

# Joseon and Her People Shown in the Travel Report of Campbell in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century

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The travel record on Joseon by the British diplomat Charles William Campbell was sent to the British prime minister together with a letter of then British Consul-General Hillier, which was published as a 'travel report' and submitted to the British parliament. This paper synthetically analyzes the characteristics of the travelogue and what Campbell felt about Joseon and her people after his travels to the north of Joseon in 1889.

Campbell's travelogue succeeded in the same writing style that was found in the travelogue of the Englishman William Richard Carles who had surveyed the northern area of Joseon some years earlier, and inspired the English captain A. E. Cavendish in his private journey when he visited Joseon two years later. Campbell traveled to both Geumgangsán (Mt. Geumgang) and Baekdusan (Mt. Baekdu) during this journey, a rare case for foreigners at that time. He confirmed that the religious mind of the Joseon people was strongly projected on these two mountains. While Campbell indicated that the conditions for trade with Western countries were not matured yet, he positively evaluated that there was a latent ability for the people of the lower classes to contribute to the vitalization of trade. He also grasped that the underground resources of Joseon were worth being noticed from the viewpoint of British trade.

There is no doubt that Campbell's travelogue was described for the benefit of Great Britain. Nevertheless, he described the then domestic situation of Joseon rather objectively according to what he had seen and felt. His travelogue is of significance as it provides a clue to a synthetic survey on what attitudes the common people of Joseon had during the turbulent period of the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Keywords: Campbell, travelogue, Joseon, Great Britain, Geumgangsán, Baekdusan, people of the lower classes, trade

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## 1. Introduction: Campbell's Journey in Joseon and the Circumstances of the Times

At the turn of the latter half of the nineteenth century, Joseon faced many serious challenges at home and abroad. In particular, the strong oppression against Roman Catholicism became a catalyst for various changes. It stiffened the domestic politico-social situation and furthermore, irrespective of the will of Joseon, resulted in frequent contact with Western countries that Joseon had stubbornly resisted until then. Frequently, the ships of foreign countries that wanted diplomatic relations and trade with Joseon approached the territory of Joseon, resulting in various unofficial and accidental contact with them. The intention of the Western Powers to contact the government of Joseon grew stronger to a coercive standard and, therefore, military conflicts became inevitable with Joseon who had maintained a closed posture.

Joseon fought against the warships of France and the United States of America and suffered great loss, especially from the French attack in 1866 and the American attack in 1871. Opening major ports to foreign countries and establishing diplomatic relations with them, Joseon settled the situation quickly. It wasn't long before Joseon established diplomatic relations with many countries such as the United States of America, France, Great Britain, Russia and Germany, which Joseon had called barbarians and shunned at the turn of the 1880s. This was a solid indication of the end of seclusion and isolation. The entry of Western diplomats, merchants, and missionaries into Joseon increased quickly. The Westerners who came to Joseon either with private interests or for the benefit of their countries kept a record of their experiences. Review of these records provides a good opportunity to understand the point of view held by Westerners who came to the turbulent Korean Peninsula during the second half of the nineteenth century.

This paper focuses on the record of the British diplomat Charles William Campbell (1861-1927) who journeyed around the north of the Korean Peninsula soon after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Joseon and Great Britain. The voices of the author in this record were his own thoughts about Joseon and also represented the thoughts of an Englishmen; thus this study is valuable. Moreover, since there are very few studies on Campbell's travelogue, review of this work is very significant.

Campbell had performed diplomatic duties in East Asia including China at the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Since 1884, he

had served as a consul in China and remained in China until 1911. He had even been consul-general in Guangdong and Sichuan. However, it seems that his major service area was Beijing.<sup>1</sup> During the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), he participated as secretary on the Chinese side in negotiations to win concessions such as railroad construction and mine development and also joined in negotiations to demarcate the frontier line between Burma and Yunnan Province of China. While doing diplomatic activities, he enjoyed journeying overland in China and was keenly interested in East Asian areas that neighbored China such as Joseon and Mongolia.

