

ting the crown in the Gioro line were made hereditary princes, who are collectively called princes of the iron crown. Besides the above-mentioned, there are others, which are deemed even more honorable, either from their rarity or peculiar privileges, and answer to membership of the various orders of the Garter, Golden Fleece, Bath, etc., in Europe.

The internal arrangements of the court are modelled somewhat after those of the Boards, the general supervision being under the direction of the *Nui-wu fu*, composed of a president and six assessors, under whom are seven subordinate departments. It is the duty of these officers to attend upon the Emperor and Empress at sacrifices, and conduct the ladies of the harem to and from the palace; they oversee the households of the sons of the Emperor, and direct, under his Majesty, everything belonging to the palace and whatever appertains to its supplies and the care of the imperial guard. The seven departments are arranged so as to bear no little resemblance to a miniature state: one supplies food and raiment; a second is for defence, to regulate the body-guard when the Emperor travels; the third attends to the etiquette the members of this great family must observe toward each other, and brings forward the inmates of the harem when the Emperor, seated in the inner hall of audience, receives their homage, led by the Empress herself; a fourth department selects ladies to fill the harem, and collects the revenue from crown lands; a fifth superintends all repairs necessary in the palace, and sees that the streets of the city be cleared whenever the Emperor, Empress, or any of the women or children in the palace wish to go out; a sixth department has in charge the herds and flocks of the Emperor; and the last is a court for punishing the crimes of soldiers, eunuchs, and others attached to the palace.

The Emperor ought to have three thousand eunuchs, but the actual number is rather less than two thousand, who perform the work of the household. His sons and grandsons are allowed from thirty down to four, while the iron-crown princes and imperial sons-in-law have twenty or thirty; all these nobles are constrained to employ some eunuchs in their establishments, if not able to maintain the full quota, for show. Most of this



class are compelled to submit to mutilation by their parents before the age of eight (and not always from poverty), as it usually insures a livelihood. Some take to this condition from motives of laziness and the high duties falling to their share if they behave themselves. From very ancient times certain criminals have been punished by castration. There is a separate control for the due efficiency of these servants of the court, who are divided into forty-eight classes; during the present dynasty they have never caused trouble. The highest pay any of them receive is twelve taels a month.

The number of females attached to the harem is not accurately known; all of them are under the nominal direction of the Empress. Every third year his Majesty reviews the daughters of the Manchu officers over twelve years of age, and chooses such as he pleases for concubines; there are only seven legal concubines, but an unlimited number of illegal. The latter are restored to liberty when they reach the age of twenty-five, unless they have borne children to his Majesty. It is generally considered an advantage to a family to have a daughter in the harem, especially by the Manchus, who endeavor to rise by this backstairs influence.<sup>1</sup> To the poor women themselves it is a monotonous, weary life of intriguing unrest. As soon as one enters the palace she bids final adieu to all her male relatives, and rarely sees her female friends; the eunuchs who take care of her are her chief channels of communication with the outer world. It may be added, however, that the comforts and influence of her condition are vastly superior to those of Hindu females.

In the forty-eighth volume of the *Hwui Tien*, from which work most of the details in this chapter are obtained, is an account of the supplies furnished his Majesty and the court. There should daily be placed before the Emperor thirty pounds of meat in a basin and seven pounds boiled into soup; hog's fat and butter, of each one and one-third pound; two sheep, two fowls, and two ducks, the milk of eighty cows, and seventy-

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. XIV., p. 521; *N. C. Br. R. As. Soc. Journal*, No. XI.



five parcels of tea. Her Majesty receives twenty-one pounds of meat in platters and thirteen pounds boiled with vegetables; one fowl, one duck, twelve pitchers of water, the milk of twenty-five cows, and ten parcels of tea. Her maids and the concubines receive their rations according to a regular fare.

The Empress-dowager is the most important subject within the palace, and his Majesty does homage at frequent intervals, by making the highest ceremony of nine prostrations before her. When the widow of Kiaking reached the age of sixty in 1836, many honors were conferred by the Emperor. An extract from the ordinance issued on this festival will exhibit the regard paid her by the sovereign:

“Our extensive dominions have enjoyed the utmost prosperity under the shelter of a glorious and enduring state of felicity. Our exalted race has become most illustrious under the protection of that honored relative to whom the whole court looks up. To her happiness, already unalloyed, the highest degree of felicity has been superadded, causing joy and gladness to every inmate of the Six Palaces. The grand ceremonies of the occasion shall exceed in splendor the utmost requirements of the ancients in regard to the human relations, calling forth the gratulation of the whole Empire. It is indispensable that the observances of the occasion should be of an exceedingly unusual nature, in order that our reverence for our august parent and care of her may both be equally and gloriously displayed. . . . In the first month of the present winter occurs the sixtieth anniversary of her Majesty's sacred natal day. At the opening of the happy period, the sun and moon shed their united genial influences on it. When commencing anew the revolution of the sexagenary cycle, the honor thereof adds increase to her felicity. Looking upward and beholding her glory, we repeat our gratulations, and announce the event to Heaven, to Earth, to our ancestors, and to the patron gods of the Empire. On the nineteenth day of the tenth moon in the fifteenth year of Taukwang, we will conduct the princes, the nobles, and all the high officers, both civil and military, into the presence of the great Empress, benign and dignified, universally placid, thoroughly virtuous, tranquil and self-collected, in favors unbounded; and





we will then present our congratulations on the glad occasion, the anniversary of her natal day. The occasion yields a happiness equal to what is enjoyed by goddesses in heaven; and while announcing it to the gods and to our people, we will tender to her blessings unbounded."

Besides the usual tokens of favor, such as rations to soldiers, pardons, promotions, advances in official rank, etc., it was ordered in the eleventh article, "That every perfectly filial son or obedient grandson, every upright husband or chaste wife, upon proofs being brought forward, shall have a monument erected, with an inscription in his or her honor." Soldiers who had reached the age of ninety or one hundred received money to erect an honorary portal, and tombs, temples, bridges, and roads were ordered to be repaired; but how many of these "exceedingly great and special favors" were actually carried into effect cannot be stated.<sup>1</sup>

For the defence and escort of the Emperor and his palaces there are select bodies of troops, which are stationed within the *Hwang-ching* and the capital and at the various cantonments near the city. The Bannermen form three separate corps, each containing the hereditary troops of Manchu, Mongol, and enrolled Chinese, organized at the beginning of the dynasty under eight standards. Their flags are triangular, a plain yellow, white, red, and blue for troops in the left wing, and the same bordered with a narrow stripe of another color for troops in the right wing. All the families of these soldiers remain in the corps into which they were born.

Two special forces are selected, one named the Vanguard Division, the other the Flank Division, from the Manchu and Mongol Bannermen; these guard the Forbidden City, form his Majesty's escort when he goes out, and number respectively about one thousand five hundred and fifteen thousand men. For the preservation of the peace of the capital a force of upward of twenty thousand, called the Infantry Division, or Gendarmerie, is stationed in and around the walls, in addition to the palace forces. Besides these a cadet corps of five hundred

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., p. 576.



young men armed with bows and spears, two battalions with firearms, and four larger battalions of eight hundred and seventy-five men each, drilled in rifle-practice, are relied on to aid the Gendarmerie and Vanguard in case of danger. Whenever the One Man goes out of the palace gate to cross the city, the streets through which he passes are screened with matting, to keep off the crowds as well as diminish the risks of his person. The result has been that few of the citizens have ever seen their sovereign's face during the last two hundred years. The young Emperor Tungchí obtained great favor among them on one occasion of his return from the Temple of Heaven by ordering the screen of mats to be removed so that he and his people could see each other.

Under the Emperor is the whole body of the people, a great family bound implicitly to obey his will as being that of heaven, and possessing no right or property *per se*; in fact, having nothing but what has been derived from or may at any time be reclaimed by him. The greatness of this family, and the absence of an entailed aristocracy to hold its members or their lands in serfdom, have been partial safeguards against excess of oppression. Liberty is unknown among the people; there is not even a word for it in the language. No acknowledgment on the part of the sovereign of certain well-understood rights belonging to the people has ever been required, and is not likely to be demanded or given by either party until the Gospel shall teach them their respective rights and duties. Emigration abroad, and even removal from one part of the Empire to another, are prohibited or restrained by old laws, but at present no real obstacle exists to changing one's place of residence or occupation. Notwithstanding the fact that Chinese society is so homogeneous when considered as distinct from the sovereign, inequalities of many kinds are constantly met with, some growing out of birth or property, others out of occupation or merit, but most of them derived from official rank. There is no caste as in India, though the attempt to introduce the miserable system was vainly made by Wán-tí about A.D. 590. The ancient distinctions of the Chinese into scholars, agriculturists, artisans, and traders is far superior to that of Zoroaster into priests,



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warriors, agriculturists, and artisans; a significant index of the different polities of eastern and western Asiatic nations is contained in this early quaternary division, and the superiority of the Chinese in its democratic element is also noticeable. There are local prejudices against associating with some portions of the community, though the people thus shut out are not remnants of old castes. The *tankia*, or boat-people, at Canton form a class in some respects beneath the other portions of the community, and have many customs peculiar to themselves. At Ningpo there is a degraded set called *to min*, amounting to nearly three thousand persons, with whom the people will not associate. The men are not allowed to enter the examinations or follow an honorable calling, but are play-actors, musicians, or sedan-bearers; the women are match-makers or female barbers and are obliged to wear a peculiar dress, and usually go abroad carrying a bundle wrapped in a checkered handkerchief. The *tankia* at Canton also wear a similar handkerchief on their head, and do not cramp their feet. The *to min* are supposed to be descendants of the Kin, who held northern China in A.D. 1100, or of native traitors who aided the Japanese, in 1555-1563, in their descent upon Chehkiang. The *tankia* came from some of the Miaotsz' tribes so early that their origin is unknown.<sup>1</sup>

The modern classifications of the people, recognized, however, more by law than custom, are various and comprehensive. First, natives and aliens; the latter include the unsubdued mountaineers and aboriginal tribes living in various parts, races of boat-people on the coasts, and all foreigners residing within the Empire, each of whom are subject to particular laws. Second, conquerors and conquered; having reference almost entirely to a prohibition of intermarriages between Manchus and Chinese. Third, freemen and slaves; every native is allowed to purchase slaves and retain their children in servitude, and free persons sometimes forfeit their freedom on account of their crimes, or mortgage themselves into bondage. Fourth, the

<sup>1</sup> *Missionary Chronicle*, Vol. XIV., p. 324; Hardy, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 69; Heeren, *Asiatic Nations*, Vol. I., p. 246.



honorable and the mean, who cannot intermarry without the former forfeiting their privileges; the latter comprise, besides aliens and slaves, criminals, executioners, police-runners, actors, jugglers, beggars, and all other vagrant or vile persons, who are in general required to pursue for three generations some honorable and useful employment before they are eligible to enter the literary examinations. These four divisions extend over the whole body of the people, but really affect only a small minority.

It is worthy of note how few have been the slaves in China, and how easy has been their condition in comparison with what it was in Greece and Rome. Owing chiefly to the prevalence of education in the liberal principles of the Four Books, China has been saved from this disintegrating element. The proportion of slaves to freemen cannot be stated, but the former have never attracted notice by their numbers nor excited dread by their restiveness. Girls are more readily sold than boys; at Peking a healthy girl under twelve years brings from thirty to fifty taels, rising to two hundred and fifty or three hundred for one of seventeen to eighteen years old. In times of famine orphans or needy children are exposed for sale at the price of a few cash.<sup>1</sup>

There are also eight privileged classes, of which the privileges of imperial blood and connections and that of nobility are the only ones really available; this privilege affects merely the punishment of offenders belonging to either of the eight classes. The privilege of imperial blood is extended to all the blood relations of the Emperor, all those of the Empress-mother and grandmother within four degrees, of the Empress within three, and of the consort of the crown prince within two. Privileged noblemen comprise all officers of the first rank, all of the second holding office, and all of the third whose office confers a command. These ranks are distinct from titles of nobility, and are much thought of by officers as honorary distinctions. There are nine, each distinguished by a different colored ball placed on the apex of the cap, by a peculiar emblazonry of a bird for

<sup>1</sup> M. Ed. Biot furnished a good account to the *Journal Asiatique* (3d series, Vol. III.) of the legal condition of slaves in China; see also *Chinese Repository*, Vol. XVIII., pp. 347-363, and passim; Archdeacon Gray's *China*.

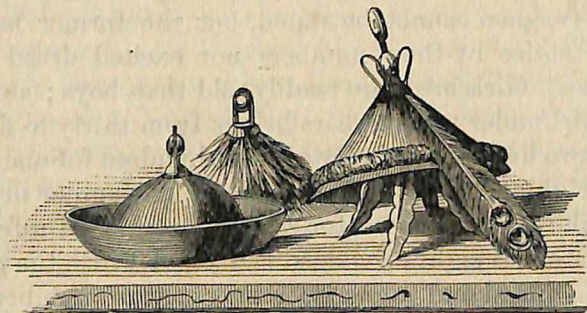


civilians and a beast for military officers on the breast, and a different clasp to the girdle.

Civilians of the first rank wear a precious ruby or transparent red stone; a Manchurian crane is embroidered on the back and breast of the robe, while the girdle clasp is jade set in rubies; military men have a unicorn, their buttons and clasps being the same as civilians.

Civilians of the second rank wear a red coral button, a robe embroidered with a golden pheasant, and a girdle clasp of gold set in rubies; the lion of India is emblazoned on the military.

Civilians of the third rank carry a sapphire and one-eyed peacock's feather, a robe with a peacock worked on the breast, and a clasp of worked gold; military officers have a leopard.



Different Styles of Official Caps.

Civilians of the fourth rank are distinguished by a blue opaque stone, a wild goose on the breast, and a clasp of worked gold with a silver button; military officers carry a tiger in place of the embroidered wild goose.

Civilians of the fifth rank are denoted by a crystal button, a silver pheasant on the breast, and a clasp of plain gold with a silver button; the bear is the escutcheon of military men.

Civilians of the sixth rank wear an opaque white shell button, a blue plume, an egret worked on the breast, and a mother-of-pearl clasp; military men wear a tiger-cat.

Civilians of the seventh rank have a plain gold button, a mandarin duck on the breast, and a clasp of silver; a mottled bear designates the military, as it also does in the last rank.



The eighth rank wear a worked gold button, a quail on the breast, and a clasp of clear horn ; military men have a seal.

The ninth rank are distinguished by a worked silver button, a long-tailed jay on the breast, and a clasp of buffalo's horn ; military men are marked by a rhinoceros embroidered on the robe. All under the ninth can embroider the oriole on their breasts, and unofficial Hanlin take the egret.

The mass of people show their democratic tendencies in many ways, some of them conservative and others disorganizing. They form themselves into clans, guilds, societies, professions, and communities, all of which assist them in maintaining their rights, and give a power to public opinion it would not otherwise possess. Legally, every subject is allowed access to the magistrates, secured protection from oppression, and can appeal to the higher courts, but these privileges are of little avail if he is poor or unknown. He is too deeply imbued with fear and too ignorant of his rights to think of organized resistance ; his mental independence has been destroyed, his search after truth paralyzed, his enterprise checked, and his whole efforts directed into two channels, viz., labor for bread and study for office. The people of a village, for instance, will not be quietly robbed of the fruits of their industry ; but every individual in it may suffer multiplied insults, oppressions, and cruelties, without thinking of combining with his fellows to resist. Property is held by a tolerably secure tenure, but almost every other right and privilege is shamefully trampled on.

Although there is nominally no deliberative or advisory body in the Chinese government, and nothing really analogous to a congress, parliament, or *tiers état*, still necessity and law compel the Emperor to consult and advise with the heads of tribunals. There are two imperial councils, which are the organs of communication between the head and the body politic ; these are the Cabinet, or Imperial Chancery, and the Council of State ; both of them partake of a deliberative character, but the first has the least power. Subordinate to these two councils are the administrative parts of the supreme government, consisting of the six Boards, the Colonial Office, Censorate, Courts of Representation and Appeal, and the Imperial Academy ;



making in all thirteen principal departments, each of which will require a short description. It need hardly be added that there is nothing like an elective body in any part of the system; such a feature would be almost as incongruous to a Chinese as the election of a father by his family.

1. The *Nui Kon*, or Cabinet, sometimes called the Grand Secretariat, consists of four *ta hioh-sz'*, or principal, and two *hiehpant* *ta hioh-sz'*, or 'joint assistant chancellors,' half of them Manchus and half Chinese. Their duties, according to the Imperial Statutes, are to "deliberate on the government of the Empire, proclaim abroad the imperial pleasure, regulate the canons of state, together with the whole administration of the great balance of power, thus aiding the Emperor in directing the affairs of state." Subordinate to these six chancellors are six grades of officers, amounting in all to upward of two hundred persons, of whom more than half are Manchus. Under the six chancellors are ten assistants, called *hioh-sz'*, 'learned scholars;' some of the sixteen are constantly absent in the provinces or colonies, when their places are supplied by substitutes. What in other countries is performed by one person as prime minister, is in China performed by the four chancellors, of whom the first in the list is usually considered to be the premier, though perhaps the most influential man and the real leader of government holds another station.

The most prominent daily business of the Cabinet is to receive imperial edicts and rescripts, present memorials, lay before his Majesty the affairs of the Empire, procure his instructions thereon, and forward them to the appropriate office to be copied and promulgated. In order to expedite business in court, it is the custom, after the ministers have read and formed an opinion upon each document, to fasten a slip of paper at the foot—or more than one if elective answers are to be given—and thus present the document to his Majesty, in the presence-chamber, who, with a stroke of his pencil on the answer he chooses, decides its fate. The papers, having been examined and arranged, are submitted to the sovereign at daylight on the following morning; one of the six Manchu *hioh-sz'* first reads each document and hands it over to one of the four Chinese





*hioh-sz'*, who inscribes the answer dictated by the sovereign, or hands it to him to perform that duty with the vermilion pencil. By this arrangement a large amount of business can be summarily despatched ; but it is also evident that much depends upon the manner in which the answer written upon the slip is drawn up, as to the reception or rejection of the paper, though care has been taken in this particular by requiring that codicils be prepared showing the reasons for each answer. The appointment, removal, and degradation of all officers throughout his vast dominions, orders respecting the apportionment or remittal of the revenue and taxes, disposition of the army, regulation of the nomadic tribes—in short, all concerns, from the highest appointments and changes down to petty police cases of crime, are in this way brought to the notice and action of the Emperor.

Besides these daily duties there are additional functions devolving upon the members of the Cabinet, who are likewise all attached to other bureaus, such as presiding on all state occasions and sacrifices, coronations, reception of embassies, etc. ; these duties are fulfilled by the ten assistant *hioh-sz'*, who are all vice-presidents of the Board of Rites. They are the keepers of the twenty-five seals of government, each of which is of a different form and used for different and special purposes, according to the custom of orientals, who place so much dependence upon the seal for vouching for the authenticity of a document.<sup>1</sup> Attached to the Cabinet are ten subordinate offices, one of which is for translating documents into the various languages found in the Empire. The higher members of the Cabinet are familiarly called *koh lao*, i.e., elders of the council-room, from which the word *colao*, often met with in old books upon China, is derived.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Chrestomathy*, Chap. XVII., Sec. 4, p. 570.

<sup>2</sup> A still more common designation for officers of every rank in the employ of the Chinese government has not so good a parentage ; this is the word *mandarin*, derived from the Portuguese *mandar*, to command, and indiscriminately applied by foreigners to every grade, from a premier to a tide-waiter ; it is not needed in English as a general term for officers, and ought to be disused, moreover, from its tendency to convey the impression that they are in some way unlike similar officials in other lands. Compare *Notes and Queries on China and Japan*, Vol. III., p. 12.



2. The KIUN-kí CHU, Council of State or General Council, was organized about 1730, but has now become the most influential body in the government; and, though quite unlike in its construction, corresponds to the *ministry* of western nations more than does any other branch of the Chinese system. It can be composed of any grandees, as princes of the blood, chancellors, presidents and vice-presidents of the Six Boards, and chief officers of all the other metropolitan courts. They are selected at the Emperor's pleasure, and unitedly called "great ministers directing the machinery of the army"—the army being here taken to signify the nation. Its duties are "to write imperial edicts and decisions, and determine such things as are of importance to the army and nation, in order to aid the sovereign in regulating the machinery of affairs." The number of members of the General Council probably varies according to his Majesty's pleasure, for no list of them is given in the *Red Book*; but latterly their number has been four, two of each nationality, and Prince Kung as the president. This body is one of the mainsprings of the government, and its composition shows the tendency of the national councils and polity.

The members of the General Council assemble daily in the Forbidden Palace, between five and six in the morning; when summoned by his Majesty into the council-chamber they sit upon mats or low cushions, no person being permitted to sit on chairs in the real or supposed presence of the Emperor. His Majesty's commands being written down by them, are, if public, transmitted to the Inner Council to be promulgated; but on any matter requiring secrecy or expedition, a despatch is forthwith made up and sent under cover to the Board of War, to be forwarded. In all important consultations or trials this Council, either alone or in connection with the appropriate court, is called in; and in time of war it is formed into a committee of ways and means. Lists of officers entitled to promotion are kept by it, and the names of proper persons to supply vacancies furnished the Emperor. Many of the residents in the colonies are members of the Council, and communicate directly with his Majesty through it, and receive allowances and gifts with great formality from the throne—a device of



statecraft designed to maintain an awe of the imperial character and name as much as possible among the mixed races under them.

