

this, but in that event what would become of us? Should we not soon be merely the subjects of your kings? The converts you have made already recognise nobody but you, and in time of trouble they would listen to no other voice than yours. . . . I will have none of you in the provinces. The Emperor, my father, suffered much in reputation among the *literati* by the condescension with which he allowed you to establish yourselves. He could not himself make any change in the laws of our sages, and I will not suffer that in the least degree there shall be any cause to reproach my reign on this score."

His reign was short; but in the long reign of his successor Chienlung the prospects of Christianity in no wise improved. Persecution indeed revived, though without anything like torture or death. A commission of Mandarins was appointed, who reported that the Christian religion was not at all bad in principle, but that "what we lay to its blame is that it has had the audacity to introduce itself, to promulgate itself, and to establish itself in secret. . . . The laws have long forbidden its adoption." This passage illustrates Chinese official opinion up to the close of the eighteenth century. In 1785 the Emperor issued an edict rescinding most of the harsh penalties which had recently been enacted. This, then, brings the story of Roman Catholic Christianity in China up to about 1800; Protestant Christianity not having yet appeared on the scene. The position of the Holy Religion in China was one of

bare sufferance without anything like reasonable toleration; quite restricted in operation, still sustained under depression by the devotion of its priests and the fidelity of its scanty adherents. Yet, in justice to the Chinese leaders, it must be admitted that the doctrine of Christianity was hard for them inasmuch as it cut away the ground from under the so-called divine constitution of their polity. On the other hand their assertion that the Emperor of the day was veritably "the son of heaven," and hedged about with quasi-divinity, was manifestly absurd, because he often had to be deposed for utter misconduct, and some successful warrior enthroned in his stead. Even if an Emperor descended by lineage from remote antiquity could be counted as divine, how could such persons as these possibly have that character?

It will have been noted above how one Emperor stated that his Imperial father had suffered in reputation with the *literati*, owing to his favour towards the Christians. This leads to the consideration of these *literati*, that is, men of learning, who bore a Chinese title which European scholars have translated as *literati*; who were at the beginning of the nineteenth century as they had been in the previous centuries, and still are, the one class of commanding influence in China, and to whom more than to any other men are due the dangers and troubles by which the Chinese Empire is beset at this moment in 1899.

Several considerations have to be mentioned in order that the position of these *literati* may be understood.

In the first place there was not at this time (1800), as there had probably not been at any other time, anything to correspond with the priesthood as seen in India or in any Moslem country, and nothing that approached to the priesthood as seen in the Continent of Europe. Chinese ministers of several orders, indeed, there necessarily were for each of the four religions already mentioned. But none of these priestly groups ever formed an organisation with the status, influence and authority which are commonly associated with the idea of priesthood. Perhaps the Booddhist priests were nearer to this conception than the other groups, but even they did not attain to it.

On the other hand, all that pertains to priesthood was monopolised by the professionally educated, or what would perhaps be called, in Europe, the professional class. The State instruction was imparted with extreme strictness in many unfruitful branches. The admission to the public service was by competitive examination, that being the first ambition of every instructed youth. Those who won became Officials and were styled Mandarins. Still many were on this examination found qualified for office but never received it, and they were styled by a name in Chinese which has been translated as *literati*. The literary classes, trained in all the learning of the Chinese, were the established guardians of the laws, the customs, the traditions, the authoritative literature of China. Under these august and venerable

headings was included all that pertained to authorised beliefs, to ceremonial or ritual practice, to civil government, to social order and to the Imperial Constitution. Of all this, then, they were the keepers, the witnesses, the interpreters. Thus they not only became the high-priests of all that Chinamen cared for, but also they were the directors of the national education and of the instruction for the people. Their educational position was immensely augmented by the extraordinary fact that, in a certain sense and up to a certain point, China was the most educational and literary country ever known in ancient or mediæval times. In that particular regard she has not been surpassed by the most advanced country in recent times. It were strange to say, yet it may be said without exaggeration, that China has been, and was still up to 1800, a slave to her own literature.

It is very difficult for an ordinary European to adequately comprehend the character of Chinese literature; any mastery of it would be for him unattainable. By all accounts it contains much of stately, sonorous prose and some beautiful poetry, or at least versification. Interminable voluminousness was its awful characteristic. On each topic the volumes were counted by hundreds and the chapters by thousands. Gazetteers and Encyclopædias were compiled. An elaborate lexicography was instituted. Public libraries on a vast scale were maintained, a tribunal of history was set up and an official gazette published. All this was carried out or supervised by the



*literati* above described, whose learning was enormous and whose influence was all-pervading. Literature, externally at least, dominated all affairs, and it was guided by them. How far it really exercised the authority it seemed to possess will be considered immediately. It was not only patronised but professed by Emperors. Their Imperial Majesties oft-times essayed flights of authorship in verse and prose. Their announcements, on great occasions of Imperial demise and accession, were set forth in language both high-sounding and magnificent, sometimes adorned with grand imagery, and seemingly inspired by sublime morality. One of the strongest claims which the memory of the Emperor Kanghsi has on Chinese posterity is the immense dictionary of the language which was compiled under his auspices or supervision. It followed of course that the vast country was completely furnished with schools and colleges, in which the memory of the students was most severely exercised.

The system of examination has been much in vogue in recent times among Western countries. But no example of this sort nowadays equals that which has been set by China for many centuries up to the nineteenth century. Moreover when anything important was at stake the examinations were competitive. Probably the word competitive has never been so significant to European ears as it was to Chinese students during those centuries. There was in China a paucity of what would be styled aris-

toeracy in Europe. The Chinese aristocracy was mainly official. Then the entrance to the circle of officialdom, which, however large, was still the charmed one, could be won only by competitive examination. One of the most dangerous rebels in Chinese history, the originator of the Taiping rebellion, turned into his dangerous course because he failed to win in the examinations. Modern educationists in Europe have rightly insisted on the difference between instruction and education. Nowhere in the world could so big an instance be found of this difference as in China about 1800. All the accumulated mental forces of preceding centuries were in full play then; the system was at the end of its long summer with all its sins in bloom and blossom.