As a member of the British Royal Geographical Society since 1892, he read a paper based upon his journeys about the situation in East Asia. Campbell took two important trips while performing his diplomatic duties in East Asia: the first to Joseon in 1889, which this paper deals with, and the other to Mongolia in 1902 after the Chinese Boxer Rebellion (1900). Both of these journeys aroused an enormous interest of the British Government and the British Royal Geographical Society. The former was published as a part of a report to Parliament in 1891 and the latter was introduced at a lecture of the British Royal Geographical Society in 1903, published in the *Geographical Journal* and also published as a report similar to the former in 1904. In particular, the travel record on the north of Joseon in 1889 was his first full-scale travelogue. It seems that the travelogue was evaluated as a writing that gave free play to his power of observation toward objects and discretion toward circumstances and that it was responsive to British diplomats and geographic researchers to a considerable degree.

Those Englishmen who visited Joseon before or after Campbell in the second half of the nineteenth century and left a record on the lives and culture of the people of Joseon are W. R. Carles (1888), A. E. J. Cavendish (1894), A. H. Savage-Landor (1895), and Isabella Bird (1898). Their records were mentioned in the theses on the viewpoints of Westerners toward Joseon<sup>2</sup> and, in particular, those records of Carles, Savage-Landor and Bird were translated into Korean and became easy for Korean readers to access.<sup>3</sup> This paper focuses on analyzing

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1. Campbell's obituary was published in *The Geographical Journal* 70(2):189-190, which was published by the British Royal Geographical Society. This paper referred to this journal for Campbell's personal history.

2. See Lee (1991), Choe (1997), Wang (1998), Shin (2002), Lim (2002), and Jo (2007).

3. See Lee (1994), Shin (1999a, 2000), and Shin and Chang (1999).

the contents of interest toward Joseon and her people through the travelogue of Campbell, which hasn't adequately been reviewed up to now. In the analyzing process, the tendency of the works of Carles and Cavendish who entered Joseon and left writings of the form of travelogue at a similar period as Campbell will be partly reviewed.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Structure of Campbell's Travel Report and His Travel Route

### 1) Combination Travelogue and Diplomatic Report

As shown in the title, Campbell's travel report was published in the form of a report.<sup>5</sup> The British parliament published it with the materials that Hillier, British consul-general to Joseon, had sent to the British prime minister. This publication contains a letter Hillier had sent the British government on the front page and the travelogue of Campbell just after that page. The recipient of Hillier's letter was the then British Prime Minister Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, Marquis of Salisbury. The core of this travel report is the travelogue that Campbell, acting vice-consul of Great Britain in Joseon, wrote after traveling to the north of the Korean Peninsula from August 31 until November 6, 1889. Based on the travelogue of Campbell, Consul-General Hillier described the political situation of Joseon in nothing more than a page and made a 'report' by combining the letter with Campbell's travelogue. The report was sent to the British prime minister on December 23, 1890, was received officially on February 24, 1891, and was published and submitted to Parliament in May 1891.

For the sake of convenience, this paper will call the writing of Campbell 'travelogue' or 'travel record,' the letter of Hillier 'diplomatic report,' and the writing that combined the two and was reported to Parliament 'travel report.' In other words, the target of review in this paper, the travel report, was made by

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4. The travelogues by Carles and Cavendish, like that of Campbell, were recorded by date from the beginning of travel to the end and were similar in form.

5. On the cover, there is the following title: "Report by Mr. C. W. Campbell of a Journey in North Corea in September and October 1889." The Widener Library at Harvard University owns the material this paper refers to (Hollis No. 007853710). This material was printed in pamphlet form, larger than the common size. The text from the first page containing the letter of Hillier to the end of Campbell's travel record amounts to a total of thirty-nine pages and a map of the north of the Korean Peninsula that marked Campbell's travel route is attached after this text.

combining what Campbell had written while journeying in Joseon along with the letter of Hillier, which was submitted officially as a report to the government. It doesn't appear that the contents of Campbell's travelogue were rearranged according to the form of Hillier's report. Hillier judged that Campbell's travelogue properly dealt with the then situation of Joseon and attached it to his report. Based on the travelogue, Hillier made his report in the form of a letter and summarized the situation of Joseon.

In Hillier's letter, his interest in Joseon as a consul-general is also summarized together with the general characteristics of Campbell's travelogue. In the beginning of his letter, Hillier outlined the significance of Campbell's travelogue as follows.