The General Council fills an important station in the system, and tends greatly to consolidate the various branches of government, facilitating their harmonious action as well as supplying the deficiencies of an imbecile, or restraining the acts of a tyrannical monarch. The statutes speak of various record-books, both public and secret, kept by the members for noting down the opinions of his Majesty, and add that there are no fixed times for audiences, one or more sessions being held daily, according to the exigencies of the state. Besides these functions, its members are further charged with certain literary matters, and three subordinate offices are attached to the Council for their preparation. One is for drawing up narratives of important transactions—a few of those relating to the wars and negotiations with foreigners since 1839 would be of much interest now; a second is for translating documents; and the third, entitled “an office for observing that imperial edicts are carried into effect,” must be at times rather an arduous task, though probably its responsibility ends when the despatch goes forward. An office with this title shows that the Chinese government, with all its business-like arrangements, is still an Asiatic one.<sup>1</sup>

The duties of these supreme councils are general, comprising matters relating to all departments of the government, and serving to connect the head of the state with the subordinate bodies, not only at the capital, but throughout the provinces, so that he can, and probably does to a very great degree, thereby maintain a general acquaintance with what is done in all parts, and sooner rectify disorders and malpractices. The rivalry between their members, and the dislike entertained by the Chinese and Manchus composing them, cause, no doubt, some trouble to the Emperor; but this has some effect in thwarting conspiracies and intrigues. It must not be supposed, however, that every high officer in the Chinese government is wholly unprincipled, venal, and intriguing; most of them desire to serve and maintain their country. The personal character and knowledge of

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., p. 138. *Chinese Chrestomathy*, p. 573.



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the monarch has much to do with the efficiency of his government, and the guidance of its affairs demands constant oversight. If he allows his ministers to conduct their trusts without restraint, they soon engross and misuse this power for selfish ends. In natural sequence every branch feels the fatal laxity, while its functionaries lose no time in imitating their superiors. This was the case during the reign of Hienfung, but matters have much improved under the regency since 1861. In ordinary times, the daily intercourse between the Emperor of China and his ministers presents very similar features of confidence, courtesy, and esteem between them as those seen in western lands.

The *King Pao*, i.e., '*Metropolitan Reporter*,' usually called the *Peking Gazette*, is compiled from the papers presented before the General Council, and constitutes the principal source of information available to the people for ascertaining what is going on in the Empire. Every morning ample extracts from the papers decided upon or examined by the Emperor, including his own orders and rescripts, are placarded upon boards in a court of the palace, and form the materials for the annals of government and the history of the Empire. Couriers are despatched to all parts of the land, carrying copies of these papers to the high provincial officers; certain persons are also permitted to print these documents, but always without note or change, and circulate them at their own charges to their customers. This is the *Peking Gazette*, and such the mode of its compilation. It is simply a record of official acts, promotions, decrees, and sentences, without any editorial comments or explanations; and as such of great value in understanding the policy of government. It is very generally read and discussed by educated people in cities, and tends to keep them more acquainted with the character and proceedings of their rulers than ever the Romans were of their sovereigns and Senate. In the provinces thousands of persons find employment by copying and abridging the *Gazette* for readers who cannot afford to purchase the complete edition.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fraser's Magazine*, February, 1873. *China Review*, Vol. III., p. 13. *Note on the Condition and Government of the Chinese Empire in 1849*. By T. F. Wade. Hongkong, 1850. Translations of several years of the *Gazette* have appeared since 1872, reprinted from the columns of the *North China Herald*.





The principal executive bodies under these two Councils are the *Luh Pu*, or 'Six Boards,' which were modelled on much the same plan during the ancient dynasties. At the head of each Board are two presidents, called *shang-shu*, and four vice-presidents, called *shilang*, alternately a Manchu and a Chinese; and over three of them—those of Revenue, War, and Punishment—are placed superintendents, who are frequently members of the Cabinet; sometimes the president of one Board is superintendent of another. There are three subordinate grades of officers in each Board, who may be called directors, under-secretaries, and controllers, with a great number of minor clerks, and their appropriate departments for conducting the details of the general and peculiar business coming under the cognizance of the Board, the whole being arranged and subordinated in the most business-like style. The detail of all the departments in the general and provincial governments is regulated in the same manner. For instance, each Board has a different style of envelope for its despatches, and the papers in the offices are filed away in them.

3. The *Lí Pu*, or Board of Civil Office, "has the government and direction of all the various officers in the civil service of the Empire, and thereby it assists the Emperor to rule all people;" these duties are further defined as including "whatever appertains to the plans of selecting rank and gradation, to the rules of determining degradation and promotion, to the ordinances of granting investitures and rewards, and the laws for fixing schedules and furloughs, that the civil service may be supplied." Civilians are presented to the Emperor, and all civil and literary officers throughout the Empire distributed by this Board. The great power apparently thus entrusted is shared by the two preceding, whose members are made advisory overseers of the highest appointments, while the provincial authorities put men in vacant posts as fast as they are needed. The danger arising from the arrangement is noticed by Biot<sup>1</sup> as having early attracted criticism.

This Board is subdivided into four bureaus. The first at-

<sup>1</sup> *Essai sur l'Instruction en Chine*, pp. 540-589.





tends to the distinctions, precedence, promotion, exchanging, etc., of officers. The second investigates their merits and worthiness to be recorded and advanced, or contrariwise; ascertains the character each officer bears and the manner in which he fulfils his duties, and prescribes his furloughs. The third regulates retirement from office on account of mourning or filial duties, and supervises the registration of official names; it is through this bureau that Hwang Ngăn-tung, the Governor of Kwangtung, was degraded in 1846 for not resigning his office on the death of his mother. The fourth regulates the distribution of titles, patents, and posthumous honors. The Chinese is the only government that ennobles ancestors for the merits of their descendants; the custom arose out of the worship paid them, in which the rites are proportionate to the rank of the deceased, not of the survivor; and if the deceased parent or grandparent were commoners, they receive proper titles in consequence of the elevation of their son or grandson. This custom is not a trick of state to get money, for commoners cannot buy these posthumous titles; they can only buy nominal titles for themselves. The usage, however, offers an unexpected illustration of the remark of Job, "His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not."

4. The Hu Pu, or Board of Revenue, "directs the territorial government of the Empire, and keeps the lists of population in order to aid the Emperor in nourishing all people; whatever appertains to the regulations for levying and collecting duties and taxes, to the plans for distributing salaries and allowances, to the rates for receipts and disbursements at the granaries and treasuries, and to the rights for transporting by land and water are reported to this Board, that sufficient supplies for the country may be provided." Besides these duties, it obtains the admeasurement of all lands in the Empire, and proportions taxes and conscriptions, according to the divisions, population, etc., regulates the expenditure, and ascertains the latitude and longitude of places. One minor office prepares lists of all the Manchu girls fit to be introduced into the palace for selection as inmates of the harem, a duty which is enjoined on it because the allowances, outfits, and positions of these women





come within its control. The injudicious mode of collecting revenue common under the Persian and Syrian kings, by which the sums obtained from single cities and provinces were apportioned among the royal family and favorites, and carried directly to them, has never been practised by the Chinese.

There are fourteen subordinate departments to attend to the receipt of the revenue from each of the provinces, each of which corresponds with the treasury department in its respective province. The revenue being paid in sundry ways and articles, as money, grain, manufactures, etc., the receipt and distribution of the various articles require a large force of assistants. This Board is moreover a court of appeal on disputes respecting property, and superintends the mint in each province; one bureau is called the "great ministers of the Three Treasuries," viz., of metals, silks and dye-stuffs, and stationery.

5. The *Lí Pü*, or Board of Rites, "examines and directs concerning the performance of the five kinds of ritual observances, and makes proclamation thereof to the whole Empire, thus aiding the Emperor in guiding all people. Whatever appertains to the ordinances for regulating precedence and literary distinctions, to the canons for maintaining religious honor and fidelity, to the orders respecting intercourse and tribute, and to the forms of giving banquets and granting bounties, are reported to this Board in order to promote national education." The five classes of rites are defined to be those of a propitious and those of a felicitous nature, military and hospitable rites, and those of an infelicitous nature. Among the subordinate departments is that of ceremonial forms, which "has the regulation of the etiquette to be observed at court on all occasions, on congratulatory attendances, in the performance of official duties, etc.; also the regulation of dresses, caps, etc.; as to the figure, size, color, and nature of their fabrics and ornaments, of carriages and riding accoutrements, their form, etc., with the number of followers and insignia of rank. It has also the direction of the entire ceremonial of personal intercourse between the various ranks or peers, minutely defining the number of bows and degree of attention which each is to pay to the other when meeting in official capacities, according as they are



on terms of equality or otherwise. It has also to direct the forms of their written official intercourse, including those to be observed in addresses to and from foreign states. The regulation of the literary examinations, the number of the graduates, the distinction of their classes, the forms of their selection, and the privileges of successful candidates, with the establishment of governmental schools and academies, are all under this department."

Another office superintends the rites to be observed in worshipping deities and spirits of departed monarchs, sages, and worthies, and in "saving the sun and moon" when eclipsed. The third, called "host and guest office," looks after tribute and tribute-bearers, and takes the whole management of foreign embassies, supplying not only provisions, but translators, and ordering the mode of intercourse between China and other states. The fourth oversees the supplial of food for banquets and sacrifices. The details of all the multifarious ritual duties of this Board occupy fourteen volumes of the Statutes. "Truly nothing is without its ceremonies," as Confucius taught, and no nation has paid so much attention to them in the ordering of its government as the Chinese. The *Book of Rites* is the foundation of ceremonies and the infallible standard as to their meaning; the importance attached to them has elevated etiquette and ritualism into a kind of crystallizing force which has molded Chinese character in many ways.

Connected with the Board of Rites is a Board of Music, containing an indefinite number of officers whose duties "are to study the principles of harmony and melody, to compose musical pieces and form instruments proper to play them, and then suit both to the various occasions on which they are required." Nor are the graces of posture-making neglected by these ceremony-mongers; but it may with truth be said, that if no other nation ever had a Board of Music, and required so much official music as the Chinese, certainly none ever had less real melody.

6. The PING PU, or Board of War, "has the duty of aiding the sovereign to protect the people by the direction of all military affairs in the metropolis and the provinces, and to





regulate the hinge of the state upon the reports received from the various departments regarding deprivation of, or appointment to, office; succession to, or creation of, hereditary military rank; postal or courier arrangements; examination and selection of the deserving, and accuracy of returns." The navy is also under the control of this Board. The management of the post is confided to a special department, and the transmission of official despatches is performed with great efficiency and regularity. A minor bureau of the courier office is called "the office for the announcement of victories," which, from a recital of its duties, appears to be rather a *grande vitesse*, whose couriers should hasten as if they announced a victory.

To enable this Board of War to discharge its duties, they are apportioned under four *sz'*, or bureaus, severally attending to promotion for various reasons; to the regulation of the distribution of rewards and punishments, inspection of troops and issue of general orders, answering to an adjutant-general's department; to the supply and distribution of horses for the cavalry; and, lastly, to the examination of candidates, preparation of estimates and rosters, with all the details connected with equipments and ammunition. The conception of all government with the Manchus being military and not civil, they have developed this Board more than was the case during the last dynasty, the possessions in Central Asia having drawn greatly on their resources and prowess.

The Household troops and city Gendarmerie have already been noticed; their control is vested in the *Nui-wu Fu*, and the oversight of all the Bannermen in the Empire vests in the metropolitan office of the *Tu-tung*, or Captains-general, of whom there are twenty-four, one to every banner of each race. The Board of War has no control directly over this large portion of the Chinese army, and as the direction of the land and sea forces in each province is entrusted in a great degree to the local authorities, its duties are really more circumscribed than one would at first imagine. The singular subordination of military to civil power, which has ever distinguished the Chinese polity, makes the study of the army, as at present constituted, a very interesting feature of the national history; for while it has



often proved inefficient to repress insurrection and defend the people against brigandage, it has never been used to destroy their institutions. In times of internal commotion the national soldiers have usually been loyal to their flag, though it must be confessed that discipline within the ranks is not so perfect as to prevent the soldiers from occasionally harassing and robbing those whom they are set to protect.<sup>1</sup>

7. The HING PU, or Board of Punishments, "has the government and direction of punishments throughout the Empire, for the purpose of aiding the sovereign in correcting all people. Whatever appertains to measures of applying the laws with leniency or severity, to the task of hearing evidence and giving decisions, to the rights of granting pardons, reprieves, or otherwise, and to the rate of fines and interest, are all reported to this Board, to aid in giving dignity to national manners." The *Hing Pu* partakes of the nature of both a criminal and civil court; its officers usually meet with those of the Censorate and Tali Sz', the three forming the *San Fah Sz'*, or 'Three Law Chambers,' which decide on capital cases brought before them. In the autumn these three unite with members from six other courts, forming collectively a Court of Errors, to revise the decisions of the provincial judges before reporting them to his Majesty. These precautions are taken to prevent injustice when life is involved, and the system shows an endeavor to secure a full and impartial consideration for all capital cases, which, although it may signally fail of its full effect, does the rulers high credit, when the small value set upon life generally by Asiatic governments is considered. These bodies are expected to conform their decisions to the law, nor are they permitted to cite the Emperor's own decisions as precedents, without the law on these decisions has been expressly entered as a supplementary clause in the code.

It also belongs to sub-officers in the Board of Punishments to record all his Majesty's decisions upon appeals from the provinces at the autumnal assizes, when the entire list is presented

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., pp. 188, 276-287; Vol. V., pp. 165-178; Vol. XX., pp. 250, 300, and 363. *Mémoires concernant les Chinois, par les Missionnaires à Peking*, Tomes VII. and VIII., passim.





for his examination and ultimate decision, and see that these sentences are transmitted to the provincial judges. Another office superintends the publication of the code, with all the changes and additions; a third oversees jails and jailers; a fourth receives the fines levied by commutation of punishments, and a fifth registers the receipts and expenditures. If the administration of the law in China at all corresponded with the equity of most of its enactments, or the caution taken to prevent collusion, malversation, and haste on the part of the judges, it would be incomparably the best governed country out of Christendom; but the painful contrast between good laws and wicked rulers is such as to show the utter impossibility of securing the due administration of justice without higher moral principles than heathenism can teach.

The *yamun* of the *Hing Pu* in the capital is the most active of all the Boards, but little is known of what goes on within its walls. Its prisoners are mostly brought from the provinces, officers of high rank arrested for malfeasance or failure, and criminals convicted or condemned there who have appealed to the highest tribunals. Few of those who enter its gates ever return through them, and their sufferings seldom end as long as they have any property left. The narrative of the horrible treatment endured by Loch and his comrades in 1860, while confined within this *yamun*, gives a vivid picture of their sufferings, but native prisoners are not usually kept bound and pinioned. In the rear wall of the establishment is an iron door, through which dead bodies are thrust to be carried away to burial.

8. The KUNG PU, or Board of Works, "has the government and direction of the public works throughout the Empire, together with the current expenses of the same, for the purpose of aiding the Emperor to keep all people in a state of repose. Whatever appertains to plans for buildings of wood or earth, to the forms of useful instruments, to the laws for stopping up or opening channels, and to the ordinances for constructing the mausolea and temples, are reported to this Board in order to perfect national works." Its duties are of a miscellaneous nature, and are performed in other countries by no one department, though



the plan adopted by the Chinese is not without its advantages. One bureau takes cognizance of the condition of all city walls, palaces, temples, altars, and other public structures; sits as a prize-office, and furnishes tents for his Majesty's journeys; supplies timber for ships, and pottery and glassware for the court. A second attends to the manufacture of military stores and utensils employed in the army; sorts the pearls from the fisheries according to their value; regulates weights and measures, furnishes "death-warrants" to governors and generals; and, lastly, takes charge of arsenals, stores, camp-equipage, and other things appertaining to the army. A third department has charge of all water-ways and dikes; it also repairs and digs canals, erects bridges, oversees the banks of rivers by means of deputies stationed at posts along their course, builds vessels of war, collects tolls, mends roads, digs the sewers in Peking and cleans out its gutters, preserves ice, makes book-cases for public records, and, lastly, looks after the silks sent as taxes. The fourth of these offices confines its attention chiefly to the condition of the imperial mausolea, the erection of the sepulchres and tablets of meritorious officers buried at public expense, and the adornment of temples and palaces, as well as superintending all workmen employed by the Board.

The mint is under the direction of two vice-presidents, and the manufacture of gunpowder is specially intrusted to two great ministers. One would think, from this recital, that the functions of the Board of Works were so diverse that it would be one of the most efficient parts of government; but if the condition of forts, ports, dikes, etc., in other parts of the country corresponds to those along the coast, there is, as the Emperor once said of the army, "the appearance of going to war, but not the reality"—most of the works being on record, and suffered to remain there, except when danger threatens, or his Majesty specially orders a public work, and, what is more important, furnishes the money.

9. The *Lí FAN YUEN*, or Court for the Government of Foreigners, commonly called the Colonial Office, "has the government and direction of the external foreigners, orders their emoluments and honors, appoints their visits to court, and



regulates their punishments, in order to display the majesty and goodness of the state." This is an important branch of the government, and has the superintendence of all the wandering and settled tribes in Mongolia, Cobdo, Ílí, and Koko-nor. All these are called *wai fan*, or 'external foreigners,' in distinction from the tributary tribes in Sz'chuen and Formosa, who are termed *nui fan*, or 'internal foreigners.' There are also *nui í* and *wai í*, or 'internal and external barbarians,' the former comprising the unsubdued mountaineers of Kweichau, and the latter the inhabitants of all foreign countries who do not choose to range themselves under the renovating influences of the Celestial Empire. The Colonial Office regulates the government of the nomads and restricts their wanderings, lest they trespass on each other's pasture-grounds. Its officers are all Manchus and Mongols, having over them one president and two vice-presidents, Manchus, and one Mongolian vice-president appointed for life.

Besides the usual secretaries for conducting its general business, there are six departments, whose combined powers include every branch necessary for the management of these clans. The first two have jurisdiction over the numerous tribes and corps of the Inner Mongols, who are under more complete subjection than the others, and part have been placed under the control of officers in Chihlí and Shansí. The appointment of local officers, collecting taxes, allotting land to Chinese settlers, opening roads, paying salaries, arranging the marriages, retinues, visits to courts, and presents made by the princes and the review of the troops, all appertain to these two departments. The third and fourth have a similar, but less effectual control over the princes, lamas, and tribes of Outer Mongolia. At Urga reside two high ministers, organs of communication with Russia, and general overseers of the frontier. The oversight of the lama hierarchy in Mongolia is now completely under the control of this office; and in Tibet their power has been considerably abridged. The fifth department directs the actions, restrains the powers, levies the taxes, and orders the tributary visits of the Mohammedan begs in the Tien shan Nan Lu, who are quiet pretty much as they are paid by presents and flattered



by honors. The sixth department regulates the penal discipline of the tributary tribes. The salaries paid the Mongolian princes are distributed according to an economical scale. A *tsin wang* annually receives \$2,600 and twenty-five pieces of silk; a *kiun wang* receives about \$1,666 and fifteen pieces of silk; and so on through the ranks of Beile, Beitse, Duke, etc., the last of whom gets a stipend of only \$133 and four pieces of silk. The internal organization of these tribes is probably the same now as it was at first among the Scythians and Huns, and partakes of the features of the feudal and tribal system, modified by the nomadic lives they are obliged to lead. The Chinese government is endeavoring to reduce the influence and retinues of the khans and begs and elevate the people to positions of independent owners and cultivators of the soil.

10. The TU-CHAH YUEN, or Censorate, *i.e.*, 'All-examining Court,' is entrusted with the "care of manners and customs, the investigation of all public offices within and without the capital, the discrimination between the good and bad performance of their business, and between the depravity and uprightness of the officers employed in them; taking the lead of other censors, and uttering each his sentiments and reproofs, in order to cause officers to be diligent in attention to their daily duties, and to render the government of the Empire stable." The Censorate, when joined with the Board of Punishments and Court of Appeal, forms a high court for the revision of criminal cases and hearing appeals from the provinces; and, in connection with the Six Boards and the Court of Representation and Appeal, makes one of the *Kiu King*, or 'Nine Courts,' which deliberate on important affairs of government.

The officers are two censors and four deputy censors, besides whom the governors, lieutenant-governors, and the governors of rivers and inland navigation are *ex-officio* deputy censors. A class of censors is placed over each of the Six Boards, whose duties are to supervise all their acts, to receive all public documents from the Cabinet, and after classifying them transmit them to the several courts to which they belong, and to make a semi-monthly examination of the papers entered on the archives of each court. All criminal cases in the provinces come under





the oversight of the censors at the capital, and the department which superintends the affairs of the metropolis revises its municipal acts, settles the quarrels, and represses the crimes of its inhabitants. These are the duties of the Censorate, than which no part of the Chinese government has attracted more attention. The privilege of reproof given by the law to the office of censor has sometimes been exercised with remarkable candor and plainness, and many cases are recorded in history of these officers suffering for their fidelity, but such instances must be few indeed in proportion to the failures.