This literary and educational system was as unsound as an over-ripe pear. It was an organisation of make-believe. Professor Douglas seems to consider that the Chinese leaders from Confucius onwards have been masters in the art of make-believe, that is, in the skill of making affairs look well, without being so in reality. A great display would be made of mechanism and machinery, but they never accomplished their proper ends. For example, there was an elaborate statistical department, but the numbers of the population were never ascertained within fifty millions, some even think within a hundred millions; there was an equally elaborate cartographical department, but the maps of the country were so defective that the Jesuit fathers first won the

favour of the Emperor by supplying trustworthy charts. There was a historical department, but enquirers have justly complained that the histories show only the affairs of the courts and camps, but little or nothing of the real movements of the nation. This fault extended to still graver affairs; for example, despite the natural skill of the people (as evinced by their high proficiency in the industrial arts), the lack of knowledge regarding ordinary mechanism was so utterly bad that the Jesuit fathers had to repair the Imperial clocks

There was a financial department naturally, but the revenues and expenditure were never known exactly, and no financier has ever been able to construct a Chinese budget worthy of the name. There was a war department, there were soldiers hardy and enduring on the wild frontiers, some commanders with a stomach for fighting and a turn for rough strategy. But the army as an institution was beneath criticism, worse than the worst of any large nation in any quarter of the world. The present state of the troops was never known within even a distant approach to the actuality; the armament remained antique when even surrounding Eastern nations were adopting improvements; the greater part of the infantry had bows and arrows when their brethren in Asiatic nations carried firearms. There was a navy, much needed indeed for the extensive Chinese waters and the numerous Chinese ports, but the ships were highly picturesque in build, resembling the

feeblest ships in the Spanish Armada, and were rarely able to cope effectually with the horrid organisation of piracy in those quarters. Indeed the success of the pirates, who generally had regular headquarters in the island of Formosa, was almost more than the ocean-borne commerce could endure even in an age when piracy was but too common in all the waters of the globe. The frequent prevalence, the temporary suppression, and the equally frequent recrudescence of piracy, redound to the discredit of the Chinese navy.

Worst of all was the mal-organisation of the Civil Service. The men were highly instructed, though not really educated, doubtless versed in the maxims of Confucius regarding the duties of princes, of rulers, of officers, and passed into the service by competitive examination. But when in the service they were never placed beyond the reach of temptation by reasonable emoluments. They were under a provincial Governor, in every province, and each group of Provinces was under a Viceroy. But these supervisors never received emoluments suitable to their position and power. They were left to pay themselves by pilfering from the revenue and by illicit exaction from the people. When the heads were of this nature, the subordinates were the same in their several degrees. The plan of helping themselves from the public treasury, and from the pockets of all the classes they ruled over, would spread right up to the highest ministers in the Emperor's Court.

Added to all this there was such a centralisation of references and decisions at Peking under the Emperor himself, as would have hampered an administration which had been otherwise good, and as aggravated the evil of this administration in itself fundamentally defective. The Emperors seem often to have boasted of their own personal toils and of their own efforts at supervision. It never occurred to them that no Emperor could govern a large Empire in this way. The question was not what he could do himself, but what he could make countless others do. His business was to see that he was represented in every district by an officer honest in principle, placed by status beyond the motives for dishonesty, and in every province by vice-regents trustworthy and capable for the same reasons. This was the one thing never thought of by the Emperor, or by his Court or by his Ministry. So strongly had the tendrils of corruption clasped the Government in their deadly embrace, that had any Emperor individually essayed a reform, he would have been stopped by a palace revolution.

Thus there was a despotism of misrule and maladministration, tempered only by rebellion. When the evil passed or approached the bounds which the people set for it, then it would be checked by insurrection. This is the reason why Chinese annals teem with sedition, commotion and turbulence. The Emperor in whose reign these events were comparatively infrequent was deemed fairly successful.

But the Emperor under whom they happened hardly at all was thought to have been a great ruler. This was especially the good fortune of the Emperor Chienlung, whose long reign closed just before the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Doubtless several, perhaps even many, of the Emperors showed capacity in dealing with particular affairs not requiring a long sustained effort, as for example some particular public works. Sometimes a road (unmetalled) would be made, again a bridge would be constructed, though not quite scientifically. Further, a navigation canal would be made, and the one between the Hoang Ho and the Yang-tsze-Kiang was among the finest in the world, and was, up to 1800 at least, repaired and kept in working order. Again, the permanent diversion of the Hoang Ho from the Pechihlee Gulf to the Yellow Sea under the orders of Chienlung, the Emperor, was a noteworthy undertaking. For these merits China may be remembered when her political faults are forgotten.

Most Emperors effectually fostered the industrial arts. It may be in fairness remembered that China gave her own name, in popular use to pottery, porcelain and the whole range of ceramic art-work. In this branch of beautiful art she is among the oldest as well as the finest workers. In her exquisite silk works she has for many centuries stood high in the first rank of the world. In textile fabrics and in embroideries she has probably the very highest place

for richness of colour and brilliancy of effect in combination. Amidst certain kinds of painting for graphic power, originality of design and exquisite manipulation she was remarkable. But for want of science she never reached any assignable rank in pictorial art as it is understood in Europe. In these respects and in many other departments of decoration she was perhaps as good in 1800 as she had ever been, and no decay was at that time perceptible.

Thus in various ways some Emperors, especially those of the eighteenth century up to 1800, did succeed in dazzling the imagination of mankind by holding together a huge and unwieldy dominion (with what means few stopped to enquire), by guarding frontiers of unequalled length, by victorious campaigns under physical difficulties (though never against any formidably trained enemy), by some public works of undoubted magnitude and value, by patronage of the industrial arts rarely surpassed in any age or nation, by personal diligence and desire to rule well (though foreigners seldom knew with what success or with what failure), and by puissance in pomp and pageantry. The effect thus produced is shown in the able History by Mr. Boulger in his Vol. II., Chapters X. to XXIV. He takes always respecting China the most generous view that may be compatible with historic correctness. He places three of the Chinese Emperors—Taitsong, the Chinese Cæsar, who set up the Manchu dynasty in supersession of the Mings; Kanghsi, who consoli-

dated the Manchu power, and Chienlung, whose reign has been just considered—among the greatest rulers of mankind in ancient or modern times, and as deserving the title of Great.\* This favourable view, if it be accepted, must be taken with large reservations in reference to what has been stated above regarding the realities of national life in China.

The Chinese people of the industrial classes were at this time, in 1800, of a cheerful and peace-loving disposition, so long as they were not provoked beyond endurable limits as understood by them; but in almost every locality there was a quivering fringe of society ready always for mischief if anything happened to shake the local authority which was generally unstable. They looked on their Government as emanating from the semi-divine authority of their Emperor, otherwise they had no idea what good governance meant, having never seen or heard of such a thing. Their industry, in agriculture especially, had for centuries been proverbial, and still was so. In one important particular, namely, the application of sewage manure to the soil, they have not been equalled anywhere. As peasant proprietors cultivating their own holdings and paying easily and punctually the land revenue, so long as the demand was not excessive, they were as good subjects as any Emperor could wish for. They were strong to labour, of steady, temperate habits, and they brought up

\* See Vol. II., p. 423.



large families well. They were extremely tenacious of customs descended from the golden age of their ancestors, with its hazy sunlight, anterior to Booddha and to Confucius. Otherwise they were not fanatical, nor excitably bigoted, unless they were told that some foreign innovation would strike at their ancestral customs. Then indeed they would rise in anger to drive away the foreign person, on the same principle which they thought would justify them in insurrection against a dynasty too wicked to be endured. Their extreme conservatism, amidst which the foremost feature was the veneration, almost the adoration, of forefathers and ancestors, will have kept them straighter and steadier through all their troubles than they would otherwise have been. Though they are in many respects mild—perhaps sometimes gentle—there must yet be a vein of cruelty or a streak of fierceness in their character, as is seen by the savagery of their punishments and the idea among many Mandarins that the panacea for civil troubles is the execution ground. They are wanting in due respect for the sacredness of human life. Their religion makes them think that there is no “something after death” to be feared. When an execution is reported there has often been doubt whether the real man has been executed and whether some substitute has not been offered up. It has often been possible to find a vicarious victim to volunteer on a sum being paid down to his family.

