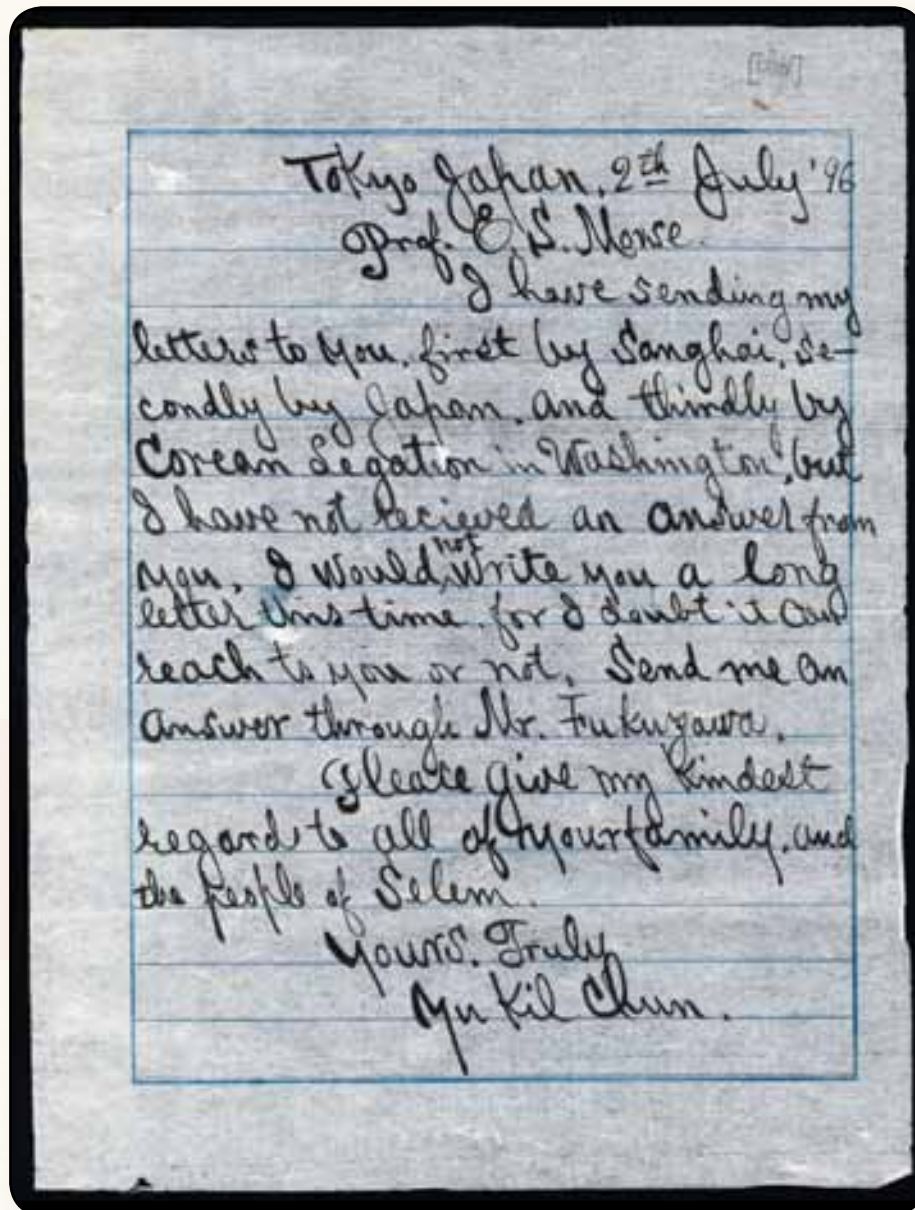
[1292]

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Tokyo Japan, 2th July '96

Prof. E. S. Morse.

I have sending my letters to you, first by Sanghai, secondly by Japan. and thirdly by Corean Legation in Washington, but I have not received an answer from you, I would not write you a long letter this time, for I doubt it can reach to you or not. Send me an answer through Mr. Fukuzawa.

Please give my kindest regards to all of your family, and the people of Salem.

Yours Truly
Yu Kil Chun

Tokio, Japan. Dec 3. '96

Dear Prof. E.S. Morse.

Your letters of July 28 and Aug 7 reached to me on the same day first of Dec. latter one enclosed with two letters from my dear old friends-Choate family.