The celebrated Sung, who was appointed commissioner to accompany Lord Macartney, once remonstrated with the Emperor Kiaking upon his attachment to play-actors and strong drink, which degraded him in the eyes of his people and incapacitated him from performing his duties. The Emperor, highly irritated, called him to his presence, and on his confessing to the authorship of the memorial, asked him what punishment he deserved. He answered, "Quartering." He was told to select some other; "Let me be beheaded;" and on a third command, he chose to be strangled. He was then ordered to retire, and the next day the Emperor appointed him governor in Ílí, thus acknowledging his rectitude, though unable to bear his censure.

History records the reply of another censor in the reign of an Emperor of the Tang dynasty, who, when his Majesty once desired to inspect the archives of the historiographer's office, in order to learn what had been recorded concerning himself, under the excuse that he must know his faults before he could well correct them, was answered: "It is true your Majesty has committed a number of errors, and it has been the painful duty of our employment to take notice of them; a duty which further obliges us to inform posterity of the conversation which your Majesty has this day, very improperly, held with us."

The censors usually attend on all state occasions by the side of his Majesty, and are frequently allowed to express their opinions openly, but in a despotic government this is little else than a fiction of state, for the fear of offending the imperial ear, and consequent disgrace, will usually prove stronger than the consciousness of right or the desires of a public fame and



martyrdom for the sake of principle. The usual mode of advising is to send in a remonstrance against a proposed act, as when one of the body in 1832 remonstrated against the Emperor paying attention to anonymous accusations; or to suggest a different procedure, as the memorials of Chu Tsun against legalizing opium. The number of these papers inserted in the *Peking Gazette* for the information of the Empire, in many of which the acts of officers are severely reprehended, shows that the censors are not altogether idle. In 1833 a censor named Sü requested the Emperor to interdict official persons at court from writing private letters concerning public persons and affairs in the provinces. He stated that when candidates left the capital for their provincial stations, private letters were sent by them from their friends to the provincial authorities, "sounding the voice of influence and interest," by which means justice was perverted. The Emperor ordered the Cabinet to examine the censor and get his facts in proof of these statements, but on inquiry he either would not or could not bring forward any cases, and he himself consequently received a reprimand. "These censors are allowed," says the Emperor, "to tell me the reports they hear, to inform me concerning courtiers and governors who pervert the laws, and to speak plainly about any defect or impropriety which they may observe in the monarch himself; but they are not permitted to employ their pencils in writing memorials which are filled with vague surmises and mere probabilities or suppositions. This would only fill my mind with doubts and uncertainty, and I would not know what men to employ; were this spirit indulged, the detriment of government would be most serious. Let Sü be subjected to a court of inquiry."

The suspension or disgrace of censors for their freedom of speech is a common occurrence, and among the forty or fifty persons who have this privilege a few are to be found who do not hesitate to lift up their voice against what they deem to be wrong; and there is reason for supposing that only a small portion of their remonstrances appears in the *Gazette*. With regard to this department of government, it is to be observed that although it may tend only in a partial degree to check



oppression and reform abuses, and while a close examination of its real operations and influence and the character of its members may excite more contempt than respect, still the existence of such a body, and the publication of its memorials, can hardly fail to rectify misconduct to some degree, and check maladministration before it results in widespread evil. The Censorate is, however, only one of a number of checks upon the conduct of officers, and perhaps by no means the strongest.<sup>1</sup>

11. The TUNG-CHING Sz', which may be called a Court of Transmission, consists of a small body of six officers, whose duty is to receive memorials from the provincial authorities and appeals from their judgment by the people and present them to the Cabinet. Attached to this Court is an office for attending at the palace-gate to await the beating of a drum, which, in conformity with an ancient custom, is placed there that applicants may by striking it obtain a hearing. It is also the channel through which the people can directly appeal to his Majesty, and cases occur of individuals, even women and girls, travelling to the capital from remote places to present their petitions for redress before the throne. The feeling of blood revenge prevails among the Chinese, and impels many of these weak and unprotected persons to undergo great hardships to obtain legal redress, when the lives of their parents have been unjustly taken by powerful and rich enemies.

12. The TA-LÍ Sz', or Court of Judicature and Revision, has the duty of adjusting all the criminal courts in the Empire, and forms the nearest approach to a Supreme Court in the government, though the cases brought before it are mostly criminal. When the crimes involve life, this and the preceding unite with the Censorate to form one court, and if the judges are not unanimous in their decisions they must report their reasons to the Emperor, who will pass judgment upon them. In a despotic government no one can expect that the executive officers of courts will exercise their functions with that caution and

<sup>1</sup> Compare an article by E. C. Taintor, in *Notes and Queries on China and Japan. Chinese Repository*, Vols. IV., pp. 148, 164, and 177, and XII., pp. 32 and 67.



## THE MIDDLE KINGDOM.

equity required in Christian countries, but considerable care has been taken to obtain as great a degree of justice as possible.

14. The HANLIN YUEN, or Imperial Academy, is entrusted "with the duty of drawing up governmental documents, histories, and other works; its chief officers take the lead of the various classes, and excite their exertions to advance in learning in order to prepare them for employments and fit them for attending upon the sovereign." This body has, it is highly probable, some similarity to the collection of learned men to whom the King of Babylon entrusted the education of promising young men, for although the members of the Hanlin Yuen do not, to any great degree, educate persons, they are constantly referred to as the Chaldeans were by Belshazzar. Sir John Davis likens it to the Sorbonne, inasmuch as it expounds the sacred books of the Chinese. Its chief officers are two presidents or senior members, called *chwang yuen hioh-sz'*, who are usually appointed for life; they attend upon the Emperor, superintend the studies of graduates, and furnish semi-annual lists of persons to be "speakers" at the "classical feasts," where the literary essays of his Majesty are translated from and into Manchu and read before him.

Subordinate to the two senior members are four grades of officers, five in each grade, together with an unlimited number of senior graduates, each forming a sort of college, whose duties are to prepare all works published under governmental sanction; these persons are subject from time to time to fresh examination, and are liable to lose their degrees or be altogether dismissed from office if found faulty or deficient. Subordinate to the Hanlin Yuen is an office consisting of twenty-two selected members, who in rotation attend on the Emperor and make a record of his words and actions. There is also an additional office for the preparation of national histories.

The situation of a member of the Hanlin is one of considerable honor and literary ease, and scholars look forward to a station in it as one which confers dignity in a government where all officers are appointed according to their literary merit, but much more from its being the body from which the Emperor selects his most responsible officers. A graduate of this rank is



most likely to be nominated to a vacant office, though the possession of the title does not of itself warrant a place.<sup>1</sup>

Before proceeding to consider the provincial governments, notices of some of the other departments not connected with the general machinery of the state are here in place. The municipality of Peking has already been mentioned when describing the capital; it is intimately connected with the general government and forms an integral part of the machine. Among the courts not connected with the municipal rule of the metropolis, nor forming one of the great departments of state, is *Tai-chang Sz'*, or 'Sacrificial Court,' whose officers "direct the sacrificial observances and distinguish the various instruments and the quality of the sacrifices." Their duties are of importance in connection with the state religion, and they rank high among the court dignitaries of the Empire, but as members of this, possess no power. The *Tai-puh Sz'*, or Superintendent of H. I. M.'s Stud, is an office for "rearing horses, taking account of their increase, and regulating their training;" large tracts of land beyond the Great Wall are appropriated to this purpose, and the clerks of this office, under the direction of the Board of War, oversee the herdsmen and grooms.

The *Kwangluh Sz'*, or 'Banqueting House,' has the charge of "feasting the meritorious and banqueting the deserving;" it is somewhat subordinate to the Board of Rites, and provides whatever is necessary for banquets given to literary graduates, foreign ambassadors, etc. The *Hunglu Sz'*, or 'Ceremonial Court,' regulates the forms to be observed at these banquets, which consist in little else than marshalling the guests according to their proper ranks and directing them when to make the *kotow*, called also *san kwei kiu kao*, "three kneelings and nine knockings." The *Kwoh-tsz' Kien*, or 'National College,' is a different institution from the Hanlin Yuen, and intended for teaching graduates of the lower degrees; the departments of study are the Chinese language, the classics and mathematics, each branch having its appropriate teachers, with some higher officers, both Chinese and Manchu.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. W. A. P. Martin, *The Chinese*.



The *Kin Tien Kien*, or 'Imperial Astronomical College,' as might be expected, is much more astrological than astronomical; its duties are defined to be "to direct the ascertainment of times and the movements of the heavenly bodies, in order to attain conformity with the celestial periods and to regulate the notation of time among men; all things relating to divination and the selection of days are under its charge." The preparation of the almanac, in which, among other things, lucky and unlucky days are marked for the performance of all the important acts of life, and astrological and chiromantic absurdities inserted for the amusement of fortune-tellers and others, the instruction of a few pupils, and care of the observatory, occupy most of the time of its officers. It is now of no practical use, and as the *Tung-wăn Kwan* develops into a learned and efficient college, including astronomy and medicine and their kindred branches, these native Boards will gradually pass away.

The other local courts of the capital seem to have been subdivided and multiplied to a great degree for the purpose of affording employment to a larger number of persons, especially Manchus and graduates, so that the Emperor can attach them to himself and be surer of their support in case of any insurrection on the part of the people, and also that he may have them more under his control. The number of clerks and minor offices in all the general departments of state is doubtless more numerous than it would be in a European government. In the mutual relations of the great departments of the Chinese government the principles of responsibility and surveillance among the officers are plainly exhibited, while regard has been paid to such a division and apportionment of labor as would secure great efficiency and care, if every member of the machine faithfully did his duty. Two presidents are stationed over each Board to assist and watch each other, while the two presidents oversee the four vice-presidents; the president of one Board is sometimes the vice-president of another; and by means of the Censorate and the General Council every portion is brought under the cognizance of several independent officers, whose mutual jealousy and regard for individual advancement, or a



partial desire for the well-being of the state, affords the Emperor some guarantee of fidelity. The seclusion in which he lives makes it difficult for any conspirator to approach his person, but his own fears regarding the management of such an immense Empire compel him to inform himself respecting the actions of ministers, generals, and proconsular governors. The conduct and devotion of hundreds of officers, both civil and military, during the wars with Great Britain and the suppression of rebellions within the last thirty years, afford proof enough that he has attached his subordinates to his service by some other principle than fear. The total number of civilians holding office is estimated at about fourteen thousand persons, but those dependent on the government are many times this amount.

The rulers of China have contrived the system of provincial governments in an admirable manner, considering the character of the people and the materials they had to work with; no better proof of their sagacity in this respect can be required than the general degree of good order which has been maintained for nearly two centuries, and the great progress the people have made in wealth, numbers, and power. By a well-arranged plan of checks and changes in the provincial authorities, the chances of their abusing position and power and combining to overthrow the supreme government have been reduced almost to an impossibility; the influence of mutual responsibility among them does something to prevent outrageous oppression of the people, by leading one to accuse another of high crimes in order to exonerate himself or obtain his place. The sons and relatives of the Emperor being excluded from civil office in the provinces, the high-spirited and talented native Chinese do not feel inclined to cabal against the government because every avenue to emolument and power is filled and closed against them by creatures and connections of the sovereign; nor when in office are they disposed to attempt the overthrow of the reigning family, lest they lose what has cost them many years of toilsome study and the wealth and influence of friends to attain. The examination of these pashaliks is furthermore entitled to notice from the degree of power delegated to their highest



officers, and the shrewd manner in which its exercise has been circumscribed and rendered amenable to its imperial source.

The highest officers in the provinces are a *tsungtuh*, lit. 'general director,' or governor-general, and the *futai* or *fuyuen*, 'soother' or governor. The former is often called a viceroy, but that term seems to be quite inapplicable when used to denote an officer within the limits of the state; governor-general, or proconsul, is more analogous to his duties. A translation of these and many other Chinese titles does not convey their exact functions, but in some cases an equivalent is more intelligible than a translation.<sup>1</sup> The *tsungtuh* has rule over two provinces, or else fills two high offices in one province, while the *futai* is placed over one province, either independent of or in subordination to a *tsungtuh*, as enumerated in the table on page 61.

An examination of the *Red Book* for 1852 showed that out of a total of 20,327 names in it, 16,474 were Chinese, 3,295 were Manchus and Mongols, and 558 enrolled Chinese; in the copy for 1844, out of 12,758 names, 10,463 were Chinese, 1,768 Manchus, and 527 enrolled Chinese; these figures include only civilians and the employees in Peking. The Eighteen Provinces have altogether less than two thousand persons in office above the rank of assistant district magistrate, viz.: 8 governor-generals, 15 governors, 19 treasurers, 18 judges, 17 chancellors, 15 commanders of the forces, including 2 admirals and 1,740 prefects and magistrates. All those filling the high grades in this series report themselves to the Emperor twice every month, by sending him a salutatory card upon yellow paper, enclosed in a silken envelope; stating, for instance, that 'Lin Tseh-sü, governor-general of Liang Kwang, humbly presents his duty to the throne, wishing his Majesty repose.' The Emperor replies with the vermilion pencil, *Chin ngan*, i.e., 'Ourself is well.'

The duties of the governor-general consist in the collective control of all affairs, civil and military, in the region under his jurisdiction; he occupies, in his sphere, under correction, the same authority that the Emperor does over the whole Empire.

<sup>1</sup> Mayers' *Manual of Chinese Titles* furnishes the best compend for learning their duties and names.



The *futai* has a similar control, but in an inferior degree when there is a *tsungtuh*, in the more special supervision of the administrative part of the civil government, as distinguished from the revenue, gabel, or literary branches.

The departments of the civil government are five, viz.: administrative, literary, gabel, commissariat, and excise; the first being also divided into the territorial and financial and the judicial branches. At the head of the first branch is the *pu-ching sz'* (i.e., regulating-government commissioner), who is usually called the treasurer; the *ngan-chah sz'*, or 'criminal judge,' presides over the second. These two officers often unite their deliberations in the direction of any territorial or financial business, or the trial of important cases. The literary department is placed under the direction of an officer selected from among the members of the Hanlin Academy, called a *hioh-ching*, director of learning, or literary chancellor; there are seventeen of them altogether. The gabel and commissariat are usually supervised by certain intermediate officers called *tao*, or *taotai*, sometimes termed intendants of circuit, who have other functions in addition. The excise, or commercial department, is under *kientuh*, or superintendents, but the details of these three branches vary considerably in different provinces. The officers of the excise, either in the interior or on the coast, are made amenable to their superiors in the province, but their functions are exercised in an irregular manner; for the collection of the revenue is a difficult affair, and mostly entrusted to the local magistrates.

The military government of a province includes both the land and sea forces. It is under a *tituh*, or commander-in-chief, of which rank there are in all sixteen, twelve of them commanding one arm alone, and four controlling both land and sea forces. In five provinces the *futai* is commander-in-chief, and in Kansuh there are two. Above the *tituh*, in point of rank but not of power, are placed garrisons of Manchu Bannermen under a *tsiang-kiun*, or general, whose office is conferred, and his actions directly controlled, by the captains-general in Peking; he has jurisdiction, usually, only in the city itself, the principal object of the appointment, apparently, being to check any treasonable designs of the civil authorities.



The duties and relations of these various grades with one another require some further explanation, however, to be understood. The three officers, *tsungtuh*, *futai*, and *tsiangkiun* (if there be one), form a supreme council, and unite in deliberating upon a measure, calling in the subordinate officer to whose department it particularly belongs, and to whom its execution is to be committed, the whole forming a deliberative board, though the responsibility of the act rests with the two highest officers. By this means the various members of the provincial government become better acquainted with each other's character and plans, though their intercourse is much restricted by precedence and rivalry. In the provincial courts civilians always take precedence of military officers; the governor-general and Banner commander, governor and major-general, the literary chancellor and collector of customs, rank with each other; then follow the treasurer, the judge, and other civilians. The authority of the governor-general extends to life and death, to the temporary appointment to all vacant offices in the province, to ordering the troops to any part of it, issuing such laws and taking such measures as are necessary for the security and peace of the region committed to his care, or any other steps he sees necessary. The *futai* also has the power of life and death, and attends to appeals of criminal cases; he oversees, moreover, the conduct of the lower civilians.

Next in rank to the *pu-ching sz'* and *ngan-chah sz'*, who always reside in the provincial capital, are the intendants of circuit, who are located in the circuits consisting of two or three prefectures united for this purpose. They are deputies of the two highest functionaries, and their delegated power often includes military as well as civil authority, the chief object of their appointment being to relieve and assist those high functionaries in the discharge of their extensive duties. Some of the intendants are appointed to supervise the proceedings of the prefects and district magistrates; others are stationed at important posts to protect them, and those connected with foreign trade at the open ports have no territorial jurisdiction.

Subordinate to the governors, through the intendants of circuits, are the prefects or head magistrates of departments, called





*chifu*, *chichau*, and *ting tungchi*, i.e., 'knowers' of them, according as they are placed over *fu*, *chau*, or *ting* departments. It is the duty of these persons to make themselves acquainted with everything that takes place within their jurisdiction, and they are held responsible for the full execution of whatever orders are transmitted to them, all presenting their reports and receiving their orders through the intendants.

The practical efficiency of the Chinese government in promoting the welfare of the people and preserving the peace depends chiefly upon these officers. The people themselves are prone to quarrel and oppress each other; beggars, robbers, tramps, and shysters stir up disorders in various ways, and need wise and vigorous hands to repress and punish them; while all classes avoid and resist the tax-gatherer as much as is safe. The proverb, "A *chifu* can exterminate a family, a *chihien* can confiscate a patrimony," indicates the popular fear of their power.

The subdivisional parts of departments, called *ting*, *chau*, and *hien*, have each their separate officers, who report to the *chifu* and *chichau* above them; these are called *tungchi*, *chichau*, and *chihien*, and may all be denominated district magistrates. The parts of districts called *sz'* are placed under the control of *siun-kien*, circuit-restrainers, or hundreders, who form the last in the regular series of descending rank—the last of the "commissioned officers," as they might not improperly be called. The prefects sometimes have deputies directly under them, as the governor has his intendants, when their jurisdiction is very large or important, who are called *kiunmin fu* and *tungchi*, i.e., 'joint-knowers.' The deputies of district magistrates are termed *chautung* and *chaupwan* for the *chichau*, and *hienching* and *chaifu* for the *chihien*; the last also have others called *tso-tang* and *yu-tang*, i.e., left-tenants and right-tenants.

Besides these assistants there are others, both in the departments and districts, having the oversight of the police, collection of the taxes and management of the revenue, care of waterways, and many other subdivisions of legislative duties, which it is unnecessary to particularize. They are appointed whenever and wherever the territory is so large and the duties so onerous that one man cannot attend to all, or it is not safe to



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entrust him with them. They have nearly as much power as their superiors in the department entrusted to them, but none of them have judicial or legislative functions, and the routine of their offices affords them less scope for oppression. Nor is it worth while to notice the great number of clerks, registrars, and secretaries found in connection with the various ranks of dignitaries here mentioned, or the multitude of petty subordinates found in the provinces and placed over particular places or duties as necessity may require. Their number is very large, and the responsibility of their proceedings devolves upon the higher officers who receive their reports and direct their actions.

The common people suffer more from these "rats under the altar," as a Chinese proverb calls them, than from their superiors, because, unlike them, they are usually natives of the place and better acquainted with the condition of the inhabitants, and are not so often removed. The fear of getting into their clutches restrains from evil doings perhaps more than all punishments, though the people soon complain of high-handed acts in a way not to be disregarded. One saying, "Underlings see money as a fly sees blood," indicates their penchant, as another, "Cash drops into an underling's paw as a sheep falls into a tiger's jaw," does the popular notion how to please them. Each intendant, prefect, and district magistrate has special secretaries in his office for filing papers, writing and transmitting despatches, investigating cases, recording evidence, keeping accounts, and performing other functions. All above the *chih-hien* are allowed to keep private secretaries, called *sz' ye*, who are usually personal friends, and accompany the officers wherever they go for the purpose of advising them and preparing their official documents. The *ngan-chah sz'* have jailers under their control, as have also the more important prefects.

The appointment of officers being theoretically founded on literary merit, those to whom is committed the supervision of students and conferment of degrees would naturally be of a high grade. The *hioh-ching*, or literary chancellor, of the province, therefore ranks next to the governor, more, however, because he is specially appointed by his Majesty and oversees this





branch of the government, than from the power committed to his hands. Under him are head-teachers of different degrees of authority, residing in the chief towns of departments and districts, the whole forming a similar series of functionaries to what exists in the civil department. These subordinates have merely a greater or less degree of supervision over the studies of students, and the colleges established for the promotion of learning in the chief towns of departments. The business of conferring the lower degrees appertains exclusively to the chancellor, who makes an annual circuit through the province for that purpose, and holds examinations in the chief town of each department, to which all students residing within its limits can come.

The gabel, or salt department, is under the control of a special officer, called a "commissioner for the transport of salt," and forming in the five maritime provinces one of the *san sz'*, or three commissioners, of which the *pu-ching sz'* and *ngan-chah sz'* are the other two. There are, above these commissioners, eight directors of the salt monopoly, stationed at the dépôts in Chihli and Shantung, who, however, also fill other offices, and have rather a nominal responsibility over the lower commissioners. The number and rank of the officers connected with the salt monopoly show its importance, and is proof of how large a revenue is derived from an article which will bear such an expensive establishment. At present its administration costs about as much as its receipts.