The main foundation of the Constitution for the

Chinese Society and polity was instruction in a learning for the most part unsound, and an education which Western educationists would regard as especially defective. It fed upon itself; it looked inwardly and in no other direction; it assimilated nothing from without; it was fated to suffer more and more from tenuity, and after long attenuation to die of inanition. It had all the faults which in physical development would arise from breeding in and in. To the educated Chinese mind nothing could be more abhorrent than the idea of "fresh fields and pastures new"; the counter notion of "familiar fields and pastures old" would be more acceptable. It would be forgotten that in this way there would never be any *pabulum* or nourishment, and that their system was doomed, like fire without fuel, to extinction. Accordingly such a system was unfitted to withstand the shock of adverse events from the outside. In the nineteenth century now opening there was destined to be crash after crash, and it will be seen how poorly the system fared.

The impression in the Chinese mind against all things foreign had, as already seen, been much deepened during the eighteenth century. Almost the last event in Chienlung's reign had been the reception of the Embassy despatched to Peking by the British King George III. under Lord Macartney in the hope of obtaining commercial facilities. The Emperor received the Envoy with courtesy despite the machinations of his courtiers. The reception,

however, was not in the capital Peking, but at the Imperial hunting-seat in the mountains near Mongolia. The Chinese Ministers took care that the Mission should come to nothing, and when they saw the Englishmen proceed towards Europe they hoped, with the vainest of hopes, that no such Mission would reappear.

Lastly, in reference to some events which are to follow, it must be noted that the loyalty of the Chinese proper towards the Manchu dynasty, which is not Chinese at all but Tartar, never was to be entirely depended upon after the death of Chienlung. The magnificent successes of the Manchus during the eighteenth century induced the Chinese to accept a dynasty which was to them foreign. But when failures supervened in the nineteenth century, then that acceptance grew weaker in every decade. Then people recalled the memory of the really national Chinese dynasty which preceded the Manchus, namely, that of the Mings, which had lasted for three centuries. Although its fall was inglorious, still some of its sovereigns were great and good, especially the illustrious Hongwon, who is probably remembered by every good Chinaman. Thus from the beginning of the nineteenth century the word Ming became more and more a name to conjure with. The fact that Manchu troops were kept separate from their Chinese comrades, and that in many strategic points the garrisons were exclusively Manchu, may be perhaps attributed to apprehensions regarding

popular feeling for the Mings. It was probably fortunate for the reigning dynasty that at several junctures during the nineteenth century there was no Ming personage of any pretension who could come forward.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## REIGN OF THE EMPEROR CHIACHING, 1800 to 1820.

THE condition of China at the beginning of Chiaching's reign, that is, the year 1800, having been sketched, the course of national affairs during that reign may now be described.

Chiaching had inherited, from his predecessors during nearly a century and a half, a personal prestige rarely equalled in the history of any nation. The Imperial rule had been throughout that time a typical instance of personal government. That government had been conducted with many, though not all, of the qualities pertaining to kingly statecraft. In the imagination of the nation the predecessors of Chiaching had been indeed surrounded with the divinity that hedges in the king, and on him, as their successor, this celestial mantle descended. Very soon after his accession he began to dissipate this prestige and to abandon these advantages, until at last he flung them all to the winds. Professor Douglas states that "the gracious presence, courteous manner and marked ability which belonged to Chienlung were exchanged for churlish conduct, a sordid disposition and an uncouth bearing in the case of Chiaching." External amenity and amiabil-

ity were probably of more consequence to the Emperor, owing to the temper of the Chinese, than they would have been in most Empires of so despotic and autocratic a constitution as that of China. It will be seen directly that Chiaching soon became unpopular in a dangerous degree.

Meanwhile an event happened of the most unpleasant significance. In the latter days of Chienlung the principal and favourite Minister had been Ho, a supple and insinuating Chinaman of humble origin. He had so ingratiated himself with the Emperor as to rise to the most confidential positions. While heir-apparent, Chiaching had suspected and disliked this man and, on becoming Emperor, resolved to bring these suspicions to a test. The sequel sheds so lurid a light on the Civil Service of China, that it shall be given in Professor Douglas' own words: \* "Chiaching succeeded to the throne. The new Emperor had long disapproved of the unlimited power which Ho had exercised. He knew also that he (Ho) had acquired immense wealth in other ways than by the lawful exercise of his official position, and Chienlung was no sooner gathered to his fathers than Ho was arrested on a long series of charges embracing malpractices in every relation of life. The amount of wealth discovered in his palace must have been a surprise even to his judges. Gold, silver and jewels to the value of £23,330,000 were discovered in his treasury. This

\* *China*, p. 185.

alone was enough to convict him of the gravest crimes, and from a Chinese point of view to justify the sentence passed upon him of being cut to pieces. In consideration of his long service, however, the Emperor was graciously pleased to commute this cruel fate for the present of a silken cord, which brought the nefarious career of this illustrious culprit to a close."

Now this affair deserves a moment's pause for consideration, because it proves the vicious inefficiency of the Chinese Civil Service as explained in the last Chapter. This man Ho must have had more or less decisive influence, and that corruptly, in the appointment of the great officials of the Empire. Then they, having been appointed through a corrupt Minister, must surely have themselves shared in that corruption. It follows that the officials under them must have been corrupt also. Any person acquainted with Eastern administration will be persuaded that, with such signal dishonesty as that at the very head, the whole service must have been more or less dishonest right down to the bottom. Furthermore this most flagrant case happened in the very surroundings of the so-called great Emperor Chienlung. Whether after that he can be properly remembered as a great ruler, despite his splendour and success, may be left to the judgment of the well-informed.

It has just been stated that the new Emperor Chia-ching from the very outset became unpopular. The events which ensued are attributed to this un-

popularity, but they must have arisen from inefficiency and other faults as well. At all events sedition reared its head under the name of the "White Lily Sect." There was a bad recrudescence of piracy in the Formosa waters. Two attempts were made to assassinate the Emperor, one in the street of Peking when he was preserved by his guard, the other inside the Palace when he was saved by the valorous promptitude of his second son, Prince Mienning, who will be mentioned hereafter.