In the autumn of last year, Mr. Campbell, Assistant to this Consulate-General, obtained a few weeks' leave of absence, which he occupied in making a journey to the northern frontier of Corea [Korea]. In the course of this journey, which covered some 1,300 miles of country, much of which had never been visited by foreigners, Mr. Campbell twice crossed the peninsula, and his knowledge of the language enabled him to gather much useful information,<sup>6</sup> which he has embodied in the interesting Report of which I have the honour to inclose a copy.

While a considerable portion of this narrative is occupied with descriptive matter that appeals more particularly to the general reader, Mr. Campbell has not failed to notice many facts bearing upon mining, forestry, agriculture, trade, and kindred topics...(Campbell 1891:1)

Campbell's travel record contained many interesting items unknown to general readers like Hillier said. Though it was constructed into a diplomatic report and was sent to his home country, it seems that the travel report gave an unimpaired appearance of travelogue in its character. Therefore, though the title of the document was 'Report,' the interesting aspects about Koreans and Korean nature that Campbell wrote about while traveling to the north of the Korean Peninsula are not that different from the narrative found in common travelogues. Such a character of a common travelogue induced another British traveler, Captain

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6. Campbell was a fluent speaker of Chinese and a Korean interpreter who spoke Chinese accompanied him during the trip.

Cavendish, to have an interest in travel to Joseon. Cavendish had an important opportunity to experience Joseon and her people while traveling a similar route from Seoul to Baekdusan two years after Campbell.<sup>7</sup> It seems that Cavendish received a hint from Campbell's travelogue that a rather enjoyable journey would be possible; consequently, he set out for the journey with the simple goals of climbing Baekdusan and hunting a tiger. This means that Campbell's writing served as a writing of both a diplomat and a common traveler.

Combined with the letter Hillier sent to the British prime minister, the travelogue of Campbell assumed without a doubt the character of a diplomatic report that vividly reflected the situation of Joseon society on the basis of an on-the-spot survey. In particular, his power of investigation as a diplomat can be confirmed in the contents of trade and the social system of Joseon. When Campbell journeyed through Joseon, it had not been long since Joseon had opened her doors to Western countries.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, many northern areas of Joseon were still unexplored by foreigners. Thus, irrespective of the contents, Campbell's travel record was an important diplomatic barometer of detecting the then situation of the north of Joseon to Hillier, the British consul-general. Campbell's writing was important as a travel record of a foreigner on Joseon and a report by a non-Korean diplomat on the social situation of Joseon. As it was the first time for a foreigner to travel to Duman-gang (Tumen River), Amnokgang (Yalu River), and Baekdusan from the Korean side and not the Chinese, the travel itself was of significance.<sup>9</sup> As Campbell mentioned, he expected it would be a good chance to make a technical diagnosis of the north of Joseon from the commercial point of view (Campbell 1891:2).

Consul-General Hillier summarized what he was interested in as a diplomat

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7. Cavendish recorded that he received help from Campbell and Hillier for his journey. During his travels in Joseon, Hillier was still a consul-general in Joseon and helped him tremendously (Cavendish 1894:5, 21; Jo 2007:42). It seems that Cavendish read Campbell's record beforehand and searched for an efficient route to climb Baekdusan during his leave; accordingly, he chose a slightly different route from that of Campbell (Cavendish 1894:159).

8. In the case of Great Britain, the ratifications of the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between Great Britain and Korea were exchanged in April 1884 (Carles 1888:71).

9. The Englishman Carles, who came to Korea during the exchange of ratifications of the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce, published a travel record on the north of Joseon ahead of Campbell. He traveled from September 27 until November 8. Since his traveling period was shorter than Campbell's, he omitted a few areas including Baekdusan and Geumgangsang where Campbell traveled (Carles 1888).

in his letter to the prime minister (Campbell 1891:1-2). The contents that Hillier thought diplomatically important and summarized were the very ones that the British government had a great interest in, namely, trade with Joseon. Hillier summarized the characteristics of major strong points like Port Wonsan, trade center of the northeastern area of Joseon, and Pyeongyang, which was expected to emerge as a new trade center. He diagnosed that the road between Wonsan and Pyeongyang had not been developed, causing a high cost of transport, and believed that the development of transportation by sea could solve the problem. He also diagnosed that the natural resource reserves like gold would be abundant and foresaw that scientific methods would bring about efficient development of these resources. He foresaw positively that the desire of the Joseon people for trade would be strengthened with the effect of opening ports and laborers would maintain a more diligent pattern to accumulate wealth. Ultimately, Hillier completed his diplomatic report after intensively analyzing the travelogue of Campbell and sent to his home country a positive message that the natural resources of Joseon would arouse the interest of British diplomacy and that the intention of the people of Joseon for trade would be developed more conspicuously.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the ‘travel report’ to Parliament was a proper combination of general ‘travelogue’ and ‘diplomatic report.’