The commissariat and revenue department is unusually large in China compared with other countries, for the plan of collecting any part of the revenue in kind necessarily requires numerous vehicles for transporting and buildings for storing it, which still further multiplies the number of clerks and hands employed. The transportation of grain along the Yangtsz' River is under the control of a *tsungtuk*, who also oversees the disposal and directs the collectors of it in eight of the provinces adjacent to this river. The office of *liang-chu tao*, or commissioner to collect grain, is found in twelve provinces, the *pu-ching sz'* attending to this duty in six; the supervision of the subordinate agents of this department in the several districts is in the hands of the prefects and district magistrates. That feature of the



Chinese system which makes officers mutually responsible, seems to lead the superior powers to confer such various duties upon one functionary, in order that he may thus have a general knowledge of what is going on about and under him, and report what he deems amiss. It is not, indeed, likely that such was the original arrangement, for the Chinese government has come to its present composition by slow degrees ; but such is, so far as can be seen, the effect of it, and it serves in no little degree to accomplish the designs of the rulers to bind the main and lesser wheels of the huge machine to themselves and to one another.

The customs and excise are under the management of different grades of officers according to the importance of their posts. The transit duties levied at the excise stations placed in every town are collected by officers acting under the local authorities, and have nothing to do with the collection of maritime duties. This tax, called *li-kin*, or 'a cash a catty,' has lately been greatly increased, and the natural result has been to destroy the trade it preyed on, or divert it to other channels. The foreign merchants and officers have, too, protested against its imposition, seeing that their trade was checked.

Recapitulating in tabular form, we may say that outside of the Cabinet, Council, Boards, and Courts at the capital, the government (in the Eighteen Provinces) is in the hands of :

8 Governors-General (6 governing two provinces each).	64 Intendants of Circuit.
15 Governors.	182 Prefects.
19 Commissioners of Finance (2 for Kiangsu).	68 Prefects of Inferior Departments.
18 Commissioners of Justice.	18 Independent Subprefects.
4 Directors of the Salt Gabel.	180 Dependent Subprefects.
9 Collectors (independent of these).	139 Deputy Subprefects.
13 Commissioners of Grain, or Commissaries.	141 District Magistrates of the Fifth Class.
	1,232 District Magistrates of the Seventh Class.

The military section of the provincial governments is under the control of a *tituh*, or major-general, who resides at a central post, and, in conjunction with the governor-general and governor, directs the movements of the forces, while these last have also an independent control over a certain body of troops belonging to them officially. The various grades of officers in the native army, and the portion of troops under each of them,



stationed in the garrisons and forts in different parts of the provinces, are all arranged in a methodical manner, which will bear examination and comparison with the army of any country in the world. The native force in each province is distinct from the Manchu troops, and is divided somewhat according to the Roman plan of legion, cohort, maniple, and century, over each of which are officers, from colonel down to sergeant. Nothing is wanting to the Chinese army to make it fully adequate to the defence of the country but discipline and confidence in itself; for lack of practice and systematic drilling have made it an army of paper warriors against a resolute enemy. Nevertheless, the recent campaigns against the rebels in the extreme western colonies indicate the fact that its regeneration is already of some weight. On the other hand, it has no doubt been for the good of the Chinese people and government—the advance of the first in wealth, numbers, and security, and the consolidation and efficiency of the latter—that they have cultivated letters rather than arms, peace more than war.

All the general officers in the army have fixed places of residence, at which the larger portion of their respective brigades remain, while detachments are stationed at various points within their command. The governor, major-general, and Banner commandant have commands independent of each other, but the *títuh*, or major-general, exercises the principal military sway. The naval officers have the same names as those in the army, and the two are interchanged and promoted from one service to the other. Admirals and vice-admirals usually reside on shore, and despatch their subordinates in squadrons or single vessels wherever occasion requires. This system must, ere long, give place to a better division of the two arms with the building of steam vessels and management of arsenals, when junks are superseded.

The system of mutually checking the provincial officers is also exhibited in their location. For example, in the city of Canton the governor-general is stationed in the New city near the collector of customs, while the lieutenant-governor and Manchu general are so located in the Old city that should circumstances require they can act against the two first. The



governor has the general command of all the provincial troops, estimated to be one hundred thousand men, but the particular command of only five thousand, and they are stationed fifty miles off, at Shaeking fu. The *tsiang kiun* has five thousand men under him in the Old city, which, in an extreme case, would make him master of the capital, while his own allegiance is secured by the antipathy between the Manchus and Chinese preventing him from combining with the latter. Again, the governor-general has the power of condemning certain criminals to death, but the *wang-ming*, or death-warrant, is lodged with the *futai*, and the order for execution must be countersigned by him; his despatches to court must be also countersigned by his coadjutor. The general absence of resistance to the imperial sway on the part of these high officers during the two centuries of Manchu rule, when compared with the multiplied intrigues and rebellions of the pashas in the Turkish Empire, proves how well the system is concocted.

In order to enable the superior officers to exercise greater vigilance over their inferiors, they have the privilege of sending special messengers, invested with full power, to every part of their jurisdiction. The Emperor himself never visits the provinces judicially, nor has an Emperor been south of the capital during the present century; he therefore constantly sends commissioners or legates, called *kinchai*, to all parts of the Empire, ostensibly entrusted with the management of a particular business, but required also to take a general surveillance of what is going on. The ancient Persians had a similar system of commissioners, who were called the eyes and ears of the prince, and made the circuit of the empire to oversee all that was done. There are many points of resemblance between the structure of these two ancient monarchies, the body of councilors who assisted the prince in his deliberations, the presidents over the provinces, the satraps, etc.; but the Persians had not the elements of perpetuity which the system of common schools and official examinations give to the Chinese government.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rollin's *Ancient History*, Chap. IV. *Manners of the Assyrians*. Heeren's *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. I., Chap. II.





Governors in like manner send their deputies and agents, called *weiyuen*, over the province; and even the prefects and intendants despatch their messengers. All these functionaries, during the time of their mission, take rank with the highest officers according to the quality of their employers; but the imperial commissioners, who for one object or another are constantly passing and repassing through the Empire in every direction, exercise great influence in the government, and are powerful agents in the hands of the Emperor for keeping his proconsuls at their duty.





## CHAPTER VIII.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAWS.

THE preceding chapter contains a general view of the plan upon which the central and provincial governments of the Empire are constructed; and if an examination of the conduct of officers in every department shows their extortion, cruelty, and venality, it will not, in the opinion of the liberal-minded reader, detract from the general excellence of the theory of the government, and the sagacity exhibited in the system of checks designed to restrain the various parts from interfering with the well-being of the whole. In addition to the division of power and the restrictions upon Chinese officers already mentioned, there are other means adopted in their location and alternation to prevent combination and resistance against the head of the state. One of them is the law forbidding a man to hold any civil office in his native province, which, besides stopping all intrigue where it would best succeed, has the further effect of congregating aspirants for office at Peking, where they come in hope of obtaining some post, or of succeeding in the examination for the highest literary degrees. The central government could not contrive a better plan for bringing all the ambitious and talented men in the country under its observation before appointing them to clerkships in the capital, or scattering them in the provinces.

Moreover, no officer is allowed to marry in the jurisdiction under his control, nor own land in it, nor have a son, brother, or near relative holding office under him; and he is seldom continued in the same station or province for more than three or four years. Manchus and Chinese are mingled together in high stations, and obligations are imposed on certain grandees





to inform the Emperor of each other's acts. Members of the imperial clan are required to attend the meetings of the Boards at the capital, and observe and report what they deem amiss or of interest to the Emperor and his council; while in all the upper departments of the general and provincial governments, a system of espionage is carried out, detrimental to all principles of honorable fidelity, such as we look for in officials, but not without some good effects in a weak despotism like China. There is, besides this constant surveillance, a triennial catalogue made out of the merits and demerits of all officers in the Empire, which is submitted to imperial inspection by the Board of Civil Office. In order to collect the details for this catalogue, it is incumbent upon every provincial officer to report upon the character and qualifications of those under him, and the list, when made out, is forwarded by the governor to the capital. The points of character are arranged under six different heads, viz.: those who are not diligent, the inefficient, the superficial, the untalented, superannuated, and diseased. According to the opinion given in this report, officers are elevated or degraded so many steps in the scale of merit, like school-boys in a class, and whenever they issue an edict are required to state how many steps they have been advanced or degraded, and how many times recorded. Officers are required to accuse themselves, when guilty of crime, either in their own conduct or that of their subordinates, and request punishment. The results of this peculiar and patriarchal mode of teaching officers their duty will be best exhibited by quoting from a rescript of Taukwang's, issued in February, 1837, after one of the catalogues had been submitted to his Majesty.

"The cabinet minister Changling has strenuously exerted himself during a long lapse of years; he has reached the eightieth year of his age, yet his energies are still in full force. His colleagues Pwan Shí-ngán and Muchangah, as well as, the assistant cabinet minister Wang Ting, have invariably displayed diligence and attention, and have not failed in yielding us assistance. Tang Kin-chau, president of the Board of Office, has knowledge and attainments of a respectable and sterling character, and has shown himself public-spirited and intelligent in the performance of special duties assigned to him. Shí Chí-yen, president of the Board of Punishments, retains his usual strength and energies, and in the performance of his judicial duties has displayed perspi-



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cacity and circumspection. The assistant cabinet minister and governor of Chihlí province, Kishen, transacts the affairs of his government with faithfulness, and the military force under his control is well disciplined. Husungé, the governor of Shensí and Kansuh provinces, is cautious and prudent, and performs his duties with careful exactness. Ílipu, governor of Yunnan and Kweichau, is well versed in the affairs of his frontier government, and has fully succeeded in preserving it free from disturbance. Linking, who is entrusted with the general charge of the rivers in Kiangnan, has not failed in his care of the embankments, and has preserved the surrounding districts from all disquietude. To show our favor unto all these, let the Board of Office determine on appropriate marks of distinction for them.

"Kweisan, subordinate minister of the Cabinet, is hasty and deficient, both in precision and capacity; he is incapable of moving and acting for himself; let him take an inferior station, and receive an appointment in the second class of the guards. Yihtsih, vice-president of the Board of Works for Mukden, possesses but ordinary talents, and is incompetent to the duties of his present office; let him also take an inferior station, and be appointed to a place in the first class of guards. Narkingé, the governor-general of Hukwang, though having under him the whole civil and military bodies of two provinces, has yet been unable, these many days, to seize a few beggarly impish vagabonds: after having in the first instance failed in prevention, he has followed up that failure by idleness and remissness, and has fully proved himself inefficient. Let him take the lower station of governor in Hunan, and within one year let him, by the apprehension of Lan Ching-tsun, show that he is aroused to greater exertions.

"Let all our other servants retain their present appointments. Among them Tau Shu, the governor of Kiangnan and Kiangsí, is bold and determined in the transaction of affairs, but has not yet attained enlarged views in regard to the salt department; Chung Tsiang, the governor of Fuhkien and Chehkiang, finds his energies failing; Täng Ting-ching, the governor of Kwangtung and Kwangsí, possesses barely an adequate degree of talent and knowledge; and Shin Kí-hien, though faithful and earnest in the performance of his duties, has, in common with these others, been not very long in office.

"That all ministers will act with purity and devotedness of purpose, with public spirit and diligence, is our most fervent hope. A special edict."<sup>1</sup>

The effect of such confessions and examination of character is to restrain the commission of outrageous acts of oppression; it is still further enforced by the privilege, common alike to censors and private subjects, of complaining to the Emperor of misdeeds done to them by persons in authority. Fear for their own security has suggested this multiplicity of checks, but the Emperor and his ministry have no doubt thereby impeded the

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. VI., p. 48.





efficiency of their subordinates, and compelled them to attend so much to their own standing that they care far less than they otherwise would for the prosperity of the people.

The position of an officer in the Chinese government can hardly be ascertained from the enumeration of his duties, nor can we easily appreciate, from a general account of the system, his temptations to oppress inferiors and deceive superiors. His duties, as indicated in the code, are so minute, and often so contradictory, as to make it impossible to fulfil them strictly; it is found, accordingly, that few or none have ascended the slippery heights of promotion without frequent relapses. Degradation, when to a step or two and temporary, carries with it of course no moral taint in a country where the award for bribery is graduated to the amount received, without any reference to moral violation; where the bamboo is the standard of punishment as well for error in judgment or remissness as for crime—only commuted to a fine in honor of official rank; where, as a distinction in favor of the imperial race, the bamboo is softened to the whip and banishment mitigated to the pillory.<sup>1</sup> The highest officers have of course the greatest opportunity to oppress, but their extortions are limited by the venality and mendacity of the agents they are compelled to employ. Inferiors also can carry on a system of exactions if they keep on the right side of those above them. The whole class form a body of men mutually jealous of each other's advance, where every incumbent endeavors to supplant his associate; they all agree in regarding the people as the source of their profits, the sponge which all must squeeze, but differ in the degree to which they should carry on the same plan with each other. Although sprung from the mass of the people, the welfare of the community has little place in their thoughts. Their life is spent in ambitious efforts to rise upon the fall of others, though they do not lose all sense of character or become reckless of the means of advance, for this would destroy their chance of success. The game they play with each other and their imperial master is, however, a harmless one compared with what was

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., p. 59.



done in old Rome or in Europe four or five centuries ago, or even lately among the pashas and viziers of the sultans and shahs in Western Asia. To the honor of the Chinese, life is seldom sacrificed for political crime or envious emulation; no officer dreads a bowstring or a poisoned cup from his lord paramount, nor is he on the watch against the dagger of an assassin hired by a vindictive competitor. Whatever heights of favor or depths of umbrage he may experience, the servant of the Emperor of China need not, in unproved cases of delinquency, fear for his life; but he not unfrequently takes it himself from conscious guilt and dread of just punishment.

The names and standing of all officers are published quarterly by permission of government in the *Red Book* (which by an usual coincidence is bound in red), called the "Complete Record of the Girdle Wearers" (*Tsin Shin Tsiuen Shu*), comprised in four volumes, 12mo, to which are added two others of the Army and Bannermen. This publication was first issued at the command of Wanli, of the Ming dynasty, about 1580, and mentions the native province of each person, whether Chinese, Manchu, Mongol, or enrolled Chinese, describes the title of the office, its salary, and gives much general information. The publishers of the book expect that officers will inform them of the changes that take place in their standing, and sometimes omit to mention those who do not thus report themselves.

A memoir of the public life of a high officer in China would present a singular picture of ups and downs, but, on account of their notorious disregard of truth, Chinese documents are unsafe to trust entirely in drawing such a sketch. One of the most conspicuous men in late times was Duke Ho, the premier in the time of Macartney's embassy, who for many years exercised a greater control over the counsels of a Chinese sovereign than is recorded of any other man during the present dynasty. This man was originally a private person, who attracted the notice of the Emperor by his comeliness, and secured it by his zeal in discharging the offices entrusted to him. With but few interruptions he gradually mounted the ladder of promotion, and for some years before Kienlung's death, when the latter's energies had begun to fail from age, was virtual master of the country. Staun-





ton describes him as possessing eminent abilities; "the manners of Hokwän were not less pleasing than his understanding was penetrating and acute. He seemed indeed to possess the qualities of a perfect statesman."<sup>1</sup> The favorite had gradually filled the highest posts with his friends, and his well-wishers were so numerous in the general and provincial governments that some began to apprehend a rising in his favor when the Emperor died. Kiaking, on coming to the throne, began to take those cautious measures for his removal which showed the great influence he possessed; one of these proceedings was to appoint him superintendent of the rites of mourning, in order, probably, that his official duties might bring him often to the palace. After four years the Emperor drew up sixteen articles of impeachment, most of them frivolous and vexatious, though of more consequence in the eyes of a Chinese prince than they would have been at other courts. One article alleged that he had ridden on horseback up to the palace gate; another, that he had appropriated to his own household the females educated for the imperial harem; a third, that he had detained the reports of officers in time of war from coming to the Emperor's eye, and had appointed his own retainers to office, when they were notoriously incompetent; a fourth, that he had built many apartments of *nan-muh*, a kind of laurel-wood exclusively appropriated to royalty, and imitated regal style in his grounds and establishment; a fifth, that "on the day previous to our Royal Father's announcement of our election as his successor, Hokwän waited upon us and presented the insignia of the newly conferred rank—thereby betraying an important secret of state, in hopes of obtaining our favor." He was also accused of having pearls and jewels of larger size than those even in the Emperor's regalia. But so far as can be inferred from what was published, this Cardinal Wolsey of China was, comparatively speaking, not cruel in the exercise of his power, and the real cause of his fall was evidently his riches. In the schedule of his confiscated property it was mentioned that besides houses, lands, and other immovable property to an amazing extent, not less

<sup>1</sup> *Embassy to China*, Vol. III., p. 26.



than one hundred and five millions of dollars in bullion and gems were found in his treasury. A special tribunal was instituted for his trial, and he was allowed to become his own executioner, while his constant associate was beheaded. These were the only deaths, the remainder of his relatives and dependents being simply removed and degraded. His power was no doubt too great for the safety of his master if he had proved faithless; but his wealth was too vast for his own security, even had he been innocent. The Emperor, in the edict which contains the sentence, cites as a precedent for his own acts similar condemnation of premiers by three of his ancestors in the present dynasty, but nothing definite is known of their crimes or trials.<sup>1</sup>

Taukwang was more clement, or more fortunate than his father, and upon coming to the throne continued Tohtsin in power; this statesman had held the premiership from 1815 to 1832, with but few interruptions, when he was allowed to retire at the age of seventy-five. He had served under three emperors, having risen step by step from the situation of clerk in one of the offices. His successor, Changling, experienced a far more checkered course, but remained in favor at last, and retired from the premiership in 1836, aged about seventy-nine. He became very popular with his master from his ability in quelling the insurrection of Jehangir in Turkestan in 1827. Even a few such instances of the honor in which an upright, energetic, and wise minister is regarded by prince and people have great influence in encouraging young men to act in the same way.

Few Chinese statesmen have been oftener brought into the notice of western foreigners than Sung, one of the commissioners attached to Lord Macartney's embassy, and a favorite of all its members. His lordship speaks of him then as a young man of high quality, possessing an elevated mind; and adds that "during the whole time of our connection with him he has on all occasions conducted himself toward us in the most friendly and gentleman-like manner." This was in 1793. In 1817 he is mentioned as one of the Cabinet; but not long after, for some unknown reason, he was degraded by Kiaking to the sixth rank, and ap-

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. III., p. 241.



pointed adjutant-general among the Tsakhar Mongols; from thence he memorialized his master respecting the ill conduct of some lamas, who had been robbing and murdering. Sung and his friends opposed the Emperor's going to Manchuria, and were involved in some trouble on this account, the reasons of which it is difficult to understand. He was promoted, however, to be captain-general of Manchuria, but again fell under censure, and on his visit to his paternal estate at Mukden the Emperor took him back to the capital and appointed him to some important office. He soon got into new trouble with the Emperor, who in a proclamation remarks that "Sung is inadequate to the duties of minister of the imperial presence; because, although he formerly officiated as such, he is now upward of seventy years of age, and rides badly on horseback;" he is therefore sent to Manchuria to fill his old office of captain-general. The next year the ex-minister and his adherents were involved in a long trial about the loss of a seal, and he was deprived of his command and directed to retire to his own Banner; the real reasons of this disgrace were probably connected with the change of parties ensuing upon the accession of Taukwang.

Soon afterward Sung was restored to favor and made adjutant at Jeh ho, after having been president of the Censorate for a month. He was allowed to remain there longer than usual, and employed his spare time in writing a book upon the newly acquired territory in Turkestan. In 1824 he was reinstated as president of the Censorate, with admonitions not to confuse and puzzle himself with a multiplicity of extraneous matters. In 1826 he was sent on a special commission to Shansi, and when he returned was honored with a dinner at court on new year's day. He then appears as travelling tutor to the crown-prince, but where his royal highness went for his education does not appear; from this post we find him made president of the Board of Rites, and appointed to inspect the victims for a state sacrifice. He is then ordered to Jeh ho, from whence, in a fit of penitence, or perhaps from fear of a dun, he memorialized the Emperor about a debt of \$52,000 he had incurred nearly thirty years before, which he proposed to liquidate by foregoing his salary of \$1,000 until the arrears were paid up; the Emperor was in good humor



with the old man, and forgave him the whole amount, being assured, he says, of Sung's pure official character. In this memorial, when recounting his services, the aged officer says that he has been twice commander-in-chief and governor of Ílí, governor-general at Nanking, Canton, etc., but had never saved much.