He had imbibed all the Chinese prejudices against foreigners, which his father had veiled under a polite masque, but which he displayed openly. His mettle in this respect was soon tried by the arrival of a Mission from the Russian Emperor, under Count Goloyken. When this Envoy reached the Chinese frontier at the Great Wall in the Mongolian Mountains intimation was officially conveyed to him that unless he was prepared to perform the ceremony of "Kotow" \* before the Emperor at Peking he had better not proceed. Accordingly he did not proceed, but turned back, being resolved not to submit to that ceremony. In 1816 another Mission from the British King arrived under Lord Amherst. The Envoy after some vicissitudes of treatment did reach Peking, but never had an audience of the Emperor, and was, indeed, actually dismissed.

At this time, that is, from 1800 to 1816, many

\* In Chinese Kotow means bowing so as to touch the ground with the head. See Giles, *Historic China*.



circumstances combined to bring the British into prominence, of a strangely chequered kind, in the eyes of the Chinese. The war between England and France by land and sea caused the British Government to send many ships of war to Chinese waters. Twice was the friendly Portuguese settlement at Macao occupied by them to prevent it being seized by the French, as it was in the neighbourhood of the British trading centre at Canton. All this was denounced by the Chinese provincial authorities. Notwithstanding that, however, they actually applied to British Commanders for assistance against the pirates who from the robbers-nest of Formosa island were beginning to rule all sea-borne traffic except that which was carried by European ships. On one occasion the periodical tribute from Siam for the Emperor of China was coming in a Siamese ship; and the pirates were known to be lying in wait for it. So the Viceroy at Canton requested the British traders at Canton to fit out a fighting vessel and save the tribute-ship. This they did, and so the pirate fleet were attacked and dispersed, allowing the ship to pass in safety towards Peking.

In 1813 the monopoly of trade which had long pertained to the famous East India Company was abolished, though the Company continued as a trading agency for yet a short while. But this abolition set free the European traders at large, which at that time meant really the British traders only, free

to embark on enterprises with the Chinese merchants. However advantageous all this might be to the material interests of China, and however acceptable to all the Chinese subjects concerned therein, the Emperor and his Ministers treated it with a hatred arising from every passion and sentiment that were as subterranean fires in the Chinese heart. The European traders were subjected to the indirect annoyances in the practice of which those Chinese officials were master-hands. The trade was so very profitable that the Europeans forced themselves to be patient and forbearing. The British King sent a friendly letter to the Emperor together with suitable presents. Chiaching's imperial reply was characteristic in the emptiness of its substance and the haughtiness of its tone. In the language of a suzerain to a vassal he condescendingly approved of the respectful terms of the letter, but distinctly intimated to the British Majesty that its interference would not be allowed on behalf of its "subjects who for a long course of years have been in the habit of trading with our Empire. We must observe to you that our Celestial Government regards all persons and nations with eyes of charity and benevolence, and always treats your subjects with the utmost indulgence and affection; on their account, therefore, there can be no place or occasion for the exertions of Your Majesty's Government."

This, then, was the attitude of Chiaching, the last of the Emperors whose reign passed without a dis-

aster to the Empire. The foreign trade might indeed be desired by all Chinese producers and most Chinese consumers. But it would unsettle the minds and thoughts of the people, and would consequently be incompatible with the preservation of the ancient laws of China; it would let the Western light into the internal weakness of the Empire; it would introduce men who would not yield to unreasonable authority the obedience to which the Chinese Emperor had been accustomed in all times save of passing rebellions. Consequently it must at all hazards be checked, and if its suppression be impossible its expansion or extension must be prevented; and surely, with so vast a people and country as the Chinese, such prevention must be practicable. Such, doubtless, were the thoughts of the Emperor, of his ministers and officials and of the *literati* generally. Any politician, or any "man of the world," in the popular sense of the term, could see that such ideas would drive the Chinese Government and its officials into contests, even conflicts, with Europeans; and that in such events an excitable mob, at the beck of the very authorities who ought to have been restraining it, would mingle in taking an anti-European part. Indeed this anti-European policy, which had taken root in previous reigns, did in Chia-ching's reign, during the early part of the nineteenth century, not only grow apace, but also assume a conspicuous form; and although he did not thereby incur any disaster for himself he paved the way for the disasters that befell his heirs and successors.

During his reign there was developed a set of circumstances, regarding which he took no particular part, but on which his successors laid much stress to the political detriment of their country without any moral advantage in compensation. These related to the cultivation of the poppy in China and to the importation of Indian opium into the country.

The origin and progress of the drugs produced from the poppy are succinctly stated in the following passage from the Appendix to the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Opium in 1895: "As to China, the production and habitual use of opium (as distinct from the use of the seed and capsules of the poppy) seem to have reached that country also through the Musalmans, but of course much later. According to Dr. MacGowan the use of Opium came in with the Mongols who established the Yuen dynasty in China in A.D. 1260. The Mongols must have been familiar with opium from their previous conquests of Turkistan and Persia, and probably imported it from those countries. According to Dr. Edkins, production of opium in China is first distinctly mentioned in Chinese literature by Wang Hsi, who wrote in the fifteenth century. He found the cultivation established in those parts of Western China where there was then a Musalman population. Foreign opium must have been consumed at the same time in the coast districts of China, for, as is proved by the authorities quoted by Dr. Dane, the Portuguese in the commencement of the sixteenth

century found both Arabs and Indians trading in opium with the Chinese and other nations to the east of India. It is a significant fact that ancient passages from Chinese poets and writers quoted by Dr. Edkins, show that before opium was known drinks and decoctions, which do not seem to have been medical, were made from poppy seeds, and the juice expressed from poppy capsules."

The following passage may be quoted from the work of Professor Douglas as that of the latest authority in 1899:

"But however strong the feelings of individuals on the subject might be, interests were at work which militated against any direct action towards prohibiting the traffic. The use of the pipe had spread to almost every yamên in the Empire, and already large areas of the country were devoted to the cultivation of the poppy. In the province of Yunnan several thousands of chests of opium were produced annually, and in other provinces vast tracts were sown with poppy seeds. The drug had thus taken a hold upon the nation, and it moderates our view as to the injurious nature of opium when we observe that after so many years the evils arising from it are so difficult to trace. But at the time when the Charter of the East India Company was abolished there was another and a stronger reason why the local authorities of Canton and elsewhere were either openly or privately in favour of the continuance of the traffic. During the reign of Chia-

ching opium was recognised as an article of trade, and paid duty at the rate of three taels per hundred catties (one catty equals 1 1-3 lb.).