## 2) Campbell’s Journey and Its Characteristics

According to the names of the places Campbell mentioned, his travel route can be divided into two. One was the route from the south to the north, i.e., Seoul-Geumseong-Tonggu-Danballyeong-Geumgangsán-Tongcheon-Wonsan-Yeongheung-Hamheung- Bukcheong-Gapsan-Hyesan-Amnokgang (Yalu River)-Baekdusan; the other was the route from the east to the west, i.e., Hamheung-Yeongheung-Pyeongyang.

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10. It seems that Campbell and Hillier had a particular interest in trade between Joseon and Russia.

At that time, as Great Britain was in the situation of checking the expansion policy of Russia toward the Far East, it was pressing to diagnose the prospect of trade between Joseon and Russia happening in Hamgyeong Province. The confirmation that Kyeongheung in Hamgyeong Province, which was considered a major trade point, didn’t play a great role as a market for trade between Joseon and Russia gave comfort to Campbell and Hillier. It can be assumed that the attitude of Japan, whose ambition became more evident through the Sino-Japanese War (1894) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05), was not seriously considered at the time (Campbell 1891:1, 19).

Looking at the whole travelogue, it can be confirmed that Campbell wanted his route to include the famous mountains Geumgangsan and Baekdusan and rather large cities such as Wonsan, Hamheung, Gapsan, and Pyeongyang. Campbell grasped the characteristic features of nature of Joseon and the lives and culture of the people of Joseon enroute to Geumgangsan along the East Sea and northward to Baekdusan. As mentioned before, this travel route greatly influenced Cavendish's northern route to Baekdusan and, in particular, the record on visiting Geumgangsan was too distinctive to be found in any other foreigner's travelogue at that time. The fact that Campbell investigated the actual conditions of each place through the major cities was something in common with that of Carles who had traveled to these areas before Campbell. Of course, as Campbell himself mentioned, he made an effort to avoid unnecessary repetition by omitting concise descriptions of trodden ways and experiences that Carles or others had taken (Campbell 1891:2, 13). As a whole, in Campbell's travelogue, he took a larger-scale route than both Carles who had traveled earlier and Cavendish who traveled later and wanted to experience various curiosities.

As most of the points Campbell thought highly of were located on the way to Baekdusan, most of the travelogue's content focused on traveling from the south to the north. The descriptions of traveling from the east to the west amounted to about 10% of the travelogue since the aim of this directional travel was to visit Pyeongyang. What Campbell hoped to obtain during his visit to Pyeongyang was to grasp the actual conditions of the still unopened port of Pyeongyang and the natural resource reserves in its vicinity and to search for the possibility of whether Pyeongyang would be developed as a trade port.

### **3. Aspects of Campbell's Understanding of Joseon and Her People**

#### **1) Geumgangsan and Baekdusan: Understanding as Projection of Religion and Belief**

Westerners who visited Joseon at the end of the nineteenth century were generally interested in the customs, culture, and politics of Joseon and described their experiences inclusively. However, few of them wrote a travelogue as Campbell did traveling across the north of the Korean Peninsula and containing Geumgangsan and Baekdusan. It was because they had to arrange a successful start time for traveling to Baekdusan, considering the inconveniences of trans-

portation at that time. With a view to climbing Baekdusan, it would be late to start from Seoul in late August or early September as Campbell did. Therefore, it was not easy for an individual to adjust to the schedule. Because only to climb Baekdusan was already a tight schedule, the fact that Campbell included Geumgangsan in the schedule showed his strong intention to travel to the north of Joseon in its entirety.

Campbell's interest in going to Geumgangsan derived from the special interest of a common traveler rather than a career diplomat. It seems that before his journey Campbell clearly recognized the significance Geumgangsan had on Joseon society.