Shortly after this he is recalled from Jeh ho and made *ti-tuh* of Peking, then president of the Board of War; and in a few months he is ordered to proceed across the desert to Cobdo to investigate some affair of importance—a long and toilsome journey of fifteen hundred miles for a man over seventy-five years old. He returned the next year and resumed his post as president of the Board of War, in which capacity he acted as examiner of the students in the Russian College. In 1831 he was made president of the Colonial Office, and later received an appointment as superintendent of the Three Treasuries, but was obliged to resign from ill health. A month's relaxation seems to have wonderfully restored him, for the Emperor, in reply to his petition for employment, expresses surprise that he should so soon be fit for official duties, and plainly intimates his opinion that the disease was all sham, though he accedes to his request so far as to nominate him commander of one of the eight Banners. In 1832 Sung again became involved in intrigues, and was reduced to the third degree of rank; the resignation of Tohtsin and the struggle for the vacant premiership was probably the real reason of this new reverse, though a frivolous accusation of two years' standing was trumped up against him. He was restored again, after a few months' disgrace, at the petition of a beg of a city in Turkestan, which illustrates, by the way, the influence which those princes exert. Old age now began to come upon the courtier in good earnest, and in 1833 he was ordered to retire with the rank and pay of adjutant, which he lived to enjoy only two years. Much of the success of Sung was said to be owing to his having had a daughter in the harem, but his personal character and kindness were evidently the main sources of his enduring influence among all ranks of people and officers; one account says the Manchus almost worshipped him, and beggars clung to his chair in the





streets to ask alms. It is wortny of notice that in all his reverses there is no mention made of any severer punishment than degradation or banishment, and in this particular the political life of Sung is probably a fair criterion of the usual fortune of high Chinese statesmen. The leading events in the life of Changling, the successor of Tohtsin, together with a few notices of the governor of Canton in 1833, Li Hung-pin, are given in the *Repository*.<sup>1</sup>

Commissioners Lin and Kíying became more famous among foreigners than their compeers in the capital, from the parts they acted in the war with England in 1840, but only a few notices of their lives are accessible. Lin Tseh-sü was born in 1785, in Fuhchau, and passed through the literary examinations, becoming a graduate of the second rank at the age of nineteen, and of the third when twenty-six. After filling an office or two in the Imperial Academy, he was sent as assistant literary examiner to Kiangsí in 1816, and during three subsequent years acted as examiner and censor in various places. In 1819 he filled the office of intendant of circuit, in Chehkiang; and after absence on account of health, he was, in 1823, appointed to the post of treasurer of Kiangsu, in the absence of the incumbent. In 1826 he was made overseer of the Yellow River, but hearing of his mother's death, resigned his office to mourn for her. After the period of mourning was finished he went to Peking and received the office of judge in Shensi; but before he had been in it a month he was made treasurer of Kiangsu, and before he could enter upon this new office he heard of his father's death, and was obliged to resign once more. In 1832 he was nominated treasurer in Hupeh, and five months later transferred to the same office in Honan, and six months after that sent to Kiangsu again. Three months after this third transfer he was reinstated overseer of the Yellow River, and within a short time elevated to be governor of Kiangsí, which he retained three years, and acted as governor-general of Liang Kiang two years more. In 1838 he was made governor-general of Hu Kwang; and shortly after

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., pp. 61-66.



this ordered to come to Peking to be admitted to an imperial audience, and by special favor permitted to ride on horseback within the palace.

He was at this audience appointed imperial commissioner to put down the opium trade and manage the affairs of the maritime frontier of Kwantung, receiving at the time such plenipotentiary powers to act for the Emperor as had only once before been committed to a subject since 1644, viz., when Changling was sent to Turkestan to quell the insurrection. Lin's ill success in dealing with the opium trade and its upholders in the British government reflect no discredit on his own ability, for the task was beyond the powers of the Empire; but his fame even now stands high among the Cantonese. One incident showing his kindness to the crew of the Sunda, an English vessel lost on Hainan Island, on their arrival in Canton in October, 1839, while he was fighting their consular officers, gave a good insight into the candor of the man. In December, 1839, he was appointed governor-general of Liang Kiang; but succeeded to that of Liang Kwang in February, 1840. In October of the same year the seals of office were taken away, and he was ordered to return to Peking. He remained, however, till May of the next year to advise with Kishen in his difficult negotiations with the English. Lin left Canton in May, 1841, leading two thousand troops to defend Ningpo, but this rôle was not his forte. In July, 1842, he was banished to Ílí, but the sentence was suspended for a season by giving him a third time the oversight of the Yellow River. However, in 1844 we find him in Ílí, holding an inferior appointment and trying to bring waste lands near the Mohammedan cities under cultivation; his zeal was rewarded the next year by a pardon, and the year after that by the high post of governor-general of Shensi and Kansuh, in which region he set himself to work to reform the civil service and increase the revenue. In 1847 the cares of office wore upon him, so that he asked for a furlough and went back to Fuhchau, aged sixty-two. His ambition was not yet satisfied, for he was made governor-general in Yun-nan in 1848, but his strength was not equal to its duties, and he again retired in 1849. The young Emperor Hienfung,



startled at the rapid rise of the Tai-ping rebels, applied to the aged statesman to help him as he had his father. Lin responded to the call of his sovereign, but death came upon him before he reached Kwangsí, on the 22d of November, 1850, at the age of sixty-seven. More enduring than some of his official acts was the preparation and publication of the *History of Maritime Nations*, with maps, in fifty books, in which he gave his countrymen all the details he could gather of other nations.<sup>1</sup>

Much less is known of the official life of Kíying than of Lin, but the Manchu proved himself superior to the Chinese in trimming his course to meet the inevitable and avoid the rocks his predecessor struck. In 1835 his name is mentioned as president of the Board of Revenue and controller of the Tsung-jin fu. He was detained at the capital as commander-in-chief of the forces there until 1842, when his Majesty sent him to Canton to take the place of Yihshan. He was ordered to stop at Hangchau, however, on his way, and make a report of the condition of affairs; his memorials seem to have had great influence, for he was appointed joint commissioner with Ílipu in April of that year. At the negotiations of Nanking Kíying acted as chief commissioner, and was mainly instrumental in bringing the war to a conclusion. He proceeded to Canton in May, 1843, to succeed Ílipu, and there acted as sole commissioner in negotiating the supplementary treaty and the commercial regulations with the British, returning to the capital in December, 1843. His prudence and vigor had great effect in calming the irritation of the people of Canton. On the arrival of the American plenipotentiary he was vested with full powers to treat with Mr. Cushing, and soon after with the French and Swedish envoys, with all of whom he signed treaties. During the progress of these negotiations Kí Kung died and Kíying succeeded him.

His administration as governor-general continued till January, 1848, when he returned to Peking to receive higher honors from the Emperor. In 1849 he went to Kiangsu to inquire

<sup>1</sup> Compare Dr. Bowring in *N. C. Br. R. A. Soc. Journal*, Part III., Art. VII. (Dec., 1852).



into the salt department, and then to Northern Shansi to settle differences with the Mongols. From this period he held various posts in the cabinet and capital, busy in all court intrigues, and rather losing his good name, till he fell into disgrace. In 1856, when the envoys of the four western Powers were at Tientsin, he entered into some underhand dealings against the policy of Kweiliang and Hwashana, and was sent there as joint commissioner. He had hardly entered upon his functions by the presentation of his commission, when he suddenly returned to Peking against the Emperor's will, and was ordered to take poison in the presence of the head of the Clan to avoid the ignominy of a public execution.<sup>1</sup> Few Chinese statesmen in modern times have borne a higher character for prudence, dignity, and intelligence than Kíying, and the confidence reposed in him is creditable to his imperial master. In his demeanor, says Sir Thomas Wade, "there was a combination of dignity and courtesy which more than balanced the deficiencies of a by no means attractive exterior." The portrait of him has been engraved from a native painting made at Canton, and is a good one. It was kindly furnished for this work by J. R. Peters, Jr.

The facts of this man's career are not all known, but his connection by birth with the Clan brought him into an entirely different set of influences from Lin, while his training removed him from the contact with the people which made the other so popular and influential. Both of them were good instances of Chinese statesmen, and their checkered lives as here briefly noticed resemble that of their compeers in the highest grades of official dignity. The sifting which the personnel of the Emperor's employees in all their various grades receive generally brings the cleverest and most trustworthy to the top; no one can come in contact with them in state affairs without an increase of respect for their shrewdness, loyalty, and skill. One observable feature of the Chinese political world is the great age of the high officers, and it is not easy to account for their

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, passim. Oliphant, *Lord Elgin's Mission to China and Japan*, Chap. XVII. Minister Reed, in *U. S. Dip. Correspondence*, 1857-58.





being kept in their posts, when almost worn out, by a monarch who wished to have efficient men around him, until we learn how little real power he can arbitrarily exert over the details of the branches of his government. It is somewhat explainable on the ground that, as long as the old incumbents are alive, the Emperor, being more habituated to their company and advice, prefers to retain those whose competency has been proven by their service. The patriarch, kept near the Emperor, is moreover a kind of hostage for the loyalty of his following; and the latter, scattered throughout the provinces, can be managed and moved about through him with less opposition: he is, still further, a convenient medium through which to receive the exactions of the younger members of the service, and convey such intimations as are thought necessary. The system of clientelage which existed among the Gauls and Franks is also found in China with some modifications, and has a tendency to link officers to one another in parties of different degrees of power. The Emperor published an order in 1833 against this system of patronage, and it is evident that he would find it seriously interfering with his power were it not constantly broken up by changing the relations of the parties and sending them away in different directions. Peking is almost the only place where the "teacher and pupils," as the patron and client call each other, could combine to much purpose; and the principal safeguard the throne seems to have against intrigues and parties around it lies in the conflicting interests arising among themselves, though a long-established or unscrupulous favorite, as in the cases of Duke Ho and Suhshun in 1855-61, can sometimes manage to engross the whole power of the crown.

Notwithstanding the heavy charges of oppression, cruelty, bribery, and mendacity which are often brought against officers with more or less justice, it must not be inferred that no good qualities exist among them. Thousands of them desire to rule equitably, to clear the innocent and punish the guilty, and exert all the knowledge and power they possess to discharge their functions to the acceptance of their master and their own good name among the inhabitants. Such officers, too, generally



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rise, while the cruelties of others are visited with degradation. The pasquinades which the people stick up in the streets indicate their sentiments, and receive much more attention than would such vulgar expressions in other countries, because it is almost the only way in which their opinions can be safely uttered. The popularity which upright officers receive acts as an incentive to others to follow in the same steps, as well as a reward to the person himself. The governor of Kwangtung in 1833, Chu, was a very popular officer, and when he obtained leave to resign his station on account of age, the people vied with each other in showing their hearty regret at losing him. The old custom was observed of retaining his boots and presenting him with a new pair at every city he passed through, and many other testimonials of their regard were adopted. On leaving the city of Canton he circulated a few verses, "to console the people and excite them to virtue," for he heard that some of them wept on learning of his departure.

From ancient days, my fathers trod the path  
Of literary fame, and placed their names  
Among the wise ; two generations past,  
Attendant on their patrons, they have come  
To this provincial city.<sup>1</sup> Here this day  
'Tis mine to be imperial envoy ;  
Thus has the memory of ancestral fame  
Ceased not to stimulate this feeble frame.

My father held an office at Lungchau.<sup>2</sup>  
And deep imprinted his memorial there ;  
He was the sure and generous friend  
Of learning unencouraged and obscure.  
When now I turn my head and travel back  
In thought to that domestic hall, it seems  
As yesterday, those early happy scenes—  
How was he pained if forced to be severe !

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<sup>1</sup> The Chinese have a great affection for the place of their nativity, and consider a residence in any other province like being in a foreign settlement. They always wish to return thither in life, or have their remains carried and interred there after death.

<sup>2</sup> A district in the province of Kwangsi.



VALEDICTORY VERSES OF GOVERNOR CHU.

From times remote Kwangtung has been renowned  
 For wise and mighty men ; but none can stand  
 Among them, or compare with Kiuh Kiang : <sup>1</sup>  
 Three idle and inglorious years are past,  
 And I have raised no monument of fame,  
 By shedding round the rays of light and truth,  
 To give the people knowledge. In this heart  
 I feel the shame, and cannot bear the thought.

But now, in flowered pavilions, in street  
 Illuminations, gaudy shows, to praise  
 The gods and please themselves, from year to year  
 The modern people vie, and boast themselves,  
 And spend their hard-earned wealth—and all in vain ;  
 For what shall be the end ? Henceforth let all  
 Maintain an active and a useful life,  
 The sober husband and the frugal wife.

The gracious statesman, <sup>2</sup> politic and wise,  
 Is my preceptor and my long-tried friend ;  
 Called now to separate, spare our farewell  
 The heartrending words affection so well loves.  
 That he may still continue to exhort  
 The people, and instruct them to be wise,  
 To practice virtue and to keep the laws  
 Of ancient sages, is my constant hope.

When I look backward o'er the field of fame  
 Where I have travelled a long fifty years,  
 The struggle for ambition and the sweat  
 For gain seem altogether vanity.  
 Who knoweth not that heaven's toils are close,  
 Infinitely close ? Few can escape.  
 Ah ! how few great men reach a full old age !  
 How few unshorn of honors end their days !

Inveterate disease has twined itself  
 Around me, and binds me in slavery.  
 The kindness of his Majesty is high <sup>3</sup>  
 And liberal, admitting no return

<sup>1</sup> Kiuh Kiang was an ancient minister of state during the Tang dynasty. His imperial master would not listen to his advice and he therefore retired. Rebellion and calamities arose. The Emperor thought of his faithful servant and sent for him ; but he was already dead.

<sup>2</sup> Governor Loo.

<sup>3</sup> In permitting Chu to retire from public life.



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Unless a grateful heart ; still, still my eyes  
 Will see the miseries of the people—  
 Unlimited distresses, mournful, sad,  
 To the mere passer-by awaking grief.

Untalented, unworthy, I withdraw,  
 Bidding farewell to this windy, dusty world ;  
 Upward I look to the supremely good—  
 The Emperor—to choose a virtuous man  
 To follow me. Henceforth it will be well—  
 The measures and the merits passing mine ;  
 But I shall silent stand and see his grace  
 Diffusing blessings like the genial spring.

Ílipu, Kí Kung, the late governor-general of Kwangtung, and Shu, the prefect of Ningpo in 1842, are other officers who have been popular in late years. When Lin passed through Macao in 1839, the Chinese had in several places erected honorary portals adorned with festoons of silk and laudatory scrolls ; and when he passed the doors of their houses and shops they set out tables decorated with vases of flowers, “in order to manifest their profound gratitude for his coming to save them from a deadly vice, and for removing from them a dire calamity by the destruction and severe interdiction of opium.” Alas, that his efforts and intentions should have been so fruitless !

The *Peking Gazette* frequently contains petitions from old officers describing their ailments, their fear lest they shall not be able to perform their duties, the length of their official service, and requesting leave of absence or permission to retire. It is impossible to regard all the expressions of loyalty in these papers, coming as they do from every class of officers, as heartless and made out according to a prescribed form ; but we are too ready to measure them by our own standard and fashion, forgetting that it is not the defects of a system which give the best standard of its value and efficiency. Let us rather, as an honest expression of feeling, quote a few lines from a memorial of Shí, a censor in 1824 : “Reflecting within myself that, notwithstanding the decay of my strength, it has still pleased the imperial goodness to employ me in a high office instead of rejecting and discarding me at once, I have been most anxious to effect a cure, in order that, a weak old horse as I am,





it might be still in my power, by the exertion of my whole strength, to recompense a ten-thousandth part of the benevolence which restored me to life.”<sup>1</sup>

Connected with the triennial schedule of official merits and demerits is the necessity the high officers of state are under of confessing their faults of government; and the two form a peculiar and somewhat stringent check upon their intrigues and malversation, making them, as Le Comte observes, “exceeding circumspect and careful, and sometimes even virtuous against their own inclinations.” The confessions reported in the *Peking Gazette* are, however, by no means satisfactory as to the real extent or nature of these acts; most of the confessors are censors, and perhaps it is in virtue of their office that they thus sit in judgment upon themselves. Examples of the crimes mentioned are not wanting. The governor-general of Chihlí requested severe punishment in 1832 for not having discovered a plotting demagogue who had collected several thousand adherents in his and the next provinces; his request was granted. An admiral in the same province demands punishment for not having properly educated his son, as thereby he went mad and wounded several people. Another calls for judgment upon himself because the Empress-dowager had been kept waiting at the palace gate by the porters when she paid her Majesty a visit. One officer accused himself for not being able to control the Yellow River; and his Majesty’s cook in 1830 requested punishment for being too late in presenting his bill of fare, but was graciously forgiven. The rarity of these confessions, compared with the actual sins, shows either that they are, like a partridge’s doublings, made to draw off attention from the real nest of malversation, or that few officers are willing to undergo the mortification.

The Emperor, in his character of vicegerent of heaven, occasionally imposes the duty of self-confession upon himself. Kiaking issued several public confessions during his reign, but the *Gazette* has not contained many such papers within the last thirty years. These confessions are drawn from him more by

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., p. 71.



natural calamities, such as drought, freshets, epidemics, etc., than by political causes, though insurrections, fires, ominous portents, etc., sometimes induce them. The personal character of the monarch has much to do with their frequency and phraseology. On occasion of a drought in 1817 the Emperor Kiaking said: "The remissness and sloth of the officers of government constitute an evil which has long been accumulating. It is not the evil of a day; for several years I have given the most pressing admonitions on the subject, and have punished many cases which have been discovered, so that recently there appears a little improvement, and for several seasons the weather has been favorable. The drought this season is not perhaps entirely on their (the officers') account. I have meditated upon it, and am persuaded that the reason why the azure Heavens above manifest disapprobation by withholding rain for a few hundred miles only around the capital, is that the fifty and more rebels who escaped are secreted somewhere near Peking. Hence it is that fertile vapors are fast bound, and the felicitous harmony of the seasons interrupted." On the 14th of May, 1818, between five and six o'clock in the evening, a sudden darkness enveloped the capital, attended by a violent wind from the southeast and much rain. During its action two intervals occurred when the sky became a lurid red and the air offensive, terrible claps of thunder startling the people and frightening the monarch. His astrologers could not relieve his forebodings of evil, and he issued a manifesto to explain the matter to his subjects and discharge his own conscience. One sentence is worth quoting: "Calumnious accusations cause the ruin and death of a multitude of innocent people; they alone are capable of provoking a sign as terrible as this one just seen. The wind coming from the southeast is proof enough that some great crime has been committed in that region, which the officials, by neglecting their duties, have ignored, and thereby excited the ire of Heaven."<sup>1</sup>

One of the most remarkable specimens of these papers is a prayer for rain issued by Taukwang, July 24, 1832, on occasion

<sup>1</sup> *Annales de la Foi*, No. 6, 1823, pp. 21-24.



of a severe drought at the capital. Before publishing this paper he had endeavored to mollify the anger and heat of heaven by ordering all suspected and accused persons in the prisons of the metropolis to be tried, and their guilt or innocence established, in order that the course of justice might not be delayed, and witnesses be released from confinement. But these vicarious corrections did not avail, and the drought continuing, he was obliged, as high-priest of the Empire, to show the people that he was mindful of their sufferings, and would relieve them, if possible, by presenting the following memorial :

“Kneeling, a memorial is hereby presented, to cause affairs to be heard.

“Oh, alas ! imperial Heaven, were not the world afflicted by extraordinary changes, I would not dare to present extraordinary services. But this year the drought is most unusual. Summer is past, and no rain has fallen. Not only do agriculture and human beings feel the dire calamity, but also beasts and insects, herbs and trees, almost cease to live. I, the minister of Heaven, am placed over mankind, and am responsible for keeping the world in order and tranquillizing the people. Although it is now impossible for me to sleep or eat with composure, although I am scorched with grief and tremble with anxiety, still, after all, no genial and copious showers have been obtained.

“Some days ago I fasted, and offered rich sacrifices on the altars of the gods of the land and the grain, and had to be thankful for gathering clouds and slight showers ; but not enough to cause gladness. Looking up, I consider that Heaven’s heart is benevolence and love. The sole cause is the daily deeper atrocity of my sins ; but little sincerity and little devotion. Hence I have been unable to move Heaven’s heart, and bring down abundant blessings.

“Having searched the records, I find that in the twenty-fourth year of Kienlung my exalted Ancestor, the Emperor Pure, reverently performed a ‘great snow service.’ I feel impelled, by ten thousand considerations, to look up and imitate the usage, and with trembling anxiety rashly assail Heaven, examine myself, and consider my errors ; looking up and hoping that I may obtain pardon. I ask myself whether in sacrificial services I have been disrespectful ? Whether or not pride and prodigality have had a place in my heart, springing forth there unobserved ? Whether, from length of time, I have become remiss in attending to the affairs of government, and have been unable to attend to them with that serious diligence and strenuous effort which I ought ? Whether I have uttered irreverent words, and have deserved reprehension ? Whether perfect equity has been attained in conferring rewards or inflicting punishments ? Whether in raising mausolea and laying out gardens I have distressed the people and wasted property ? Whether in the appointment of officers I have failed to obtain fit persons, and thereby the acts of government have been petty and vexatious to the people ? Whether punishments have been unjustly inflicted or not ? Whether the oppressed have found no



means of appeal ? Whether in persecuting heterodox sects the innocent have not been involved ? Whether or not the magistrates have insulted the people and refused to listen to their affairs ? Whether, in the successive military operations on the western frontiers, there may not have been the horrors of human slaughter for the sake of imperial rewards ? Whether the largesses bestowed on the afflicted southern provinces were properly applied, or the people were left to die in the ditches ? Whether the efforts to exterminate or pacify the rebellious mountaineers of Hunan and Kwangtung were properly conducted ; or whether they led to the inhabitants being trampled on as mire and ashes ? To all these topics to which my anxieties have been directed I ought to lay the plumb-line, and strenuously endeavor to correct what is wrong ; still recollecting that there may be faults which have not occurred to me in my meditations.