It is really a great pleasure to me to look at your handwriting since about ten years after my heart-felt-sorry-departure from your fatherly kind guide, and to find you and your family all well.

What science has Master John graduated, and has he get a nice position; and how is Miss Edith and has she married is a good husband?

I am great sorry for your losing of your good mother and sorry also is the death of Judge Choate and Mrs Brooks.

How is Mr. P. Lowell? My debt to him last year, I had petitioned our Government for the returning, as I was a student sent over to America by Government, and the expense must be paid by the Government.

Our Financial Minister told me he would give me the money if I bring an account of exact sum written by Mr. Lowell. So I wrote twice to you for it and once send a word to Mr. Lowell for it through our ex-minister to U.S.A. Mr. So-Kang-Bom but now I am in Japan like an exile without a cent and the Financial Minister was killed in the last riot.

I came to Japan with twenty men and supported by old Mr. Fukuzawa, but it is quite difficult for me to support

copy

[12/19/96]

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We sent over a hundred students to Japan last year, for the future worker of Corea, and put them in Fukuzawa school for their education, but about one third of them went back to Corea, and have about seventy of them left with me.

The expenses of those students, Corean Government has tried stop the pay but the contract with the school (it was made last year for deep consideration) was not allow it and they had to pay, this difficulty was over the government had also tried to call them back, but all the students did not obey and they say better die than is go back.

Dear Prof. we must save our people-twenty million souls, from despotic supression and guard their life from unlawful torture which often causes death, protect their property from squeezing and plundering by bad officers and also prevent our nation from being an eastern Poland.

I am pretty busy and no time now to write letters to Master John and Miss Edith and answers to Choate family, I write them in a few days.

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Yours gratefully
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Yours gratefully
(signed) Ryu Kil Chun

[Possibly sent as an enclosure in the letter dated December 3, 1896]

The Reformation We Made

1. Clear distinction shall be drawn between Nation and Royal House. That is the King is king and only a head of nation and not himself is the Nation.

Hitherto our Governmental system and everything was made for one man — the king not for Nation — the people. So that the king has the power of death and life, and will of giving and depriving it was, above all, the evil source which made our nation weak and poor.

2. No distinction shall be mentioned between nobles and commons, in appointing to official positions and enjoying in Judicial right.

3. No taxes shall be taken without a consent of the king and which shall be fixed by law about the collecting mode and the average rate. And no one shall be a collector except those appointed by the Financial Minister.

Hitherto the Royal House, nobleman or distinct [district] officials squeezed people's money under the name of tax and filled their private purses which impaired national industry.

4. No one shall be arrested without a consent of Judge and no one shall be punished without through an open trial, and the bloody law of killing all the family when a member of any family commits a high treason abolished, and also the old mode of punishment such as cutting head off, beating to death and torturing to make a confession abolished, and the only punishment for death is hanging.

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Besides these, all the soldiers put together under one head police force was organized, Primary School and Normal School was opened, the expenditure of the Royal House was fixed at a sum of \$500,000 a year, thus prevent the unlawful squandering of national money by the Queen for her more selfishness, and a Rule of District meeting was published by government which was designed to give a new life of freedom to our people and rouse their feeling for self governing as to make a step to the constitutioned [constitutional] monarchy.

But it is now, all have gone by one stroke — that is by the ran away of our king to the Russian Legation.

Our Queen was a worst woman the world has ever produced. She was worse than Mary of Poland (the queen of John III) Marie Antoinette of France (the queen of Louis XVI) She was skillful as she was wicked, no law was in her eyes and no nation was in her mind, her sole aim was at money and how to make money and crazy at money just like a hungry tiger hunting for his evening prey. She tortured people for squeezing money (sometimes causes a secret death in the Black Jail) and selling title to rich men by force (which we call a thunder cap) Confiscating properties by a mere pretention and sold justice; and petty thief like officers appointed by her spread all over the country to squeeze unlawful taxes from district merchants, and take temporary taxes from farmers (which was very heavy and the amount was greater than yearly tax = national income). The lives of people she looked down just like pig or cow only raised for her food and the property of people she thought no more than the dust under her feet. As to the king, I would say nothing of him, but it is said among our people that “The king is a doll, and the queen a player of doll.”

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The Queens way of spending money.