The broad chain of mountains which continues from the Ch'ang-pai Shan [Jangbaeksan] down through the middle of North Corea [Korea], and roughly follows the contour of the east coast from Puk-ch'öng [Bukcheong] southwards, suddenly starts near the 39th parallel of latitude from a succession of tame hills, with, for the most part, rounded summits and gentle slopes, into a lofty mass of precipitous, inaccessible rocks, whose serrated peaks and jagged outline earned for them many centuries ago the name of Keum-kang San [Geumgangsan], or Diamond Mountains. They occupy a fairly well-defined district of some 30 miles long by 20 miles broad in the north of the Kang-wön [Gangwon] Province, and are easily visible from the Eastern Sea, whence the main range is distant not more than 30 miles as the crow flies. Few places are more celebrated in any country than these mountains are in Corea. Their fame, indeed, extends beyond Corean limits, but chiefly as a Buddhistic centre, the Coreans, who are not remarkable devotees of Buddhism, esteeming them solely on aesthetic grounds. At Söul [Seoul], a visit to Keum-kang San is very fashionable, and supplies all the material necessary for reputation as a traveller. (Campbell 1891:5)

It seems that Campbell knew that this region was an important vein of the Baekdudaegan (Baekdu Great Mountain Chain) and understood in general its comprehensive meaning, such as the recognition of Joseon intellectuals for Geumgangsan, the fervor of the people toward tourism of Geumgangsan, and the Buddhist meaning of Geumgangsan. He already knew Geumgangsan was a great attraction to travelers. When he recognized that the people of Joseon admired Geumgangsan so highly, he had to include a visit in his busy schedule.

It is likely that Campbell knew the culture of journeying to Geumgangsan had been broadly settled among Confucian scholars of Joseon; in fact, there had been a variety of travelogues based on journeys to Geumgangsan. Moreover, he properly recognized that Confucian scholars of Joseon approached Geumgangsan from the “aesthetic” viewpoint rather than an appreciation of it from a Buddhist viewpoint.

Campbell himself appreciated aesthetically the beauty of Geumgangsan during his journey. When visiting Jangansa and Yujeomsa, he evaluated highly the disposition of these temples harmonizing with the surroundings and felt fantastic beauty when he saw the sun shine on the letters of the pillars of Jangansa (Campbell 1891:5-6). However, from the very beginning, his travel to Geumgangsan was generally not so much a non-Buddhist and “aesthetic” one that many Confucian scholars of Joseon had enjoyed as one to confirm the relationship between Geumgangsan and Buddhism. His path over the mountain included such popular scenic places often mentioned in the journey to Geumgangsan as Jangsansa, Pyohunsa, Bodeogam, Sajaam, Hwaryongyeon, Myogilsang, Anmunjae, Manpokdong, and Yujeomsa. However, there were only a few descriptions of the beauty of Geumgangsan but many concrete descriptions of the system of command over temples and the method to make a fortune, such as a method to own land. The phenomenal meaning of the cohesion between Geumgangsan and Buddhism impressed Campbell more deeply than its natural beauty.

The northern end of Campbell’s journey was Baekdusan. While journeying to Baekdusan, Campbell came to understand the value system the people of Joseon had for the mountain in general. Knowing that the Joseon government made sacrifices to the deity of Baekdusan every year, he realized that Baekdusan was the origin of the Joseon national spirit. Campbell who thought the Buddhist meaning of Geumgangsan didn’t agree with the general intention of the people came to think Baekdusan itself was the object of worship to be admired by all the people of Joseon.

Campbell also learned that the precipitous elements inherent in Baekdusan caused the religious acts of the people of Joseon. He confirmed that as Baekdusan was too rugged to climb and tigers sometimes hurt people, it was a place of fear and the desire to escape from such fear caused religious acts.

Campbell thought it strange that, ahead of the full-scale mountain trek, the guides tried to find rice.<sup>11</sup> As the rice was a sacrifice for the deity of Baekdusan, it was preserved with the best treatment on the way. When a guide went into

convulsions, Campbell could immediately confirm the use of rice. As there were many emergency cases because of the ruggedness of the mountain and the unpredictable weather, the people of Joseon made a sacrifice to Baekdusan with rice they thought highly of to get over the fear of such circumstances.