“ Prostrate I beg imperial Heaven (*Hwang Tien*) to pardon my ignorance and stupidity, and to grant me self-renovation ; for myriads of innocent people are involved by me, the One man. My sins are so numerous it is difficult to escape from them. Summer is past and autumn arrived ; to wait longer will really be impossible. Knocking head, I pray imperial Heaven to hasten and confer gracious deliverance—a speedy and divinely beneficial rain, to save the people’s lives and in some degree redeem my iniquities. Oh, alas ! imperial Heaven, observe these things. Oh, alas ! imperial Heaven, be gracious to them. I am inexpressibly grieved, alarmed, and frightened. Reverently this memorial is presented.”<sup>1</sup>

This paper apparently intimates some acknowledgment of a ruling power above, and before a despot like the Emperor of China would place himself in such an equivocal posture before his people, he would assure himself very thoroughly of their sentiments ; for its effects as a state paper would be worse than null if the least ridicule was likely to be thrown upon it. In this case heavy showers followed the same evening, and appropriate thanksgivings were ordered and oblations presented before the six altars of heaven, earth, land, and grain, and the gods of heaven, earth, and the revolving year.

The orders of the court are usually transmitted in manuscript, except when some grand event or state ceremony requires a general proclamation, in which cases the document is printed on yellow paper and published in both the Chinese and Manchu languages, encircled with a border of dragons. The governors and their subordinates, imperial commissioners, and collectors of customs are the principal officers in the provinces who pub-

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. I., p. 236.





lish their orders to the people, consisting of admonitions, exhortations, regulations, laws, special ordinances, threatenings, and municipal requirements. Standing laws and local regulations are often superbly carved on tablets of black marble, and placed in the streets to be "held in everlasting remembrance," so that no one can plead ignorance; a custom which recalls the mode of publishing the Twelve Tables at Rome. Several of these monuments, beautifully ornamented, are to be seen at Canton and Macao. The usual mode of publishing the commands of government is to print the document in large characters, and post copies at the door of the offices and in the streets in public places, with the seal of the officer attached to authenticate them. The sheets on which they are printed being common bamboo paper, and having no protection from the weather, are, however, soon destroyed; the people read them as they are thus exposed, and copy them if they wish, but it is not uncommon, too, for the magistrates to print important edicts in pamphlet form for circulation. These placards are written in an official style, differing from common writing as much as that does in English, but not involved or obscure. A single specimen of an edict issued at Canton will suffice to illustrate the form of such papers, and moreover show upon what subjects a Chinese ruler sometimes legislates, and the care he is expected to take of the people.

"Sü and Hwang, by special appointment magistrates of the districts of Nanghai and Pwanyu, raised ten steps and recorded ten times, hereby distinctly publish important rules for the capture of grasshoppers, that it may be known how to guard against them in order to ward off injury and calamity. On the 7th day of the 8th month in the 13th year of Taukwang [September 20, 1833], we received a communication from the prefect of the [department of Kwangchau], transmitting a despatch from their excellencies the governor-general and governor, as follows:

"During the fifth month of the present year flights of grasshoppers appeared in the limits of Kwangsi, in [the departments of] Liu, Tsin, Kwei, and Wu, and their vicinage, which have already, according to report, been clean destroyed and driven off. We have heard that in the department of Kauchau and its neighborhood, conterminous to Kwangsi, grasshoppers have appeared which multiply with extreme rapidity. At this time the second crop is in the blade (which if destroyed will endamage the people), and it is proper, therefore, immediately, wherever they are found, to capture and drive them off, marshalling the troops to advance and wholly exterminate them. But Kwang-



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tung heretofore has never experienced this calamity, and we apprehend the officers and people do not understand the mode of capture ; wherefore we now exhibit in order the most important rules for catching grasshoppers. Let the governor's combined forces be immediately instructed to capture them *secundum artem* ; at the same time let orders be issued for the villagers and farmers at once to assemble and take them, and for the magistrate to establish storehouses for their reception and purchase, thus without fail sweeping them clean away. If you do not exert yourselves to catch the grasshoppers, your guilt will be very great ; let it be done carefully, not clandestinely delaying, thus causing this misfortune to come upon yourselves, transgressing the laws, and causing us again, according to the exigencies of the case, to promulgate general orders and make thorough examination, etc., etc. Appended hereto are copies of the rules for catching grasshoppers, which from the lieutenant-governor must be sent to the treasurer, who will enjoin it upon the magistrates of the departments, and he again upon the district magistrates.'

"Having received the preceding, besides respectfully transmitting it to the colonel of the department to be straightway forwarded to all the troops under his authority, and also to all the district justices, that they all with united purpose bend their energies to observe, at the proper time, that whenever the grasshoppers become numerous they join their forces and extirpate them, thus removing calamity from the people ; we also enjoin upon whomsoever receives this that the grasshoppers be caught according to these several directions, which are therefore here arranged in order as follows :

"1. When the grasshoppers first issue forth they are to be seen on the borders of large morasses, from whence they quickly multiply and fill large tracts of land ; they produce their young in little hillocks of black earth, using the tail to bore into the ground, not quite an inch in depth, which still remain as open holes, the whole somewhat resembling a bee's nest. One grasshopper drops ten or more pellets, in form like a pea, each one containing a hundred or more young. For the young grasshoppers fly and eat in swarms, and this laying of their young is done all at once and in the same spot ; the place resembles a hive of bees, and therefore it is very easily sought and found.

"2. When the grasshoppers are in the fields of wheat and tender rice and the thick grass, every day at early dawn they all alight on the leaves of the grass, and their bodies being covered with dew are heavy and they cannot fly or hop ; at noon they begin to assemble for flight, and at evening they collect in one spot. Thus each day there are three periods when they can be caught, and the people and gentry will also have a short respite. The mode of catching them is to dig a trench before them, the broader and longer the better, on each side placing boards, doors, screens, and such like things, one stretched on after another, and spreading open each side. The whole multitude must then cry aloud, and, holding boards in their hands, drive them all into the trench ; meanwhile those on the opposite side, provided with brooms and rakes, on seeing any leaping or crawling out, must sweep them back ; then covering them with dry grass, burn them all up. Let the fire be first kindled in the trench, and then drive them into it ; for if they are only buried up, then many of them will crawl out of the openings and so escape.



“3. When the swarms of grasshoppers see a row of trees, or a close line of flags and streamers, they usually hover over and settle; and the farmers frequently suspend red and white clothes and petticoats on long poles, or make red and green paper flags, but they do not always settle with great rapidity. Moreover, they dread the noise of gongs, matchlocks, and guns, hearing which they fly away. If they come so as to obscure the heavens, you must let off the guns and clang the gongs, or fire the crackers; it will strike the front ranks with dread, and flying away, the rest will follow them and depart.

“4. When the wings and legs of the grasshoppers are taken off, and [their bodies] dried in the sun, the taste is like dried prawns, and moreover, they can be kept a long time without spoiling. Ducks can also be reared upon the dried grasshoppers, and soon become large and fat. Moreover, the hill people catch them to feed pigs; these pigs, weighing at first only twenty catties or so, in ten days' time grow to weigh more than fifty catties; and in rearing all domestic animals they are of use. Let all farmers exert themselves and catch them alive, giving rice or money according to the number taken. In order to remove this calamity from your grain, what fear is there that you will not perform this? Let all these rules for catching the grasshoppers be diligently carried into full effect.”

“Wherefore these commands are transcribed that all you soldiers and people may be fully acquainted with them. Do you all then immediately in obedience to them, when you see the proper time has come, sound the gong; and when you see the grasshoppers and their young increasing, straightway get ready, on the one hand seizing them, and on the other announcing to the officers that they collect the troops, that with united strength you may at once catch them, without fail making an utter extermination of them; thus calamity will be removed from the people. We will also then confer rewards upon those of the farmers and people who first announce to the magistrates their approach. Let every one implicitly obey. A special command.

“Promulgated Taukwang, 13th year, 8th month, and 15th day.”<sup>1</sup>

The concluding part of an edict affords some room for displaying the character of the promulgator. Among other endings are such as these: “Hasten! hasten! a special edict.” “Tremble hereat intensely.” “Lay not up for yourselves future repentance by disobedience.” “I will by no means eat my words.” “Earnestly observe these things.” In their state papers Chinese officers are constantly referring to ultimate truths and axioms, and deducing arguments therefrom in a peculiarly national grandiloquent manner, though some of their

<sup>1</sup> *Easy Lessons in Chinese*, pp. 223–227. The effect of these instructions relating to grasshoppers does not appear to have equalled the zeal of the officers composing them; swarms of locusts, however, are in general neither numerous nor devastating in China.



conclusions are preposterous non-sequiturs. Commissioner Lin addressed a letter to the Queen of England regarding the interdiction of opium, which began with the following preamble:

“Whereas, the ways of Heaven are without partiality, and no sanction is allowed to injure others in order to benefit one’s self, and that men’s natural feelings are not very diverse (for where is he who does not abhor death and love life?)—therefore your honorable nation, though beyond the wide ocean at a distance of twenty thousand *li*, also acknowledges the same ways of Heaven, the same human nature, and has the like perceptions of the distinctions between life and death, benefit and injury. Our heavenly court has for its family all that is within the four seas; and as to the great Emperor’s heaven-like benevolence—there is none whom it does not overshadow; even regions remote, desert, and disconnected have a part in his general care of life and well-being.”

The edicts furnish almost the only exponents of the intentions of government. They present several characteristic features of the ignorant conceit and ridiculous assumptions of the Chinese, while they betray the real weakness of the authorities in the mixture of argument and command, coaxing and threatening, pervading every paragraph. According to their phraseology, there can possibly be no failure in the execution of every order; if they are once made known, the obedience of the people follows almost as a matter of course; while at the same time both the writer and the people know that most of them are not only perfunctory but nearly useless. The responsibility of the writer in a measure ceases with the promulgation of his orders, and when they reach the last in the series their efficiency has well nigh departed. Expediency is the usual guide for obedience; deceiving superiors and oppressing the people the rule of action on the part of many officials; and their orders do not more strikingly exhibit their weakness and ignorance than their mendacity and conceit. A large proportion of well-meaning officers are sensible too that all their efforts will be neutralized by the half-paid, unscrupulous retainers and clerks in the *yamuns*; and this checks their energy.

It is not easy, without citing many examples accompanied





with particular explanations, to give a just idea of the actual execution of the laws, and show how far the people are secured in life and property by their rulers; and perhaps nothing has been the source of such differing views regarding the Chinese as the predominance writers give either to the theory or the practice of legislation. Old Magaillans has hit this point pretty well when he says: "It seems as if the legislators had omitted nothing, and that they had foreseen all inconveniences that were to be feared; so that I am persuaded no kingdom in the world could be better governed or more happy, if the conduct and probity of the officers were but answerable to the institution of the government. But in regard they have no knowledge of the true God, nor of the eternal rewards and punishments of the other world, they are subject to no remorse of conscience, they place all their happiness in pleasure, in dignity and riches; and therefore, to obtain these fading advantages, they violate all the laws of God and man, trampling under foot religion, reason, justice, honesty, and all the rights of consanguinity and friendship. The inferior officers mind nothing but how to defraud their superiors, they the supreme tribunals, and all together how to cheat the king; which they know how to do with so much cunning and address, making use in their memorials of words and expressions so soft, so honest, so respectful, so humble and full of adulation, and of reasons so plausible, that the deluded prince frequently takes the greatest falsehoods for solemn truths. So that the people, finding themselves continually oppressed and overwhelmed without any reason, murmur and raise seditions and revolts, which have caused so much ruin and so many changes in the Empire. Nevertheless, there is no reason that the excellency and perfection of the laws of China should suffer for the depravity and wickedness of the magistrates."<sup>1</sup>

Magaillans resided in China nearly forty years, and his opinion may be considered on the whole as a fair judgment of the real condition of the people and the policy of their rulers.

<sup>1</sup> *A new History of China, containing a description of the most considerable particulars of that Empire, written by Gabriel Magaillans, of the Society of Jesus, Missionary Apostolick. Done out of French. London, 1688, p. 249.*



When one is living in the country itself, to hear the complaints of individuals against the extortion and cruelty of their rulers, and to read the reports of judicial murder, torture, and crime in the *Peking Gazette*, are enough to cause one to wonder how such atrocities and oppressions are endured from year to year, and why the sufferers do not rise and throw aside the tyrannous power which thus abuses them. But the people are generally conscious that their rulers are no better than themselves, and that they would really gain nothing by such a procedure, and their desire to maintain as great a degree of peace as possible leads them to submit to many evils, which in western countries would soon be remedied or cause a revolution. In order to restrain the officers in their misrule, Section CCX. of the code ordains that "If any officer of government, whose situation gives him power and control over the people, not only does not conciliate them by proper indulgence, but exercises his authority in a manner so inconsistent with the established laws and approved usages of the Empire, that the sentiments of the once loyal subjects being changed by his oppressive conduct, they assemble tumultuously and openly rebel, and drive him at length from the capital city and seat of his government; such officer shall suffer death."

By the laws of China, every officer of the nine ranks must be previously qualified for duty by a degree; in the ninth are included village magistrates, deputy treasurers, jailers, etc., but the police, local interpreters, clerks, and other attendants on the courts are not considered as having any rank, and most of them are natives of the place where they are employed. The only degradation they can feel is to turn them out of their stations, but this is hardly a palliative of the evils the people suffer from them; the new leech is more thirsty than the old. The cause of many of the extortions the people suffer from their rulers is found in the system of purchasing office, at all times practised in one shape or other, but occasionally resorted to by the government. As the counterpart of this system, that of receiving bribes must be expected therefore to prevail, and being in fact practised by all grades of dignitaries, and sometimes even upheld by them as a "necessary evil," it adds still more to the



bad consequences resulting from this mode of obtaining office. Indeed, so far is the practice of "covering the eyes" carried in China, that the people seldom approach their rulers without a gift to make way for them.

One mode taken by the highest ranks to obtain money is to notify inferiors that there are certain days on which presents are expected, and custom soon increases these as much as the case will admit. Subscriptions for objects of public charity or disbursements, such as an inundation, a bad harvest, bursting of dikes, and other similar things which the government must look after, are not unfrequently made a source of revenue to the incumbents by requiring much more than is needed; those who subscribe are rewarded by an empty title, a peacock's feather, or employment in some insignificant formality. The sale of titular rank is a source of revenue, but the government never attempts to subvert or interfere with the well-known channel of attaining office by literary merit, and it seldom confers much real power for money when unconnected with some degree of fitness. The security of its own position is not to be risked for the sake of an easy means of filling its exchequer, yet it is impossible to say how far the sale of office and title is carried. The censors inveigh against it, and the Emperor almost apologizes for resorting to it, but it is nevertheless constantly practised. The government stocks of this description were opened during the late rebellions and foreign wars, as the necessities of the case were a sufficient excuse for the disreputable practice. In 1835 the sons of two of the leading hong-merchants were promoted, in consequence of their donations of \$25,000 each to repair the ravages of an inundation; subscribers to the amount of \$10,000 and upward were rewarded by an honorary title, whose only privilege is that it saves its possessor from a bambooning, it being the law that no one holding any office can be personally chastised.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the lower officers, the clerks in their employ and the police, who are often taken from the garrison soldiery, are the agents in the hands of the upper ranks to squeeze the people.

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<sup>1</sup> Compare the *Chinese Repository*, Vol. XVIII., p. 207.



There are many clerks of various duties and grades about all the offices who receive small salaries, and every application and petition to their superiors, going through their hands, is attended by a bribe to pass them up. The military police and servants connected with the offices are not paid any regular salary, and their number is great. In the large districts, like those of Nanhai and Pwanyu, which compose the city of Canton and suburbs, it is said there are about a thousand unpaid police; in the middle-sized ones between three and four hundred, and in the smallest from one to two hundred. This number is increased by the domestics attending high officers as part of their suite, and by their old acquaintances, who make themselves known when there is any likelihood of being employed. Among other abuses mentioned by the censors is that of magistrates appointing their own creatures to fill vacancies until those nominated by his Majesty arrive; like a poor man oppressing the poor, such officers are a sweeping rain. A similar abuse arises when country magistrates leave their posts to go to the provincial capital to dance attendance upon their superiors, and get nominated to a higher place or taken into their service as secretaries, because they will work for nothing; the duties of their vacated offices are meantime usually left undone, and underlings take advantage of their absence to make new exactions. The governor fills vacant offices with his own friends, and recommends them to his Majesty to be confirmed; but this has little effect in consolidating a system of oppression from the constant changes going on. In fact, it is hard to say which feature of the Chinese polity is the least disastrous to good government, these constant changes which neutralize all sympathy with the people on the part of rulers, or on the other hand make it useless for seditious men to try to foment rebellion.

The retinues of high provincial officers contain many dependents and expectant supernumeraries, all subservient to them; among them are the descendants of poor officers; the sons of bankrupt merchants who once possessed influence; dissipated, well bred, unscrupulous men, who lend themselves to everything flagitious; and lastly, fortune-seekers without





money, but possessing talents of good order to be used by any one who will hire them. Such persons are not peculiar to China, and their employment is guarded against in the code, but no law is more of a dead letter. Officers of government, too, conscious of their delinquencies, and afraid their posts will soon be taken from them, of course endeavor to make the most of their opportunities, and by means of such persons, who are usually well acquainted with the leading inhabitants of the district, harass and threaten such as are likely to pay well for being left in quiet. It does them little or no good, however, for if they are not removed they must fee their superiors, and if they are punished for their misdeeds they are still more certain of losing their wicked exactions.

In the misappropriation of public funds, and speculation of all kinds in materials, government stores, rations, wages, and salaries, the Chinese officials are skilled experts, and are never surprised at any disclosures.

Another common mode of plundering the people is for officers to collude with bands of thieves, and allow them to escape for a composition when arrested, or substitute other persons for the guilty party in case the real offenders are likely to be condemned. Sometimes these banditti are too strong even for an upright magistrate, and he is obliged to overlook what he cannot remedy; for, however much he may wish to arrest and bring them to justice, his policemen are too much afraid of their vengeance to venture upon attacking them. An instance of this occurred near Canton in 1839, when a boat, containing a clerk of the court and three or four police, came into the fleet of European opium-ships to hunt for some desperate opium smugglers who had taken refuge there. The fellows, hearing of the arrival of the boat, came in the night, and surrounding it took out the crew, bound their pursuers, and burned them alive with the boat in sight of the whole fleet, to whom the desperadoes looked for protection against their justly incensed countrymen.

A censor in 1819, complaining of flagrant neglect in the administration of justice in Chihli, says: "Among the magistrates are many who, without fear or shame, connive at robbery



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and deceit. Formerly, horse-stealers were wont to conceal themselves in some secret place, but now they openly bring their plunder to market for sale. When they perceive a person to be weak, they are in the habit of stealing his property and returning it to him for money, while the officers, on hearing it, treat it as a trivial matter, and blame the sufferer for not being more cautious. Thieves are apprehended with warrants on them, showing that when they were sent out to arrest thieves they availed of the opportunity to steal for themselves. And at a village near the imperial residence are very many plunderers concealed, who go out by night in companies of twenty or thirty persons, carrying weapons with them; they frequently call up the inhabitants, break open the doors, and having satisfied themselves with what food and wine they can obtain, they threaten and extort money, which if they cannot procure they seize their clothes, ornaments, or cattle, and depart. They also frequently go to shops, and having broken open the shutters impudently demand money, which if they do not get they set fire to the shop with the torches in their hands. If the master of the house lay hold on a few of them and sends them to the magistrate, he merely imprisons and beats them, and before half a month allows them to run away.”<sup>1</sup>

The unpaid retainers about the *yamuns* are very numerous, and are more dreaded than the police; one censor says they are looked upon by the people as tigers and wolves; he effected the discharge of nearly twenty-four thousand of them in the province of Chihlí alone. They are usually continued in their places by the head magistrate, who, when he arrives, being ignorant of the characters of those he must employ, re-engages such as are likely to serve. In cases of serious accusation the clerks frequently subpoena all who are likely to be implicated, and demand a fee for liberating them when their innocence is shown. These myrmidons still fear the anger of their superiors and a recoil of the people so far as to endeavor to save appearances by hushing up the matter, and liberating those

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., p. 218.





unjustly apprehended, with great protestations of compassion. It may be added that, as life is not lightly taken, thieves are careful not to murder or maltreat their victims dangerously, nor do the magistrates venture to take life outright by torture, though their cruelties frequently result in death by neglect or starvation. Money and goods are what both policemen and officials want, not blood and revenge. Parties at strife with each other frequently resort to legal implication to gratify their ill-will, and take a pitiful revenge by egging on the police to pillage and vex their enemy, though they themselves profit nowise thereby.