"Subsequently, however, the trade had been declared illegal, and as it was plainly impossible to prevent the importation of the drug, a wide door was opened for the energy and daring of smugglers. These men were tacitly recognised by the local mandarins, who drew large though irregular incomes in return for their benevolent inaction. The natural result followed. While occasional censors exposed possible and impossible evils of opium smoking, and while the Emperor fulminated Edicts against the practice, the officials throughout the country, from the highest to the lowest, countenanced the importation of the 'foreign dirt'; and in inland districts, where it was difficult to obtain supplies from the coast, native farmers profitably supplied the officials and people with the means of indulging in the pipe."

In the conclusions of the Royal Commission on Opium there is the following passage: "The effect of that testimony may be most clearly conveyed by saying that the temperate use of opium should be viewed in the same light as the temperate use of alcohol in England. Opium is harmful, harmless, or even beneficial, according to the measure and discretion with which it is used."

So the Emperor Chiaching died in 1820 after a reign of nearly twenty-five years. He left the lofty fabric of Empire still standing with all its

pretensions almost as inflated as ever, but with its foundations somewhat undermined. Though at the outset he did well one strong deed, namely, the convicting and punishing of the chief actor in official corruption, yet afterwards he could have done but little for good government internally, inasmuch as he fell into habits which, if not vicious, were low and utterly detrimental to business. At all hours of the day he kept company with players and singers of mean status. As years went on the life became so scandalous that one honest Minister ventured to remonstrate. In departing to be "a guest on high," he bequeathed to his brave son, who by bravery had saved the father's life (as already seen), the anti-European policy strongly developed and destined to bring upon China the crushing misfortunes which will be explained in the following Chapters.

## CHAPTER XXV.

REIGN OF THE EMPEROR TAOKWANG, 1820-1850. 6

IN 1820 Prince Mienning, the second son of the Emperor Chiaching, ascended the Dragon Throne by his father's choice, under the Imperial style of Taokwang. He was of tall stature and grave deportment, much addicted to outdoor exercises, equestrian and other, and of some martial aptitude. Indeed he owed his selection for the succession to his presence of mind in saving his father from assassination in the Palace at Peking as previously mentioned. He was fairly sedulous as a ruler, and energetic enough at first until failure and disaster cowed his spirit and made him yield his energy to despair. As a youth he had sat at the feet of his renowned grandfather Chienlung, and imbibed all that national pride which was justified by the complete success reaching the utmost bounds of the territorial sphere embraced by the Chinese imagination. In his early life he could neither have doubted nor examined the foundations on which this towering superstructure rested. But during the twenty years which passed in the reign of his father Chiaching, that is, from 1800 to 1820, he had seen these founda-



tions somewhat shaken. To rehabilitate the Empire, an Emperor with a full mastery over the Chinese system at least was needed, and he must have felt he was not such a one. Indeed he was half beaten in spirit before he entered on his arduous government. At the best he was not strong enough for his exalted place. Even if he had been a far abler man than he was, the effect of his ability would have been impaired by two faults which were but too common with Chinese grandees, and were as prominent in him as in any one. In the first place he was brimful of the blind, arrogant pride, inspiring him to issue high-sounding mandates as from a thundering Jove, without any insight into grim realities and without practical regard of consequences. In the second place he equalled, or even exceeded, the most ignorant and narrow minded of his subjects in the dread of foreign trade and in the hatred of foreigners. By these two faults he was driven into a policy which rendered his reign disastrous to his Empire and brought him down with sorrow to the grave.

For the first fourteen years of his reign, that is, from 1820 to 1834, the Empire pursued the uneventful though uneven tenor of its way. At the western extremity there were troubles in the Great Plateau, and at the eastern extremity in Formosa Island, but these were overcome in the old manner. Internally there were drought, famine, inundation, pestilence, physical misfortunes to which the basin of the Hoang Ho had always been liable, but which

the decaying administration was no longer able to meet with vigour.

But in 1834 there arose events which grew more and more menacing and which were the beginnings of what may prove to be the end of the Empire of China. It thus becomes important to consider briefly how these dangerous beginnings sprang up.

Up to 1834 the East India Company, though since 1813 it had ceased to possess the trading monopoly, yet continued to be the principal corporation for trade, especially as it was the administrator of a growing dominion in India. The Company was not disposed to drive any commercial policy to extremities with China, and was not under any particular pressure to do so. It was content with quiet progress not likely to arouse Chinese susceptibilities. The European centre for trade was at that time in and about Canton, as it had long been. There during the fourteen years from 1820 to 1834 the number of European traders so increased that they formed a trading community chiefly British. If they hardly had good days, yet they had better days than any they were allowed by the Chinese to have after 1834, or than any they ever enjoyed up to the most recent times when British influence has become supreme. But in 1834, by an Act of the British Parliament, the Company ceased to be commercial, and remained only as a territorial, virtually an imperial, administrator. Thus the retirement of the great Company from business threw open much trade to

private enterprise, sure not only to advance but to press on and to push its way. Therefore it was felt by the British Government that there must be a British Officer of high status on the spot to regulate affairs. Accordingly a Representative was appointed and Lord Napier was selected for the duty. A historian might say that he was the representative of the British Crown, as he received a commission under the signature of the King. Nevertheless he was not commissioned to communicate with the Emperor of China or with the Chinese Government of Peking. He was to announce his arrival at Canton to the Viceroy. He was to try to extend European trade to other parts of the Chinese dominions, and he was informed that "with a view to the attainment of this object the establishment of direct communication with the Government of Peking would be most desirable." Now as the origin of great events must ever be instructive, it may be well to note that this procedure hardly accorded with the ordinary comity between nations. For surely a commercial envoy bearing a commission under sign-manual from the King of England ought to have waited on the Chinese Government at Peking. The justification rightly rested on the extraordinary conduct of China in the past. To accredit Lord Napier with a letter from his Royal Master to the Emperor would be only to expose his Lordship either to the polite evasiveness with which Lord Macartney had been treated, or else to the rude rebuff with

which Lord Amherst had been visited, as shown in the last Chapter. If indeed Lord Napier had reported himself to the Chinese Ministers at Peking he would certainly have been referred to one of the Viceroy or Provincial Governors, as it was not the custom of the Imperial Ministers to hold communication with foreign officers. The British Government could not have tolerated this, well knowing that such toleration would only be misunderstood by the Chinese. Indeed it had occasionally been almost too forbearing in its anxiety to keep the peace for the sake of trade. It had to choose between two alternatives: either to abandon the trade, which in the then state of English opinion was impossible, or else to adopt the alternative above explained, notwithstanding the risk of hostilities arising therefrom. Under all the circumstances the alternative which it adopted was the preferable one.