There existed always the fear of tigers at Baekdusan. In the process of climbing and descending Baekdusan,<sup>12</sup> Campbell realized that tigers were fearful creatures to the people of Joseon. On the way to and from Baekdusan, he heard many stories of tigers that had attacked and taken people's lives. Though he didn't see a tiger during the trip, he came to know that tigers were the origin of fear existing close to the people of Joseon, at least in the north of Joseon. After all, through the journey to Geumgangsan and Baekdusan, Campbell confirmed that the religious minds of the people of Joseon were projected two different ways at the two mountains.

## 2) Lower Classes of Joseon: Coexistence of Negative Temperaments and Potentialities

Campbell met various people of Joseon while visiting the northern villages and local government offices, and journeying to scenic places like Geumgangsan and Baekdusan. Also, the interpreter, guides, and porters that accompanied him were people of Joseon. On the basis of his investigation into the people of Joseon, Campbell described his thoughts here and there in his travelogue. In particular, since he had an opportunity to meet people of the lower classes frequently and they occupied most of Joseon society, Campbell had a great interest in their lifestyle. Most likely Campbell thought that their standard could be a measure of Joseon society and they could be major resources of labor with the vitalization of trade in the long-term.

It seems that Campbell saw little hope for the future of Joseon in the upper classes. While traveling to the north of the Korean Peninsula, Campbell often came upon officials who weren't trusted by the people owing to corruption and

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11. Included in his travelogue was that, ahead of the full-scale climb of Baekdusan, the Joseon guides wandered about looking for rice that was rare to the vicinity of the mountain, made a sacrifice to the mountain deity with boiled rice, and ate it while on the mountain. Later, Cavendish also experienced this event (Campbell 1891:25, 28; Cavendish 1894:156, 163).

12. As there was much snow and a guide became sick, Campbell abandoned his climb to the peak of Baekdusan halfway up.

were embarrassed by their lack of economic ability. However, Campbell experienced both the positive and negative aspects of the lower classes. It seems that though the negative aspects were mentioned more often, Campbell grasped the positive aspects at the same time. Those who supplied Campbell with transportation and portage during his journey were typical of the lower classes. Campbell summarized his impression of them as laziness, because the schedule of the journey was always delayed owing to the talkative packhorse driver hanging around and the attendants quarreling over allowances (Campbell 1891:3). It was impossible to increase efficiency in such lives of the lower classes. Campbell had visited immigrant homes of both Joseon and China in an area on Amnokgang (Yalu River), where he confirmed the inactive and lazy lifestyle once again that he had seen in the lower classes of Joseon. Campbell described their characteristics concisely by comparing Chinese people who had immigrated empty-handed, reclaimed wasteland, employed people of Joseon, and engaged in farming with people of Joseon who owned fertile land, but had little interest in farming and lingered around (Campbell 1891:31-2).

The people of the lower classes of Joseon who received a positive evaluation from Campbell were those who he recognized were faithful to their roles and could vitalize the commerce of Joseon with economic ability. The representative figure evaluated as performing his role properly was Kang Yö-hoa (Gang Yeohwa) who accompanied Campbell as an interpreter. During the journey, Kang played the role of interpreter and attendant. It seems that Kang hastened off to work the lazy attendants and employees from the lodging house and wasn't short of providing various information necessary for the journey (Campbell 1891:2). When stopping at Gapsan after abandoning the climb to Baekdusan because of bad weather, it seems that the responsibility of Kang deeply impressed Campbell through an unexpected incident. Any place they visited, Kang always made them hurry up, and always stayed behind to deal with the leftovers. Kang was stoned by the inhabitants at Gapsan in anachronistic condition because of the inability and corruption of the chief of the province. Campbell described this incident in his entry of October 4<sup>th</sup> (Campbell 1891:31). It seems that there contained Campbell's thanks to Kang for his endeavor to finish the journey successfully.

Campbell had a positive interest in the merchant class of Joseon. An old merchant from Euiju whom Campbell met on the way from Tongcheon to Hyeopgok solved money problems that the local government couldn't finance. Campbell thought highly of such a person of economic ability (Campbell

1891:14). Such ability of the merchant caused Campbell to feel the incompetence of the government. Campbell confirmed that the position of merchants was despised by noblemen in Joseon society where commerce was thought less of, but the thought of noblemen toward merchants was becoming more positive than ever before after the opening of ports. At that time, the monopoly of the middle class in manufacturing and distribution hindered the lower classes, including merchants, from displaying their ability. However, Campbell expected that the briskness of trade with the West would increase the role of merchants. He also thought that in spite of the laziness of people of the lower classes, they could easily participate in the change of Joseon in comparison with people from the upper class who were bound by social position and formality. Campbell regarded the good appearance, strong physical power, and courteous and bright characters of people of the lower classes as very good merits (Campbell 1891:35). He had positive prospects that in spite of the inability and laziness generally caused by the passive way of thinking of the people of Joseon, this was not an individual problem but the inability of the government system to induce productivity and that the ability of people of the lower classes would be shown together with the change of the national system.