The evils resulting from a half-paid and venal magistracy are dreadful, and the prospects of their removal very slight. The governor of Chihli, in 1829, memorialized the Emperor upon the state of the police, and pointed out a remedy for many abuses, one of which was to pay them fair salaries out of the public treasury; but it is plain that this remedy must begin with the monarch, for until an officer is released from sopping his superior he will not cease exacting from his inferiors. Experience has shown the authorities how far it can safely be carried; while many officers, seeing how useless it is to irritate the people, so far as ultimately enriching themselves is concerned, endeavor to restrain their policemen. One governor issued an edict, stating that none of his domestics were allowed to brow-beat shopmen, and thus get goods or eatables below the market price, and permitted the seller to collar and bring them to him for punishment when they did so. When an officer of high rank, as a governor, treasurer, etc., takes the seals of his post, he oftentimes issues a proclamation, exhorting the subordinate ranks to do as he means to do—"to look up and embody the kindness of the high Emperor," and attend to the faithful discharge of their duties. The lower officers, in their turn, join in the cry, and a series of proclamations, by turns hortative and mandatory, are echoed from mastiff, spaniel, and poodle, until the cry ends upon the police. Thus the prefect of Canton says: "There are hard-hearted soldiers and gnawing lictors who post themselves at ferries or markets, or rove about the streets, to extort money under various pretexts; or, being intoxicated, they disturb and



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annoy the people in a hundred ways. Since I came into office here I have repeatedly commanded the inferior magistrates to act faithfully and seize such persons, but the depraved spirit still continues."

A censor, speaking of the police, says: "They no sooner get a warrant to bring up witnesses than they assail both plaintiff and defendant for money to pay their expenses, from the amount of ten taels to several scores. Then the clerks must have double what the runners get; if their demands be not satisfied they contrive every species of annoyance. Then, again, if there are people of property in the neighborhood, they will implicate them. They plot also with pettifogging lawyers to get up accusations against people, and threaten and frighten them out of their money."<sup>1</sup>

One natural consequence of such a state of society and such a perversion of justice is to render the people afraid of all contact with the officers of government and exceedingly selfish in all their intercourse, though the latter trait needs no particular training to develop it in any heathen country. It also tends to an inhuman disregard of the life of others, and chills every emotion of kindness which might otherwise arise; for by making a man responsible for the acts of his neighbors, or by involving a whole village in the crimes of an individual, all sense of justice is violated. The terror of being implicated in any evil that takes place sometimes prevents the people from quenching fires until the superior authorities be first informed, and from relieving the distressed until it is often too late. Hence, too, it not unfrequently happens that a man who has had the ill fortune to be stabbed to death in the street, or who falls down from disease and dies, remains on the spot till the putrescence obliges the neighbors, for their own safety, to remove the corpse. A dead body floating down the river and washing ashore is likely to remain on the banks until it again drifts away or the authorities get it buried, for no unofficial person would voluntarily run the risk of being seen interring it. One censor reports that when he asked the people why they did not remove the loathsome ob-

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<sup>1</sup> Compare Doolittle, *Social Life of the Chinese*, Vol. I., p. 330.





ject, they said: "We always let the bodies be either buried in the bellies of fishes or devoured by the dogs; for if we inform the magistrates they are sure to make the owner of the ground buy a coffin, and the clerks and assistants distress us in a hundred ways." The usual end of these memorials and remonstrances is that the police are ordered to behave better, the clerks commanded to abstain from implicating innocent people and retarding the course of justice, and their masters, the magistrates, threatened with the Emperor's displeasure in case the grievance is not remedied: after which all goes on as before, and will go on as long as both rulers and ruled are what they are.

The working out of the principle of responsibility accounts for many things in Chinese society and jurisprudence that otherwise appear completely at variance with even common humanity. It makes an officer careless of his duties if he can shift the responsibility of failure upon his inferiors, who, at the same time, he knows can never execute his orders; it renders the people dead to the impulses of relationship, lest they become involved in what they cannot possibly control and hardly know at the time of its commission. Mr. Lindsay states that when he was at Tsungming in 1832 the officers were very urgent that he should go out of the river, and in order to show him the effect of his non-compliance upon others a degraded subaltern was paraded in his sight. "His cap with its gold button was borne before him, and he marched about blindfolded in procession between two executioners, with a small flag on a bamboo pierced through each ear. Before him was a placard with the inscription, 'By orders of the general of Su and Sung: for a breach of military discipline, his ears are pierced as a warning to the multitude.' His offence was having allowed our boat to pass the fort without reporting it."

During the first war with England, fear of punishment induced many of the subordinates to commit suicide when unable to execute their orders, and the same motive impelled their superiors to avoid the wrath of the Emperor in like fashion. The hong-merchants and linguists at Canton, during the old regime, were constantly liable, from the operation of this prin-



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ciple, to exactions and punishments for the acts of their foreign customers. One of them, Sunshing, was put in prison and ruined because Lord Napier came to Canton from Whampoa in the boat of a ship which the unhappy merchant had "secured" several weeks before, and the linguist and pilot were banished for allowing what they could not possibly have hindered even if they had known it.

Having examined in this general manner the various grades of official rank, we come to the people; and a close view will show that this great mass of human beings exhibits many equally objectionable traits, while oppression, want, clannish rivalry, and brigandage combine to keep it in a constant state of turmoil. The subdivisions into tithings and hundreds are better observed in rural districts than in cities, and the headmen of those communities, in their individual and collective character, possess great influence, from the fact that they represent the popular feeling. In all parts of the country this popular organization is found in some shape or other, though, as if everything was somehow perverted, it not unfrequently is an instrument of greater oppression than defence. The division of the people into clans is far more marked in the southern provinces than in those lying north of the Yangtze, and has had a depressing effect upon their good government. It resembles in general the arrangement of the Scottish clans, as do the evils arising from their dissensions and feuds those which history records as excited among the Highlanders by the rivalry between Campbells and Macgregors.

The eldership of villages has no necessary connection with the clans, for the latter are unacknowledged by the government, but the clan having the majority in a village generally selects the elders from among their number. This system is of very ancient date; its elementary details are given in the *Chau-li*, one of the oldest works extant in China; Heeren furnishes the same details for India and Raffles for Java, reaching back in their duration to remote antiquity.<sup>1</sup> In the vicinity of Canton the elder

<sup>1</sup> Heeren, *Asiatic Nations*, Vol. II., p. 259. Raffles, *Java*, Vol. II. App. Biot, *L'Instruction publique*, pp. 59, 200.



is elected by a sort of town meeting, and holds his office during good behavior, receives such a salary as his fellow villagers give him, and may be removed to make way for another whenever the principal persons in the village are displeased with his conduct. His duties are limited to the supervision of the police and general oversight of what is done in the village, and to be a sort of agent or spokesman between the villagers and higher authorities; the duties, the power, and the rank of these officers vary almost indefinitely. The preponderance of one clan prevents much strife in the selection of the elder, but the degree of power reposed in his hand is so small that there is probably little competition to obtain the dignity. A village police is maintained by the inhabitants, under the authority of the elder; the village of Whampoa, for instance, containing about eight thousand inhabitants, pays the elder \$300 salary, and employs fourteen watchmen. His duties further consist in deciding upon the petty questions arising between the villagers and visiting the delinquents with chastisement, enforcing such regulations as are deemed necessary regarding festivals, markets, tanks, streets, collection of taxes, etc. The system of surveillance is, however, kept up by the superior officers, who appoint excise officers, grain agents, tide-waiters, or some other subordinate, as the case may require, to exercise a general oversight of the headmen.

The district magistrate, with the *siunkien* and their deputies over the hundred, are the officers to whom appeals are carried from the headmen; they also receive the reports of the elders respecting suspicious characters within their limits, or other matters which they deem worthy of reference or remonstrance. A similarity of interests leads the headmen of many villages to meet together at times in a public hall for secret consultation upon important matters, and their united resolutions are generally acted upon by themselves or by the magistrates, as the case may be. This system of eldership, and the influential position the headmen occupy, is an important safeguard the people possess against the extremity of oppressive extortion; while, too, it upholds the government in strengthening the loyalty of those who feel that the only security they possess against theft, and loss of all things from their seditious countrymen,



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is to uphold the institutions of the land, and that to suffer the evils of a bad magistracy is less dreadful than the horrors of a lawless brigandage.

The customs and laws of clanship perpetuate a sad state of society, and render districts and villages, otherwise peaceful, the scenes of unceasing turmoil and trouble. There are only about four hundred clans in the whole of China, but inasmuch as all of the same surname do not live in the same place, the separation of a clan answers the same purpose as multiplying it. Clan-nish feelings and feuds are very much stronger in Kwangtung and Fuhkien than in other provinces. As an instance which may be mentioned, the *Gazette* contains the petition of a man from Chauchau fu, in Kwangtung, relating to a quarrel, stating that "four years before, his kindred having refused to assist two other clans in their feuds, had during that period suffered most shocking cruelties. Ten persons had been killed, and twenty men and women, taken captives, had had their eyes dug out, their ears cut off, their feet maimed, and so rendered useless for life. Thirty houses were laid in ruins and three hundred acres of land seized, ten thousand taels plundered, ancestral temples thrown down, graves dug up, dikes destroyed, and water cut off from the fields. The governor had offered a reward of a thousand taels to any one who would apprehend these persons, but for the ten murders no one had been executed, for the police dare not seize the offenders, whose numbers have largely increased, and who set the laws at defiance." This region is notorious for the turbulence of its inhabitants; it adjoins the province of Fuhkien, and the people, known at Canton as *Hoklo*, emigrate in large numbers to the Indian Archipelago or to other provinces. The later *Gazettes* contain still more dreadful accounts of the contests of the clans, and the great loss of life and property resulting from their forays, no less than one hundred and twenty villages having been attacked, and thousands of people killed. These battles are constantly occurring, and the authorities, feeling themselves too weak to put them down, are obliged to connive at them and let the clans fight it out.

Ill will is kept up between the clans, and private revenges gratified, by every personal annoyance that malice can suggest



or opportunity tempt. If an unfortunate individual of one clan is met alone by his enemy, he is sure to be robbed or beaten, or both; the boats or the houses of each party are plundered or burned, and legal redress is almost impossible. Graves are defaced and tombstones injured, and on the annual visit to the family sepulchre perhaps a putrid corpse is met, placed there by the hostile clan; this insult arouses all their ire, and they vow deadly revenge. The villagers sally out with such arms as they possess, and death and wounds are almost sure to result before they separate. In Shunteh (a district between Canton and Macao) upward of a thousand men engaged with spears and firearms on one of these occasions, and thirty-six lives were lost; the military were called in to quell the riot. In Tungkwan district, southeast of Canton, thirty-six ringleaders were apprehended, and in 1831 it was reported that four hundred persons had been killed in these raids; only twenty-seven of their kindred appealed to government for redress.

When complaint is made to the prefect or governor, and investigation becomes inevitable, the villagers have a provision to meet the exigencies of the case, which puts the burden of the charges as equally as possible upon the whole clan. A band of "devoted men" are found—persons who volunteer to assume such crimes and run their chance for life—whose names are kept on a list, and they come forward and surrender themselves to government as the guilty persons. On the trial their friends employ witnesses to prove it a justifiable homicide, and magnify the provocation, and if there are several brought on the stand at once they try to get some of them clear by proving an alibi. It not unfrequently happens that the accused are acquitted—seldom that they are executed; transportation or a fine is the usual result. The inducement for persons to run this risk of their lives is security from the clan of a maintenance for their families in case of death, and a reward, sometimes as high as \$300, in land or money when they return. This sum is raised by taxing the clan or village, and the imposition falls heavily on the poorer portion of it, who can neither avoid nor easily pay it. This system of substitution pervades all parts of society, and for all misdemeanors. A person was strangled in Macao



in 1838 for having been engaged in the opium trade, who had been hired by the real criminal to answer to his name. Another mode of escape, sometimes tried in such cases when the person has been condemned, is to bribe the jailers to report him dead and carry out his body in a coffin; but this device probably does not often answer the end, as the turnkeys require a larger bribe than can be raised. There can be little doubt of the prevalence of the practice, and for crimes of even minor penalty.

To increase the social evils of clanship and systematized thieving, local tyrants occasionally spring up, persons who rob and maltreat the villagers by means of their armed retainers, who are in most cases, doubtless, members of the same clan. One of these tyrants, named *Yeh*, or Leaf, became quite notorious in the district of Tungkwan in 1833, setting at defiance all the power of the local authorities, and sending out his men to plunder and ravage whoever resisted his demands, destroying their graves and grain, and particularly molesting those who would not deliver up their wives or daughters to gratify him. He was arrested through craft by the district magistrate at Canton leaving his office and inducing him, for old acquaintance sake, to return with him to the provincial city; he was there tried and executed by the governor, although it was at the time reported that the Board of Punishments endeavored to save his life because he had been in office at the capital. In order that no attempt should be made to rescue him, he was left in ignorance of his sentence until he was put into the sedan to be carried to execution.

Clannish banditti often supply themselves with firearms, and prowling the country to revenge themselves on their enemies, soon proceed to pillage every one; in disarming them the government is sometimes obliged to resort to contemptible subterfuges, which conspicuously show its weakness and encourage a repetition of the evil. Parties of tramps, called *hakka*, or 'guests,' roam over Kwangtung province, squatting on vacant places along the shores, away from the villages, and forming small clannish communities; as soon as they increase, occupying more and more of the land, they begin to commit petty depredations upon the crops of the inhabitants, and demand money for the



privilege of burying upon the unoccupied ground around them. The government is generally unwilling to drive them off by force, because there is the alternative of making them robbers thereby, and they are invited to settle in other waste lands, which they can have free of taxation, and leave those they have cultivated if strictly private property. This practice shows the populousness of the country in a conspicuous manner. To these evils must be also added the large bodies of floating banditti or dakoits, who rove up and down all the watercourses "like sneaking rats" and pounce upon defenceless boats. Hardly a river or estuary in the land is free from these miscreants, and lives and property are annually destroyed by them to a very great amount, especially on the Yangtsh', the Pearl River, and other great thoroughfares.

The popular associations in cities and towns are chiefly based upon a community of interests, resulting either from a similarity of occupation, when the leading persons of the same calling form themselves into guilds, or from the municipal regulations requiring the householders living in the same street to unite to maintain a police and keep the peace of their division. Each guild has an assembly-hall, where its members meet to hold the festival of their patron saint, to collect and appropriate the subscriptions of the members and settle the rent or storage on the rooms and goods in the hall, to discuss all public matters as well as the good cheer they get on such occasions, and to confer with other guilds. The members often go to a great expense in emulating each other in their processions, and some rivalry exists regarding their rights, over which the government keeps a watchful eye, for all popular assemblies are its horror. The shopkeepers and householders in the same street are required to have a headman to superintend the police, watchmen, and beggars within his limits. The rulers are sometimes thwarted in their designs by both these forms of popular assemblies, and they no doubt tend in many ways to keep up a degree of independence and of mutual acquaintance, which compels the respect of the government. The governor of Canton in 1838 endeavored to search all the shops in a particular street, to ascertain if there was opium in them; but the shopmen came in a body at the



head of the street, and told the policemen that they would on no account permit their shops to be searched. The governor deemed it best to retire. Those who will not join or agree to what the majority orders in these bodies occasionally experience petty tyranny, but in a city this must be comparatively trifling. Several of the leading men in the city are known to hold meetings for consultation in still more popular assemblies for different reasons of a public and pressing nature. There is a building at Canton called the *Ming-hun Tang*, or "Free Discussion Hall," where political matters are discussed under the knowledge of government, which rather tries to mould than put them down, for the assistance of such bodies, rightly managed, in carrying out their intentions, is considerable, while discontent would be roused if they were forcibly suppressed. In October, 1842, meetings were held in this hall, at one of which a public manifesto was issued, here quoted entire as a specimen of the public appeals of Chinese politicians and orators :

"We have been reverently consulting upon the Empire—a vast and undivided whole! How can we permit it to be severed in order to give it to others? Yet we, the rustic people, can learn to practise a rude loyalty; we too know to destroy the banditti, and thus requite his Majesty. Our Great Pure dynasty has cared for this country for more than two hundred years, during which a succession of distinguished monarchs, sage succeeding sage, has reigned; and we who eat the herb of the field, and tread the soil, have for ages drank in the dew of imperial goodness, and been imbued with its benevolence. The people in wilds far remote beyond our influence have also felt this goodness, comparable to the heavens for height, and been upheld by this bounty, like the earth for thickness. Wherefore peace being now settled in the country, ships of all lands come, distant though they be from this for many a myriad of miles; and of all the foreigners on the south and west there is not one but what enjoys the highest peace and contentment, and entertains the profoundest respect and submission.

"But there is that English nation, whose ruler is now a woman and then a man, its people at one time like birds and then like beasts, with dispositions more fierce and furious than the tiger or wolf, and hearts more greedy than the snake or hog—this people has ever stealthily devoured all the southern barbarians, and like the demon of the night they now suddenly exalt themselves. During the reigns of Kienlung and Kiaking these English barbarians humbly besought entrance and permission to make a present; they also presumptuously requested to have Chusan, but those divine personages, clearly perceiving their traitorous designs, gave them a peremptory refusal. From that time, linking themselves in with traitorous traders, they have privily





dwelt at Macao, trading largely in opium and poisoning our brave people. They have ruined lives—how many millions none can tell; and wasted property—how many thousands of millions who can guess! They have dared again and again to murder Chinese, and have secreted the murderers, whom they have refused to deliver up, at which the hearts of all men grieved and their heads ached. Thus it has been that for many years past the English, by their privily watching for opportunities in the country, have gradually brought things to the present crisis.

“In 1838, our great Emperor having fully learned all the crimes of the English and the poisonous effects of opium, quickly wished to restore the good condition of the country and compassionate the people. In consequence of the memorial of Hwang Tsioh-sz’, and in accordance to his request, he specially deputed the public-minded, upright, and clear-headed minister, Lin Tseh-sü, to act as his imperial commissioner with plenipotentiary powers, and go to Canton to examine and regulate. He came and took all the stored-up opium and stopped the trade, in order to cleanse the stream and cut off the fountain; kindness was mixed with his severity, and virtue was evident in his laws, yet still the English repented not of their errors, and as the climax of their contumacy called troops to their aid. The censor Hwang, by advising peace, threw down the barriers, and bands of audacious robbers willingly did all kinds of disreputable and villainous deeds. During the past three years these rebels, depending upon their stout ships and effective cannon, from Canton went to Fuhkien, thence to Chehkiang and on to Kiangsu, seizing our territory, destroying our civil and military authorities, ravishing our women, capturing our property, and bringing upon the inhabitants of these four provinces intolerable miseries. His Imperial Majesty was troubled and afflicted, and this added to his grief and anxiety. If you wish to purify their crimes, all the fuel in the Empire will not suffice, nor would the vast ocean be enough to wash out our resentment. Gods and men are alike filled with indignation, and Heaven and Earth cannot permit them to remain.

“Recently, those who have had the management of affairs in Kiangnan have been imitating those who were in Canton, and at the gates of the city they have willingly made an agreement, peeling off the fat of the people to the tune of hundreds of myriads, and all to save the precious lives of one or two useless officers; in doing which they have exactly verified what Chancellor Kin Ying-lin had before memorialized. Now these English rebels are barbarians dwelling in a petty island beyond our domains; yet their coming throws myriads of miles of country into turmoil, while their numbers do not exceed a few myriads. What can be easier than for our celestial dynasty to exert its fulness of power and exterminate these contemptible sea-going imps, just as the blast bends the pliant bamboo? But our highest officers and ministers cherish their precious lives, and civil and military men both dread a dog as they would a tiger; regardless of the enemies of their country or the griefs of the people, they have actually sundered the Empire and granted its wealth; acts more flagitious these than those of the traitors in the days of the Southern Sung dynasty, and the reasons for which are wholly beyond our



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comprehension. These English barbarians are at bottom without ability, and yet we have all along seen in the memorials that officers exalt and dilate upon their prowess and obstinacy; our people are courageous and enthusiastic, but the officers on the contrary say that they are dispirited and scattered: this is for no other reason than to coerce our prince to make peace, and then they will luckily avoid the penalty due for 'deceiving the prince and betraying the country.' Do you doubt? Then look at the memorial of Chancellor Kin Ying-lin, which says: 'They take the occasion of war to seek for self-aggrandizement;' every word of which directly points at such conduct as this.

"We have recently read in his Majesty's lucid mandate that 'There is no other way, and what is requested must be granted;' and that 'We have conferred extraordinary powers upon the ministers, and they have done nothing but deceive us.' Looking up we perceive his Majesty's clear discrimination and divine perception, and that he was fully aware of the imbecility of his ministers; he remembers too the loyal anger of his people. He has accordingly now temporarily settled all the present difficulties, but it is that, having matured his plans, he may hereafter manifest his indignation, and show to the Empire that it had not fathomed the divine awe-inspiring counsels.

"The dispositions of these rebellious English are like that of the dog or sheep, whose desires can never be satisfied; and therefore we need not inquire whether the peace now made be real or pretended. Remember that when they last year made disturbance at Canton they seized the Square fort, and thereupon exhibited their audacity, everywhere plundering and ravishing. If it had not been that the patriotic inhabitants dwelling in Hwaitsing and other hamlets, and those in Shingping, had not killed their leader and destroyed their devilish soldiers, they would have scrupled at nothing, taking and pillaging the city, and then firing it in order to gratify their vengeance and greediness: can we imagine that for the paltry sum of six millions of dollars they would, as they did, have raised the siege and retired? How to be regretted! That when the fish was in the frying-pan, the Kwangchau fu should come and pull away the firewood, let loose the tiger to return to the mountains, and disarm the people's indignation. Letting the enemy thus escape on one occasion has successively brought misery upon many provinces: whenever we speak of it, it wounds the heart and causes the tears to flow.