With this Commission, then, Lord Napier arrived at the mouth of the Canton River, and sailed right up to the city of Canton. His proceeding so far into the inland waters of the Empire, as the Chinese called them, was resented by the local authorities. He sent a letter to the Viceroy, who was then at some distance from the capital, but who refused to receive it, and who further replied that the great officials of the Empire were forbidden to hold communication with "barbarians" (such is understood to have been the phrase) except under certain conditions. He was informed by the local officials that

hitherto the leading Englishman had been a "tai-pan," or head merchant, and that there never had been such a thing as a correspondence to and fro with a "barbarian eye," the eye being a metaphor for minister. It is impossible for an Englishman to judge of the import of the Chinese word which in this context is translated as "barbarian," but it presumably had an invidious meaning of which the word foreigner would not be susceptible. In subsequent passages it is found associated with expressions certainly conveying scorn and hate. Having thus reached Canton, Lord Napier found himself in communication with no Chinese official, and unable to do anything for his countrymen. On the contrary, matters after his arrival became worse than they had been before, and manifold annoyances were inflicted on the British community in their settlement outside the city. They were officially designated "outer barbarians," whatever that might mean, and the meaning doubtless was not friendly. To all this Lord Napier published a reply to the effect that "The merchants of Great Britain wish to trade with all China on principles of mutual benefit; they will never relax in their exertions till they gain the point of equal importance to both countries, and the Viceroy will find it as easy to stop the current of the Canton River as to carrying into effect the insane determinations of the Hong." He was a prudent as well as a patriotic man, and the fact of his being obliged to openly use such language

shows how far things had gone already in 1835. This was one of his last official acts, for he sickened and died shortly afterwards at Macao. Though the Government of neither nation was implicated, still the British at Canton had taken up one attitude and the Chinese another; and if neither should give way, then some outbreak of hostilities seemed probable, quite enough to involve national issues, especially as the British were supported by naval force.

About this time (1836) the Emperor Taokwang appointed a High Commissioner named Lin to proceed to Canton and regulate all affairs with "the outer barbarians"—a man destined to be the instrument of much misfortune to his country. To the blindness and arrogance of a Chinese official he added the quality of impetuosity. He at once required Lord Napier's successor, Captain Elliot, to address all communications to him in the form of a "pin," which is understood to be the Chinese equivalent to a petition. As the bearer of the English King's Commission, Captain Elliot refused, and thereon was obliged to retire to Macao, a Portuguese settlement in the neighbourhood. Then all the trade at Canton ceased, though doubtless the Europeans kept their magazines and stores there. Upon that Lin resolved to get possession of all the opium there, some twenty-five thousand chests of the drug imported by private merchants from India. The origin of the domestic production and the importation of opium has been mentioned in the preceding Chapter. There had

recently been a discussion on the subject in the *Peking Gazette*. Some Chinese authorities had recommended the legalisation of the opium traffic. Others were opposed to this on the hardly concealed ground that to suppress the importation would be to keep out foreign influence, not as regarded this item particularly, but as regarded trade generally. It was upon these views that Lin acted, and having succeeded, perhaps more easily than he had expected, in seizing a great quantity of the foreign drug, he proceeded to inflict more and more of humiliation, including necessarily much commercial loss. One day in November, 1839, he commanded his men to take up arms against the foreigners. This brought on a collision; the English ships were at hand and many Chinese war-vessels were sunk. Thus the first blood was drawn, so to speak. Although war was not declared by the British, and apparently the Chinese Government was not accustomed to issue such declarations, yet a state of warfare fully existed.

The war about to begin was by some British people at the time supposed, under misapprehension, to be waged for the sake of the opium traffic; by some it was even styled by the misnomer of "the opium war." But all subsequent enquiries have shown that it was waged for the sake of trade generally, in which opium was only one item literally out of a hundred. Moreover British warships and British soldiery were employed mainly for the sake

of the trade of the British Isles, to which field of interest opium did not belong. The drug was indeed an Indian product in part only, the greater part being produced in China itself. The Indian part of the traffic was heavily taxed by the Indian Government, and that taxation rested exactly on the same basis as the taxation on wines and spirits in the British Isles or elsewhere. But it was not for the sake of such a thing as this taxation in a remote dependency that the Parliament of Britain sanctioned war, at a time when it was intent on the far nearer and dearer interests involved in the trade of the British Isles. It was probably the seizure by Lin of the opium that caused the misapprehension to arise among a section of public opinion in England, although that was by no means the immediate occasion of the war. On the contrary, the vast quantities of the drug had been quietly surrendered to Lin's demand, and in that sense only could the drug be said to have been seized by him. If no further acts of provocation or even of aggression occurred, there need not have been, there probably would not have been, any war. It was the intolerably hostile proceedings of Lin and his men, in other ways and for other things, that caused hostilities from the British side.

Still the misapprehension mentioned above has remained so unalterable with many persons in Britain whose goodness commands general respect, that it may be well here to cite the independent testimony



of Professor Douglas in 1899 (see his *China*), as one of the best and the latest authorities:

“The Opium Question was, as events fully demonstrated, only used by the officials as a convenient weapon with which to attack the foreigners. The refusal of the Governor to receive communications from Captain Elliot except in the form of petitions; the ridiculous regulations which he (Lin) laid down for the management of the merchants of Canton; and the sumptuary laws which it was attempted to enact for their guidance—all point to the real object of the mandarins, which was to drive the obnoxious foreigners out of the country. There was something particularly hypocritical in the horror professed by the mandarins at the continuance of the opium traffic, when we call to mind that along the entire coast-line of China from Canton to Tientsin the drug was smuggled openly by the officials and others; and that it was only in Canton and the neighbourhood that any attempt was ever made to check the practice. The mandarins made much of the number of foreign schooners which landed opium along the coast. But these compared with the native customs cruisers and other vessels, which performed the same service, were in numbers as one to many thousands. While the Governor at Canton was professing righteous indignation at the villainy of the English opium traders it was an open secret that his own son was daily smuggling cargoes in official vessels within his father’s jurisdiction. Our sympathy with the pro-

testors is seriously diminished by this evident insincerity, and by the consideration that, though, according to them, the practice of opium smoking had become general throughout the Empire, the energy of the merchants, the scholarship of the *literati*, and the industry of the people remained unabated. As we have already seen (the Emperor) Taokwang's son was a habitual opium smoker, and it would have been more to the purpose if, instead of emptying all the vials of his wrath on the heads of the foreigners, the Emperor had employed real and vigorous measures against the practice which he denounced, against the smuggling of the drug by natives, and against the cultivation of the poppy, which was already largely engaging the attention of native farmers.

"It is impossible under the circumstances to regard the professions of anti-opium Chinese as being genuine, and there can be no doubt that the Government deliberately chose to make a stalking-horse of the trade for the purpose of effectively exciting popular feeling against foreigners."