### 3) Conditions of Trade: Evaluation on the Social System and Industrial Standard

Campbell tried to grasp the whole social system of Joseon from the diplomatic point of view while traveling to the north of the Korean Peninsula. It seems that Campbell had a mind to grasp the maturity of the conditions of trade between Great Britain and Joseon in five years after making a contract for official diplomatic relations. As a result, his travelogue added the function of a diplomatic report beyond a pure travel story. From the viewpoint of a Great Britain that exerted stronger diplomatic influence on China since the Opium War (1839-42), Campbell tried incessantly to grasp the present situation in Joseon, to cut the expansion of Russia in the Far East, and to expand the profits of his homeland.

Campbell thought that there were great limits to the social system of Joseon driving trade with the Western Powers. As stated above, Campbell believed that trade would become brisk when the constituents of Joseon society, in particular the lower classes, positively joined in commercial activities. He thought that the inactive economic activities of the lower classes resulted from the limits of the social structure and system of Joseon. He indicated that one of the serious prob-

lems was the inadequate system to make use of labor. He described the problems found in the use of labor in Joseon society as follows.

The Korean [Korean] system of forced labour thus unwittingly made use of is in constant and universal operation. It bears a resemblance to the old French *corvée*, in that it is chiefly restricted to roads, and helping people over them. A Korean official travelling on public business naturally expects to do so at the public cost, but his conception of public cost is usually anybody's cost except his own; and the Government rule being that travelling expenses must be borne by the districts passed through, in other words, that a locality must provide food, lodging, money, bearers, and beasts of burden on the spur of the moment whenever it is so unlucky as to have an official visitor, ...if not, bulls or men are requisitioned (without remuneration) through the Headman; rooms are swept and garnished, and money collected. (Campbell 1891:4-5)

In the course of it, with the exception of the few instances I have mentioned, I was treated with the utmost civility and kindness by people and officials alike. At many places I was greeted with the pardonable suspicion which most conservative persons exhibit towards novelties, but I was glad to notice that this wore off with better acquaintance in nearly every instance. The difficulty was to convince the country folk that I intended to pay for what I wanted. Once doubt on this point was removed, everything was plain sailing; in fact, the bag containing the cash was frequently my most persuasive ally in the settlement of a bargain. (Campbell 1891:33)

In the first quotation, Campbell described the habitual practice Joseon officials traveling on official business could make use of, namely utilizing the labor and money of the local inhabitants without paying. In the second quotation, he summarized what he had experienced during his travel to the north of Joseon. Campbell carried an identification card (passport) issued by the Joseon government which gave him the status of a diplomat; therefore, he was qualified to receive the same treatment as a Joseon official on business. In the meantime, as the humbler people of Joseon used to give their labor to the bureaucrats without any price, they were reluctant to help Campbell who was traveling with qualifications similar to a Joseon official for fear of not being paid for their services.

They didn't believe his promise to pay. Campbell could get their help only after showing money to them.

Campbell thought that solving such a problem would drastically improve the recognition of the government toward labor. He firmly believed that if the administration of the government would be changed "with an incentive to honest exertion" in spite of the laziness shown by the people of the lower classes, the character of the people of Joseon would be developed toward an admirable direction (Campbell 1891:37). He viewed it as a way of developing trade with foreign countries.

Campbell indicated that the immature aspects of the conditions of trade could be found at the local markets he visited during the journey. Campbell found that octroi was collected at several markets between Wonsan and Pyeongyang. Irrespective of the amount of octroi, it violated the treaty between Joseon and Great Britain.<sup>13</sup> However, in circumstances when local government officials didn't take the treaty seriously,<sup>14</sup> he must have thought it too much to blame them for the breach. It was the then situation of Joseon that the administrative power of the central government didn't have an effective influence on local governments.