1. Bangitte [banquet] at court, day after day, night after night, while the nation suffered from starvation.
2. Offering things to the God of heaven and spirits of Earth, mountains, rivers and millions of idols in the kingdom, for begging for Her longevity, while the people in the nation cried for immediate die from their sufferings of torturing and squeezing.
3. Electric light in the palace while the whole nation placed in a dark corner, and not a bit of new rays of civilization has been glared upon.
4. Precious Jewels and silks for cloth stuff for herself and her favorites (among them is the present minister to Washington Li-Bom Chin, who is an ignorant and debauched fellow, and present minister to Japan Li-Ha-Yong and also the present minister of war Li-Yun Yong) while all the pays of soldiers and officers was stopped by her — the former about a year and a half, and latter about ten years to six or five years.

Besides these witches, fortune tellers, singers and dancers and every kind of ignorant man was thronged to the place for seeking the queen's favor and make money.

Since we start our reformation we told His and Her majesties about the immediate danger of Corea and the necessity of reforms and begged them to be a friend to reformation for the sake of nation and for themselves. The Queen promised us she will be very glad to see the reformation in progressing and she will not interfere any more with national politics, but those words were a lie and dropped from her lips and a

vicious and venomous thought was at her heart. She carried a secret intercourse with Russian Minister seeking for help and became a convert to Christianity for getting the helps from Missionary men, and last autumn she planned a massacre of whole party of reformers, but it was discovered by ex-regent — the father of king, and he consulted with Japanese Minister and decided to kill Her by some help of Japanese. It was done, but it was a great mistake for the ex-regent to consult this matter with Japanese Minister and called some help from him, but now there are no other way to help it. At that time I was appointed as a governor of province and on my way to my official post. But I was called back immediately to the cabinet, became a member of it, then with hard work restored the title of queen by indirect help of Mr. Greathouse and punished the murderers of the Queen with death, but we could not punish the ex-regent. Now the queen's favorites escaped in Russian Legation tried to throw up our cabinet, but we prevented it in every way.

Our king is a feeble-minded man, and knows nothing, but himself being frightened by a false report of a plan by designed by us for dethroning or murdering him, which conveyed to him by some way from Russian Legation (it is only my hearing after my escape) he disguised himself under a cloth of palace woman and past the gate without being discovered, and went to Russian Legation for his thought of safety. This happened on the morning of the 11th of February, this year. As soon as I have heard of it I tried to do something to bring his Majesty back to his palace. I went right into the cabinet, but not a member was presented and they had all gone somewhere for their safety and our Prime

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Minister was arrested on his way to Russian Legation to see his Majesty and ask him to be back. I was entirely ignorant of it, and tried to collect the soldiers of Body Guard but no captain was to be found, now my head was heated with anger, sat myself down in a chair in the Cabinet House plunged in a deep consideration for my dear Nation but no way to save her now and danger encroached upon me.

Five police men came with a verbal order from his Majesty to arrest me. I said to them with a loud voice “You are Corean police men and I am a Minister of State. His Majesty has no right to arrest a Corean Minister as long as he is in a Foreign Legation and you have no duty to serve him, and besides His Majesty has also no direct right to arrest a man without through a consent of Judge”. The police man, then, told me to obey his Majesty’s order as he thinks it will be proper for a loyal person to do.

I scold them by saying that “I do not think it is loyal to die like a dog at this time when hand whole country over to Russia”. Two of them were a little moved by these words and they let the other three to go for a Habias Corpus to arrest while they will watching at me, but the three would not go away until they get hold of me. I drove them away with a drawn sword, then the two escorted me to escape and on the way I met two Japs who helped me very much, but I was met with danger three times on my way to escape, and now I am in Japan with safety, but I must do something to save our country or die.

for the sake of nation and for themselves. The Queen promised me she will be very glad to see the reformation in progressing and she will not interfere any more with national politics, but those words were a lie and dropped from her lips and a vicious and venomous thought was at her heart. She carried a secret intercourse with Russian Minister seeking for help and became a convert to Christianity for getting the helps from missionary men, and last autumn she planned a ^{masochre} massacre of whole party of reformers, but it was discovered by ex-regent - the father of King, and he consulted with Japanese Minister and decided to kill her by some help of Japanese, it was done, but it was a great mistake for the ex-regent to consult this matter with Japanese Minister and called some help from him, but now there are no other way to help it, At that time I was appointed as a governor of province and on my way to my official post, but I was called back immediately to the Cabinet, became a member of it, then with hard work restored the title of queen by indirect help of Mr. Great house and punished the murderers of the queen with death, but we could not punish the ex-regent. Now the queen's favorites escaped in Russian Legation tried to throw up our cabinet, but we prevented it in

every way.