As bearing on the subject, the following passage may be quoted from the Final Report by the Royal Commission on Opium, published in 1895, already mentioned in the first Part of this work:

"In this matter responsibility mainly lies with the Chinese Government. It is for them to take the first step in any modification of the present Treaty arrangements. Upon the general question, the position which Great Britain may properly take up is

clearly put by Mr. O'Connor, Your Majesty's representative at Peking, in his covering letter addressed to Your Commissioner. He says:

“ ‘ If the use of the drug in China depended on the supply received from India, it might be a practical question what measures could, or ought to, be taken to discourage its importation. But this is not the issue. The quantity of opium grown in China is increasing enormously. Even the nominal prohibition of the cultivation of the poppy no longer exists throughout the whole Empire, and were the importation of Indian opium to be stopped, China would in a few years so increase her production, as not only to supply her own wants, but probably to export opium to foreign countries.’ ”

On the whole, then, it must be said that no charitable construction can be put on the Chinese objection to the importation of opium from any moral standpoint. On the other hand, the Chinese may have sincerely entertained some economic objections which had not been thought of as they related to the international balance of trade. These related to the drain of silver from China to pay for the opium, inasmuch as India was not then taking enough of Chinese products to discharge the account and therefore a balance had to be defrayed by China in cash. A consideration of this kind, however, would have weighed but little with the Chinese in comparison with their cardinal object of hampering foreign trade. Moreover they had probably discovered from

some European utterances that the moral bearings of the case could be so distorted and misrepresented, though unintentionally, as to create in certain quarters within England itself a sort of sympathy with the Chinese cause.

During 1840 preparations for war were made on both sides. The British had to collect their warships from a distance; the Chinese gathered large bodies of men around Canton, but the drawback to the use of these levies was that they were unarmed and that no arms were ready for them, which facts illustrate Chinese administration at that time. In 1841 Canton was blockaded and Chusan attacked by a British squadron. Not content with this the squadron proceeded to the mouth of the Peiho River, which river runs from the direction of Peking into the Pechihlee Gulf. This was the first appearance of British warships, with angry intent, in what may be styled the waters of Peking. So this really moved the Emperor and his Court, who, as is often the case with men of this stamp, passed from blind haughtiness straight into alarm and panic. Naturally the object was to get the British away from this awkward proximity, and to induce them to return to Canton far down south and there resume negotiations. For this purpose a highly placed Minister, Kishên, was employed, and the British representative, then Captain Elliot, assented. This is remarkable as showing the pacific anxiety of the British to avert further warfare. Elliot might well have said that peace must

be settled there at the mouth of the Peiho within reach of Peking, at the risk of hostilities having to be undertaken against the Capital in the event of refusal. In the light of subsequent proceedings it is impossible to say whether the war would thus have been stopped. But had this procedure succeeded, the subsequent warfare would have been averted certainly. As it was, the British squadron returned to Canton, and Kishên was sent thither to make the best settlement he could. Though not exempt from the corruption universal among Chinese officials, he was the most reasonable and trustworthy man then available. Lin was recalled from Canton by the Emperor with scornful expressions, although, bad as he was, he had done nothing more than what he had been ordered to do, or than what he knew to be the then wish of his Imperial Master.

When at Canton Kishên met the negotiators, with the British squadron at their back, he found that he must satisfy their demands, if any agreement was to be made. So he agreed to cede to them a certain rocky islet near the mouth of the Canton River, and thus Hong Kong first appears. The British trade was to be conducted on international equality. On the other hand, whatever the British had recently captured in Chusan was to be restored. There were some further subsidiary provisions. This treaty, instead of being ratified at Peking, was torn up in anger; the unfortunate Kishên was sent up to Peking in irons to answer for his conduct in acceding to it;

and after trial he was sentenced to death, though the capital sentence was commuted to one of banishment. Then the Emperor himself thought to conduct affairs, not by organising his forces, but by issuing fiery proclamations against Europeans whom he designated by Chinese expressions which have been translated as "foreign devils." One of his instructions to his officers appears to run thus. They were to "destroy and wipe clean away, to exterminate and root out the rebellious barbarians." He offered rewards for the heads of the British Representative and the British Admiral. These instructions were childish, but they show with what degree of common sense the Empire of China was directed during this its first crisis in contact with Europeans.

The British replied by making war in earnest, and a considerable body of troops were employed under Sir Hugh Gough, who afterwards became historic in India. Canton was first reduced to submission, then the coast trending northwards towards the mouth of the Yang-tsze-Kiang was attacked by the fleet and the troops in combination. Stronghold after stronghold, heretofore deemed impregnable by the Chinese, succumbed without much resistance. Then the fleet entered the estuary of the Yang-tsze-Kiang itself, justly held by the Chinese as their main inland water. Thereabouts one town, Chenkiang, was taken with heavy loss among the Chinese troops, and the British appeared opposite Nanking, the chief city of that quarter, the ancient Chinese capital, and the second city of the Empire.

It may here be mentioned that while Chenkiang was being bombarded, there was revelry going on at Tching on the opposite side of the river. This was because the Tching people were feasting the British sailors who happened to be there. Thereon Professor Douglas remarks: "So complete is the absence of all patriotic feeling among the people of that 'jest and riddle of the world,' China."

Then the Emperor was convinced that peace must be made forthwith, so a treaty was ratified conceding all the terms that poor Kishên had conceded. Hong Kong was in the first place ceded as before, similarly the previous indemnity for the destruction of the opium was repeated. But whereas in Kishên's treaty Canton was the only port where the British were to trade on terms of international equality, there were now in the new treaty four ports added, namely, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai, the last named being the place which has played and may yet play a leading part in Chinese affairs. There was moreover to be a considerable indemnity to the British for the expenses of the war. This treaty, which was one of the sort which victors would obtain from the vanquished, was signed in August, 1842, with more promptitude than might have been expected, because the Emperor was anxious to rid the inland waters of the Yang-tsze-Kiang from the presence of British warships.

There was no sincerity whatever in this compulsory deed which the Chinese Emperor had to per-

form. Here was an engagement of a nature which is nowadays termed epoch-making, which was perhaps the most important that any Chinese Sovereign had ever made, which would have a far-reaching importance to other nations besides Britain and China, and would lead sooner or later to similar engagements with other European nations. Yet the Chinese Government was so perverse as not to admit this document into the Imperial records at Peking. They persisted in treating it as a provincial paper and sent it to the keeping of the Viceroy or provincial Governor at Canton, in whose possession it was afterwards found by the English. This circumstance illustrates the temper of the Chinese Emperor and Ministers, which was fast driving their country to ruin.