In addition, an analysis of the conditions Joseon had for foreign trade were described in many places of the travelogue, where subtitles were particularly attached. The items of "Trade," "Foreign Trade," "Minerals," and "Gold" can be found conspicuously. Campbell indicated that while there was little trade of materials on the road between Seoul and Wonsan, there was active transportation on the road between Pyeongyang and Wonsan. He had a bright prospect that the role of the unopened port of Pyeongyang would be bigger. He also confirmed that the major item Joseon imported through Wonsan was cotton produced in Manchester and the cost of transport via inland roads was high. As can be seen by such subtitles as "Minerals" and "Gold," he had a great interest in the underground resources of Joseon and described gold fields, iron ore fields, and the development of such resources. In particular, he wrote about gold for about

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13. According to the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between Great Britain and Korea, it regulated that if customs on imported goods from Great Britain were collected, no more taxes could be collected.

14. Campbell described that when he indicated the local officials didn't know the importance of the treaty, even the Governor of Hamheung didn't take it seriously (Campbell 1891:32).

two pages. He named the major gold fields in Pyeongan and Hamgyeong provinces and introduced the lifestyle of gold miners and the administrative method of the government for gold mining.

Concerning trade, the diplomat Campbell was impressed by the reserves of natural resources in Joseon. After all, it seems that Campbell expected that the profits through the development of natural resources would be returned to his homeland. Thus, Campbell's journey in Joseon must have been closely connected with imperialist diplomatic activities to secure resources.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This paper will come to a conclusion by summarizing the significance of Campbell's travelogue on the basis of the above discussion. At the end of the nineteenth century when the Western Powers tried to make their own profits through trade with Joseon, the journey of Campbell in Joseon had a very special meaning. It was not common at that time to do an intensive search through the important northern areas of Joseon. Moreover, experiencing the excellent nature of Joseon by taking precipitous routes to Geumgangsan and Baekdusan and having an opportunity to analyze as a diplomat what Great Britain could win in the north of Joseon through trade, Campbell could get much information as a common traveler and diplomat.

The travelogue has the characteristics of both a travel story of a private person and a report on his interest in Joseon as a diplomat. The two meanings have a certain connection with the records of other Englishmen who traveled to Joseon before and after Campbell. The travelogue of Campbell succeeded to the power of observation as the diplomat Carles had shown in his record on the travel to the north of Joseon five years earlier than Campbell. At the same time, Campbell influenced the private travelogue of Captain Cavendish who traveled to Baekdusan on a similar route two years later. Cavendish took the information about Baekdusan and tigers described by Campbell and made the journey without any special diplomatic meaning.

Since the end of the eighteenth century, English navigators approached the shores of Joseon and tried to contact the people of Joseon to grasp the situation of Joseon without results. It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that the deep understanding of Joseon and her people was possible by travelers like Campbell. Englishmen such as Broughton, Hall, and McLeod who investigated

the shores of Joseon between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century took a superficial but positive viewpoint of Joseon. They concluded temporarily that Joseon was an “improved” and “civilized” nation and thought that Joseon had potential as a future counterpart of trade (Koh 2006:126). Their viewpoints were continued in the travelogue of Campbell. Though Campbell who had concrete experience in the north of Joseon evaluated the situation of Joseon negatively, he still diagnosed the potential for Joseon and her people like Englishmen a century before.

As a diplomat, Campbell had a strong interest in the resources of Joseon and the conditions of foreign trade. His intention to contribute to securing the profits of his homeland in Joseon was confirmed in his travelogue. He judged that trade with Joseon would finally be profitable to his homeland. He also viewed that with the administrative support of the government of Joseon to make productive use of labor, the people of the lower classes of Joseon would break the barrier of status and contribute to the development of trade to a considerable degree. In the situation where the Western Powers were busy making their own profits in Joseon, it can be viewed that the government of Joseon should have considered this point seriously and rapidly as a way of self-innovation.

It is expected that comparing comprehensively the travelogue of Campbell with the travel records of other Westerners described during the full-scale trade of Joseon with Western countries in the late nineteenth century would reveal the individual value of the travelogue of Campbell more clearly. The outlines of the views of each Western country toward Joseon that actively approached the Korean Peninsula can be confirmed more concretely by comparing the travel records of Western travelers by countries.

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