Our King is a feeble-minded man, and knows nothing, but himself being frightened by a false report of a plan by designed by me for dethroning or murdering him, which conveyed to him by some way from Russian Legation (it is only my hearing after my escape) he disguised himself under a cloth of palace woman and past the gate without being discovered, and went to Russian Legation for his thought of safety. This happened on the morning of the 11th of February, this year. As soon as I have heard of it I tried to do something to bring his Majesty back to his palace. I went right into the Cabinet, but not a member was presented and they had all gone somewhere for their safety and our Prime Minister was arrested on his way to Russian Legation to see his Majesty and ask him to be back. I was entirely ignorant of it, and tried to collect the Soldiers of Body Guard but no captain was to be found. Now my head was heated with anger, sat myself down in a chair in the Cabinet House plunged in a deep consideration for my dear Nation but no way to save her now and danger encroached upon me.

Five police men came with a verbal order from his Majesty to arrest me. I said

to them with a loud voice "You are Korean police men and I am a Minister of State. His Majesty has no right to arrest a Korean Minister as long as he is in a Foreign Legation and you have no duty to serve him, and besides His Majesty has also no direct right to arrest a man without through a consent of Judge". The police man, then, told me to obey his Majesty's order as he thinks it will be proper for a loyal person to do.

I rebeld them by saying that "I do not think it is loyal to die like a dog at this time when hand whole country over to Russia". Two of them were a little moved by these words and they let the other three to go for a Habeas Corpus to arrest while they will watch by at me, but the three would not go away until they get hold of me. I drove them away with a drawn sword, then the two escorted me to escape and on the way I met two Japs who helped me very much, but I was met with danger three times on my way to escape, and now I am in Japan with safety, but I must do something to save our country or die.



Tokyo, Japan, June 7th '97

Dear Prof Edw. S. Morse

This book I had composed in a long custody and printed in Japan 1894 [*Seoyu Gyeonmun* (Observations on a Journey to the West)], distributed among our people on gratis for the purpose to enlarge their opinion about the outside world.

It had once been very much wellcomed by our people and read with great popularity, everywhere, but now it is prohibited to be looked at since my exile.

Now I am in Japan for about more a year, and recieve some help from Mr. Fukuzawa as usual. but I have here several person with me to look after and must keep them from starvation for our future work.

By this necessity I am urged to seek for some help, and coming finally to ask you for your favor to help me in my distress, and I am also in my full confidence that you will do so with pleasure if your means can allow of it.

Please give my kindest regards to all of your family my old friends in Salem.

Yours Gratefully
Yu Kil Chun

Please send me an answer through Mr Fukuzawa or Jisimpo, then it will come directly to me and not go astray

Tokyo, Japan, June 4th '94

Dear Prof. Edw. S. Morse

This book I had composed in a long custody and printed in Japan 1894, distributed among our people on gratis for ~~the~~ the purpose to enlarge their opinion about its outside world.

It had once been very much welcomed by our people and read with great popularity, everywhere, but now it is prohibited to be looked at since my will.

Now I am in Japan for about more a year, and receive some help from Mr. Fukuzawa as usual, but I have here several person with me to look after and must keep them from starvation for our future work.

By this necessity I am urged to seek for some help, and coming finally to ask you for your help to help me in my distress, and I am also in my full confidence that you

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will do so with pleasure if your means can allow of it.

please give my kindest regards to all of your family my old friend in Salem.

Yours faithfully
Yu Kih Chun

Please send me an answer through Mr. Fukuzawa or T. J. Simpson, then it will come directly to me and not go astray

Written by Alyssa L. Langlais Dodge and Susan S. Bean
Edited by Peg Dorsey and Lin Faye
Designed by Karen Moreau-Ceballos
Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA
All photographs unless otherwise noted are
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The Peabody Essex Museum presents art and culture from New England and around the world. The museum's collections are among the finest of their kind, showcasing an unrivaled spectrum of New England art, architecture and maritime art, plus outstanding Asian, Asian Export, Native American and Oceanic art and photography.

In addition to its vast collection, the museum offers special exhibitions and a hands-on education center. The museum campus features numerous parks, period gardens and 24 historic properties.