The British authorities, returning southwards, took possession of Hong Kong, but on trying to regulate the trade at Canton found matters just as bad as they had ever been, the new treaty notwithstanding. It has been said with truth that in the huge disjointed Empire of China news may fail to spread for many months together. But no doubt in this case there was another and more potent reason, namely this, that the provincial authorities in and about Canton were resolved not to carry this treaty out if they could help it. They would represent that the Cantonese were turbulent; but that was false. The townspeople were quiet, civil and friendly, greatly liking the trade, the only disturbers being



the unattached mob who were urged on by the officials. After a weary series of insults and wrongs some events occurred which induced the British authorities once more to send warships to Canton. At Shanghai some outrage was committed on two Missionaries and force was employed to obtain reparation. Matters were made still worse at Canton by the appointment of Yeh to be Governor—a man who may be bracketed with Lin, already mentioned, as being a factor in the ruin of China. The Emperor, forgetting the treaty, on one occasion issued a proclamation to the effect that the people of the Kwantung provinces were resolved that foreigners should not enter. As usual the supposed popular will was made the stalking-horse, the truth being that the people were well disposed enough; it was the *literati* and the officials, with the Emperor at their head, who had an evil disposition with implacable enmity. The troubles regarding British trade at Canton, bad and unjustifiable as they were, became perhaps less acutely felt because the British were developing their settlement at Hong Kong and turning it into a coign of vantage in every respect, commercial, political, naval.

As might have been expected, other nations entered into the breach which the British had made in the wall of Chinese exclusiveness. A Commissioner came from America; and the French Government sent a request not so much for trade privileges as for further liberty to propagate the Roman Cath-

olic religion, to which request a limited compliance only was granted.

It has been necessary during this narrative to mention the subject of opium, but also to avoid encumbering the story of war and politics with allusions to a controversy which has raged around the drug, and which though allayed has not ceased up to this day. But after this stage in the career of China, the subject will hardly reappear, as its position will be subordinate to the grave, even tremendous, issues of other kinds which will supervene. Still for the satisfaction of those who have held and still hold strong convictions in the matter, it is well to conclude this Chapter by adverting to the conclusions of the Royal Commission as those of the best and newest authority; though it is to be feared that no such conclusions will ever be accepted by the anti-opium party mentioned in the last Chapter save one of Part I. of this work. The appointment, the enquiries, the Report to the Queen by that High Commission and presented to Parliament, the action of the House of Commons thereon, and the dissent recorded by one Member out of the nine Members of the Commission, Mr. Henry J. Wilson, have all been mentioned in that Chapter. These proceedings related to India primarily, and the result was that the opium system existing there should not be disturbed. But they touched indirectly on China also, because the two countries, the one producing, the other consuming, could not be separated. In this place the

observations of the Royal Commission will be noticed only so far as they relate to China. Mr. Wilson cites the opinion of Dr. Medhurst of the London Missionary Society, a brave and enterprising minister, who drew a moving picture of the evils of opium used in excess. But as he entered China in 1837, when the country was barred against him, he could not have gone very far into the interior. His descriptions relate to individual excesses, probably in some seaport town, and are fully accepted so far as they go. But then he might have entered the dens of vice in any European or Western city, and found things as bad, indeed even worse. The horrors he might have witnessed in, for example, a gin palace in London would not have been accepted as a reason for denunciations against all persons engaged in the gin trade, such as those which he directs against all concerned in the opium traffic. It is here that the misapprehension, as many think it to be, has its beginning; why, they will ask, is opium to be singled out from among the drugs and spirits, alcoholic and narcotic, things which have ever been and still are used by all nationalities whether Western or Oriental, and why are the Chinese to be selected from all the rest of mankind for reprobation in this respect? Still, it must be allowed that the majority of Missionaries of *all* Churches condemn the *use of* opium in China, as shown by their evidence before the Royal Commission. So the anti-opium advocates are entitled to the full benefit of this impor-

tant body of testimony. But the Royal Commission observe that many of these excellent men are the advocates of total abstinence and would similarly condemn every drug or spirit in any country regarding which they might be consulted. On the other hand, there is a minority among the Missionaries, who though believing, as everybody believes, that the excessive use is most pernicious, yet hesitate to condemn the moderate use, and this is the opinion of some among the Medical Missionaries. This view, too, is taken generally by many among the non-missionary witnesses, the mercantile professions, the consular service, the official classes, whom the Royal Commission consulted. It is to be remembered, too, that the officials in China think only of Chinese interests and pay no regard to the Indian excise on opium. The condemnatory evidence is often of a general character, so that in justice to the Chinese some specific testimony ought to be mentioned. Sir George des Vœux, late Governor of Hong Kong, writes: "It is probable that the population of Hong Kong (over 200,000 Chinese) smokes more opium than any other of the like number in the world, and yet relatively to the conditions of its existence, it is extraordinarily healthy, while for activity and industry it could scarcely be surpassed." Then Mr. Wodehouse, the police magistrate in the same colony, writes: "Taking the Chinese population of Hong Kong in its entirety, although it is probable that the great majority of the male adults are consumers of

opium, and although they have as much opium at their command as they may desire, there is nevertheless an entire absence of any general appearance of either physical or moral deterioration. Their appearances are those of a busy, thriving, well-to-do population."

The Royal Commission sum up their conclusions thus: "On a review of the whole evidence in regard to opium-smoking among the Chinese we conclude that the habit is generally practised in moderation, and that when so practised the injurious effects are not apparent; but that when the habit is carried to excess disastrous consequences, both moral and physical, inevitably follow. Assuming this conclusion to be well founded we may fairly compare the effects of opium-smoking among the Chinese population to those of alcoholic liquors in the United Kingdom."

Adverting to historical notes prepared by one of its Members, the Royal Commission say: "We wish to express our general concurrence in the conclusions at which our colleague has arrived, that opium was exported from India to China before European nations appeared in the Indian seas; that opium-smoking was a habit in existence in China before British rule began in India, and at a time when British merchants took little or no part in the opium trade; and that to speak of opium as having been forced upon the Chinese is, to say the least, an exaggeration."

Nevertheless the dissentient Member, Mr. Henry

J. Wilson, takes a different view of the evidence. He says that the main purpose of the production and sale of opium in British India is to supply the Chinese and other Eastern markets. It might at first sight appear that the markets were in the main supplied in this way. But such could not have been the writer's meaning, because the main supplies have been from China herself throughout this century. Then, apparently in distinction to opium-eating, he refers to "the practice of opium-smoking as in the highest degree prejudicial morally and physically to those who indulge in it, as is established beyond all reasonable doubt. English officials resident in China and the far East have for the last hundred years continuously referred to opium-smoking as a cause of moral and physical destruction." Five names are given in support of this, among whom three are distinguished, namely, Sir George Staunton, 1816; Sir Stamford Raffles, 1826; and Montgomery Martin, 1840. After referring to the testimony of the Missionaries and to two Medical Missionaries especially, and laying stress on that of Sir Thomas Wade, also to the majority of English officials in China, Mr. Wilson regards this as "overwhelming in its force against the opium habit in China." From the evidence taken as a whole he considers it "abundantly manifest that opium in China is a gigantic national evil." In illustration of his Minute he appends many elaborate notes. The question must often arise as to what the witness