"Last year, when the treaty of peace was made, it was agreed that the English should withdraw from beyond Lankeet, that they should give back the forts near there and dwell temporarily at Hongkong, and that thenceforth all military operations were forever to cease. Who would have supposed that before the time stipulated had passed away they would have turned their backs upon this agreement, taken violent possession of the forts at the Bogue with their 'wooden dragons' [*i.e.*, ships of war]—and when they came upon the gates of the City of Rams with their powerful forces, who was there to oppose them? During these three years we have not been able to restore things as at first, and their deceptive craftiness, then confined to these regions, has rapidly extended itself to Kiangnan. But our high and mighty Emperor, pre-eminently intelligent and discerning [*lit.* grasping the golden mirror and holding the gemmeous balances], consents to demean himself to adopt soothing





counsels of peace, and therefore submissively accords with the decrees of Heaven. Having a suspicion that these outlandish people intended to encroach upon us, he has secretly arranged all things. We have respectfully read through all his Majesty's mandates, and they are as clear-sighted as the sun and moon ; but those who now manage affairs are like one who, supposing the raging fire to be under, puts himself as much at ease as swallows in a court, but who, if the calamity suddenly reappears, would be as defenceless as a grampus in a fish-market. The law adjudges the penalty of death for betraying the country, but how can even death atone for their crimes ? Those persons who have been handed down to succeeding ages with honor, and those whose memories have been execrated, are but little apart on the page of righteous history ; let our rulers but remember this, and we think they also must exert themselves to recover their characters. We people have had our day in times of great peace, and this age is one of abundant prosperity ; scholars are devising how to recompense the kindness of the government, nor can husbandmen think of forgetting his Majesty's exertions for them. Our indignation was early excited to join battle with the enemy, and we then all urged one another to the firmest loyalty.

“ We have heard the English intend to come into Pearl River and make a settlement ; this will not, however, stop at Chinese and foreigners merely dwelling together, for men and beasts cannot endure each other ; it will be like opening the door and bowing in the thief, or setting the gate ajar and letting the wolf in. While they were kept outside there were many traitors within ; how much more, when they encroach even to our bedsides, will our troubles be augmented ? We cannot help fearing it will eventuate in something strange, which words will be insufficient to express. If the rulers of other states wish to imitate the English, with what can their demands be waived ? Consequently, the unreasonable demands of the English are going to bring great calamity upon the people and deep sorrow to the country. If we do not permit them to dwell with us under the same heaven, our spirits will feel no shame ; but if we willingly consent to live with them, we may in truth be deemed insensate.

“ We have reverently read in the imperial mandate, ‘ There must indeed be some persons among the people of extraordinary wisdom or bravery, who can stir them up to loyalty and patriotism or unite them in self-defence ; some who can assist the government and army to recover the cities, or else defend passes of importance against the robbers ; some who can attack and burn their vessels, or seize and bring the heads of their doltish leaders ; or else some with divine presence and wisdom, who can disclose all their silly counsels and get to themselves a name of surpassing merit and ability and receive the highest rewards. We can confer,’ etc., etc. We, the people, having received the imperial words, have united ourselves together as troops, and practise the plan of joining hamlets and villages till we have upward of a million of troops, whom we have provisioned according to the scale of estimating the produce of respective farms ; and now we are fully ready and quite at ease as to the result. If nothing calls us, then each one will return to his own occupation ; but if the summons come, joining our strength in force we



will incite each other to effort ; our brave sons and brothers are all animated to deeds of arms, and even our wives and daughters, finical and delicate as jewels, have learned to discourse of arms. At first, alas, those who guarded the passes were at ease and careless, and the robbers came unbidden and undesired ; but now [if they come], we have only zealously to appoint each other to stations, and suppress the rising of the waves to the stillest calm [*i.e.*, to exterminate them]. When the golden pool is fully restored to peace, and his Majesty's anxiety for the south relieved ; when the leviathan has been driven away, then will our anger, comparable to the broad ocean and high heavens, be pacified.

“ Ah ! We here bind ourselves to vengeance, and express these our sincere intentions in order to exhibit great principles ; and also to manifest Heaven's retribution and rejoice men's hearts, we now issue this patriotic declaration. The high gods clearly behold : do not lose your first resolution.”<sup>1</sup>

This spirited paper was subsequently answered by the party desirous of peace, but the anti-English feeling prevailed, and the committee appointed by the meeting set the English consulate on fire a few days after, to prevent it being occupied. There were many reasons at the time for this dislike ; its further exhibition, however, ended with this attack, and has now pretty much died out with the rising of a new generation.

The many secret associations existing among the people are mostly of a political character, but have creeds like religious sects, and differ slightly in their tenets and objects of worship. They are traceable to the system of clans, which giving the people at once the habit and spirit for associations, are easily made use of by clever men for their own purposes of opposition to government. Similar grievances, as local oppression, hatred of the Manchus, or hope of advantage, add to their numbers and strength, and were they founded on a full acquaintance with the grounds of a just resistance to despotism, they would soon overturn the government ; but as out of an adder's egg only a cockatrice can be hatched, so until the people are enlightened with regard to their just rights, no permanent melioration can be expected. It is against that leading feature in the Manchu policy, *isolation*, that these societies sin, which further prompts to systematic efforts to suppress them. The only objection

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. XI., p. 630.





the supreme government seems to have against the religion of the people is that it brings them together; they may be Buddhists, Rationalists, Jews, Mohammedans, or Christians, apparently, if they will worship in secret and apart. On the other hand, the people naturally connect some religious rites with their opposition and cabals in order to more securely bind their members together.

The name of the most powerful of these associations is mentioned in Section CLXII. of the code for the purpose of interdicting it; since then it has apparently changed its designation from the *Pih-lien kiao*, or 'Water-lily sect,' to the *Tien-ti hwui* or *San-hoh hwui*, i.e., 'Triad society,' though both names still exist, the former in the northern, the latter in the maritime provinces and Indian Archipelago; their ramifications take also other appellations. The object of these combinations is to overturn the reigning dynasty, and in putting this prominently forward they engage many to join them. About the beginning of the century a wide-spread rebellion broke out in the north-western and middle provinces, which was put down after eight years' war, attended with desolation and bloodshed; since that time the Water-lily sect has not been so often spoken of. The Triad society has extended itself along the coasts, but it is not popular, owing more than anything else to its illegality, and the intimidation and oppression employed toward those who will not join it. The members have secret regulations and signs, and uphold and assist each other both in good and bad acts, but, as might be inferred from their character, screening evil doers from just punishment oftener than relieving distressed members. The original designs of the association may have been good, but what was allowable in them soon degenerated into a systematic plan for plunder and aim at power. The government of Hongkong enacted in 1845 that any Chinese living in that colony who was ascertained to belong to the Triad society should be declared guilty of felony, be imprisoned for three years, and after branding expelled the colony. These associations, if they cause the government much trouble by interfering with its operations, in no little degree, through the overbearing conduct of the leaders, uphold it by showing



the people what may be expected if they should ever get the upper hand.'

The evils of mal-administration are to be learned chiefly from the memorials of censors, and although they may color their statements a little, very gross inaccuracies would be used to their own disadvantage, and contradicted by so many competitors, that most of their statements may be regarded as having some foundation. An unknown person in Kwangtung memorialized the Emperor in 1838 concerning the condition of that province, and drew a picture of the extortions of the lower agents of government that needs no illustrations to deepen its darkness or add force to its complaints. An extract from each of the six heads into which the memorial is divided will indicate the principal sources of popular insurrection in China, besides the exhibition they give of the tyranny of the officers.

In his preface, after the usual laudation of the beneficence and popularity of the monarch, the memorialist proceeds to express his regret that the imperial desires for the welfare of his subjects should be so grievously thwarted by the villany of his officers. After mentioning the calamities which had visited the province in the shape of freshets, insurrections, and conflagrations, he says that affairs generally had become so bad as to compel his Majesty to send commissioners to Canton repeatedly in order to regulate them. "If such as this be indeed the state of things," he inquires, "what wonder is it if habits of plunder characterize the people, or the clerks and under officers of the public courts, as well as village pettifoggers, lay themselves out on all occasions to stir up quarrels and instigate false accusations against the good?" He recommends reform in six departments, under each of which he thus specifies the evils to be remedied:

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<sup>1</sup> Compare Dr. Milne, in *Transactions R. A. S. of Gr. Brit. and Irel.*, Vol. I., p. 240 (1825). *Journal of the R. A. S.*, Vol. I., p. 93, and Vol. VI., p. 120. *Chinese Repository*, Vol. XVIII., pp. 280-295. A. Wylie, in the *Shanghai Almanac for 1854*. *Notes and Queries on C. and J.*, Vol. III., p. 55. T. T. Meadows, *The Chinese and their Rebellions*, London, 1856. Gustave Schlegel, *Thian Ti Hwui, the Hung-League or Heaven-Earth-League. A Secret Society with the Chinese in China and India*, Batavia, 1866.





*First.*—In the department of police there is great negligence and delay in the decision of judicial cases. Cases of plunder are very common, most of which are committed by banditti under the designations of Triad societies, Heaven and Earth brotherhoods, etc. These men carry off persons to extort a ransom, falsely assume the character of policemen, and in simulated revenue cutters pass up and down the rivers, plundering the boats of travellers and forcibly carrying off the women. Husbandmen are obliged to pay these robbers an “indemnity,” or else as soon as the crops are ripe they come and carry off the whole harvest. In the precincts of the metropolis, where their contiguity to the tribunals prevents their committing depredations in open day, they set fire to houses during the night, and under the pretence of saving and defending the persons and property carry off both of them; hence, of late years, calamitous fires have increased in frequency, and the bands of robbers multiplied greatly. In cases of altercations among the villagers, who can only use their local patois, it rests entirely with the clerks to interpret the evidence; and when the magistrate is lax or pressed with business, they have the evidence pre-arranged and join with bullies and strife-makers to subvert right and wrong, fattening themselves upon bribes extorted under the names of “memoranda of complaints,” “purchases of replies,” etc., and retarding indefinitely the decision of cases. They also instigate thieves to bring false accusations against the good, who are thereby ruined by legal expenses. While the officers of the government and the people are thus separated, how can it be otherwise than that appeals to the higher tribunals should be increased and litigation and strife prevail?

*Second.*—Magistrates overrate the taxes with a view to a deduction for their own benefit, and excise officers connive at non-payment. The revenue of Kwangtung is paid entirely in money, and the magistrates, instead of taking the commutation at a regular price of about five dollars for one hundred and fifty pounds of rice, have compelled the people to pay nine dollars and over, because the inundation and bad harvests had raised the price of grain. In order to avoid this extortion the police go to the villagers and demand a *douceur*, when they will get them



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off from all payment. But the imperial coffers are not filled by this means, and the people are by and by forced to pay up their arrearages, even to the loss of most of their possessions.

*Third.*—There is great mismanagement of the granaries, and instead of being any assistance to the people in time of scarcity, they are only a source of speculation for those who are charged with their oversight.

*Fourth.*—The condition of the army and navy is a disgrace; illicit traffic is not prevented, nor can insurrections be put down. The only care of the officers is to obtain good appointments, and reduce the actual number of soldiers below the register in order that they may appropriate the stores. The cruisers aim only to get fees to allow the prosecution of the contraband traffic, nor will the naval officers bestir themselves to recover the property of plundered boats, but rather become the protectors of the lawless and partakers of their booty. Robberies are so common on the rivers that the traders from the island of Hainan, and Chauchau near Fuhkien, prefer to come by sea, but the revenue cutters overhaul them under pretence of searching for contraband articles, and practise many extortions.

*Fifth.*—The monopoly of salt needs to be guarded more strictly, and the private manufacture of salt stopped, for thereby the revenue from this source is materially diminished.

*Sixth.*—The increase of smuggling is so great, and the evils flowing from it so multiplied, that strong measures must be taken to repress it. Traitorous Chinese combine with depraved foreigners to set the laws at defiance, and dispose of their opium and other commodities for the pure silver. In this manner the country is impoverished and every evil arises, the revenues of the customs are diminished by the unnecessary number of persons employed and by the fees they receive for connivance. If all these abuses can be remedied, "it will be seen that when there are men to rule well, nothing can be found beyond the reach of their government."

The chief efforts of officials are directed to put down banditti, and maintain such a degree of peace as will enable them to collect the revenue and secure the people in the quiet possession of their property; but the people are too ready to resist their





rulers, and this brings into operation a constant struggle of opposing desires. One side gets into the habit of resisting even the proper requisitions of the officers, who, on their part, endeavor in every way to reimburse their outlay in bribes to their superiors; and the combined action of the two proves an insurmountable impediment to the attainment of even that degree of security a Chinese officer wishes. The general commission of robbery and dakoity, and the prevalence of bands of thieves, therefore proves the weakness of the government, not the insurrectionary disposition of the people. In one district of Hupeh the governor reported in 1828 that "very few of the inhabitants have any regular occupation, and their dispositions are exceedingly ferocious; they fight and kill each other on every provocation. In their villages they harbor thieves who flee from other districts, and sally forth again to plunder." In the northern parts of Kwangtung the people have erected high and strongly built houses to which they flee for safety from the attacks of robbers. These bands sometimes fall upon each other, and the feudal animosities of clanship adding fuel and rage to the rivalry of partisan warfare, the destruction of life and property is great. Occasionally the people zealously assist their rulers to apprehend them, though their exertions depend altogether upon the energy of the incumbent; an officer in Fuhkien is recommended for promotion because he had apprehended one hundred and seventy-three persons, part of a band of robbers which had infested the department for years, and tried and convicted one thousand one hundred and sixty criminals, most or all of whom were probably executed.

In 1821 there were four hundred robbers taken on the borders of Fuhkien; in 1827 two hundred were seized in the south of the province, and forty-one more brought to Canton from the eastward. The governor offered \$1,000 reward for the capture of one leader, and \$3,000 for another. The judge of the province put forth a proclamation upon the subject in the same year, in which he says there were four hundred and thirty undecided cases of robbery by brigands then on the calendar; and in 1846 there were upward of two thousand waiting his decision, for each of which there were perhaps five or



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six persons in prison or under constraint until the case was settled. These bands prowl in the large cities and commit great cruelties. In 1830 a party of five hundred openly plundered a rich man's house in the western suburbs of Canton; and in Shunteh, south of the city, \$600 were paid for the ransom of two persons carried off by them. The ex-governor, in 1831, was attacked by them near the Mei ling pass on his departure from Canton, and plundered of about ten thousand dollars. The magistrates of Hiangshan district, south of Canton, were ordered by their superiors the same year to apprehend five hundred of the robbers. Priests sometimes harbor gangs in their temples and divide the spoils with them, and occasionally go out themselves on predatory excursions. No mercy is shown these miscreants when they are taken, but the multiplication of executions has no effect in deterring them from crime.

Cruelty to individual prisoners does not produce so much disturbance to the general peace of the community as the forcible attempts of officers to collect taxes. The people have the impression that their rulers exact more than is legal, and consequently consider opposition to the demands of the tax-gatherer as somewhat justifiable, which compels, of course, more stringent measures on the part of the authorities, whose station depends not a little on their punctuality in remitting the taxes. Bad harvests, floods, or other public calamities render the people still more disinclined to pay the assessments. In 1845 a serious disturbance arose near Ningpo on this account, which with unimportant differences could probably be paralleled in every prefecture in the land. The people of Funghwa hien having refused to pay an onerous tax, the prefect of Ningpo seized three literary men of the place, who had been deputed to collect it, and put them in prison; this procedure so irritated the gentry that the candidates at the literary examination which occurred at Funghwa soon afterward, on being assembled at the public hall before the *chihien*, rose upon him and beat him severely. They were still further incensed against him from having recently detected him in deceitful conduct regarding a petition they had made at court to have their taxes lightened; he had kept the answer and pocketed the difference. He was





consequently superseded by another magistrate, and a deputy of the intendant of circuit was sent with the new incumbent to restore order. But the deputy, full of his importance, carried himself so haughtily that the excited populace treated him in the same manner, and he barely escaped with his life to Ningpo. The intendant and prefect, finding matters rising to such a pitch, sent a detachment of twelve hundred troops to keep the peace, but part of these were decoyed within the walls and attacked with such vigor that many of them were made prisoners, a colonel and a dozen privates killed, and two or three hundred wounded or beaten, and all deprived of their arms. In this plight they returned to Ningpo, and, as the distance is not great, apprehensions were entertained lest the insurgents should follow up their advantage by organizing themselves and marching upon the city to seize the prefect. The officers sent immediately to Hangchau for assistance, from whence the governor sent a strong force of ten thousand men to restore order, and soon after arrived himself. He demanded three persons to be given up who had been active in fomenting the resistance, threatening in case of non-compliance that he would destroy the town; the prefect and his deputy from the intendant's office were suspended and removed to another post. These measures restored quiet to a considerable extent.<sup>1</sup>

The existence of such evils in Chinese society would rapidly disorganize it were it not for the conservative influence upon society of early education and training in industry. The government takes care to avail itself of this better element in public opinion, and grounds thereon a basis of action for the establishment of good order. But this, and ten thousand similar instances, only exhibit more strongly how great a work there is to be done before high and low, people and rulers, will understand their respective duties and rights; before they will, on the one hand, pay that regard to the authority of their rulers which is necessary for the maintenance of good order, and, on the other, resist official tyranny in preserving their own liberties.

If the character of the officers, therefore, be such as has been

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<sup>1</sup> *Missionary Chronicle*, Vol. XIV., p. 140. *Smith's China*, p. 250.



briefly shown—open to bribery, colluding with criminals, sycophantic toward superiors, and cruel to the people; and the constituents of society present so many repulsive features—opposing clans engaged in deadly feuds, bandits scouring the country to rob, policemen joining to oppress, truth universally disregarded, selfishness the main principle of action, and almost every disorganizing element but imperfectly restrained from violent outbreaks and convulsions, it will not be expected that the regular proceedings of the courts and the execution of the laws will prove on examination to be any better than the materials of which they are composed. As civil and criminal cases are all judged by one officer, one court tries nearly all the questions which arise. A single exception is provided for in the code, wherein it is ordered that “in cases of adultery, robbery, fraud, assaults, breach of laws concerning marriage, landed property or pecuniary contracts, or any other like offences committed by or against individuals in the military class—if any of the people are implicated or concerned, the military commanding officer and the civil magistrate shall have a concurrent jurisdiction.”<sup>1</sup>

At the bottom of the judicial scale are the village elders. This incipient element of the democratic principle has also existed in India in much the same form; but while its power ended in the local eldership there, in China it is only the lowest step of the scale. The elders give character to the village, and are expected to manage its public affairs, settle disputes among its inhabitants, arrange matters with other villages, and answer to the magistrates on its behalf. The code provides that all persons having complaints and informations address themselves in the first instance to the lowest tribunal of justice in the district, from which the cognizance of the affair may be transferred to the superior tribunals. The statement of the case is made in writing, and the officer is required to act upon it immediately; if the parties are dissatisfied with the award, the judgment of the lower courts is carried up to the superior ones. No case can

<sup>1</sup> For cases of this sort in Cambodia, Rémusat makes mention of a variety of ordeals which curiously resemble those resorted to on the continent of Europe during the Middle Ages. *Nouveaux Mélanges*, Tome I., p. 126.



be carried directly to the Emperor; it must go through the Board of Punishments; old men and women, however, sometimes present petitions to him on his journeys, but such appeals seldom occur, owing to the difficulty of access. The captains in charge of the gates of Peking, in 1831, presented a memorial upon the subject, in which they attribute the number of appeals to the obstinacy of many persons in pressing their cases and the remissness of local officers, so that even women and girls of ten years of age take long journeys to Peking to state their cases. The memorialists recommend that an order be issued requiring the two high provincial officers to adjudicate all cases, either themselves or by a court of errors, and not send the complainants back to the district magistrates. These official porters must have been much troubled with young ladies coming to see his Majesty, or perhaps were advised to present such a paper to afford a text for the Emperor to preach from; to confer such power upon the governor and his associates would almost make them the irresponsible sovereigns of the provinces. Appeals frequently arise out of delay in obtaining justice, owing to the amount of business in the courts; for the calendar may be expected to increase when the magistrate leaves his post to curry favor with his superiors. The almost utter impossibility of learning the truth of the case brought before them, either from the principal parties or the witnesses, must be borne in mind when deciding upon the oppressive proceedings of the magistrates to elicit the truth. Mention is made of one officer promoted for deciding three hundred cases in a year; again of a district magistrate who tried upward of a thousand within the same period; while a third revised and decided more than six hundred in which the parties had appealed. What becomes of the appeals in such cases, or whose decision stands, does not appear; but if such proceedings are common, it accounts for the constant practice of sending appeals back to be revised, probably after a change in the incumbent.

Few or no civil cases are reported in the *Gazette* as being carried up to higher courts, and probably only a small proportion of them are brought before the authorities, the rest being settled by reference. Appeals to court receive attention, and it



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may be inferred, too, that many of them are mentioned in the *Gazette* in order that the carefulness of the supreme government in revising the unjust decrees against the people should be known through the country, and this additional check to malversation on the part of the lower courts be of some use. Many cases are reported of widows and daughters, sons and nephews, of murdered persons, to whom the revenge of kindred rightly belongs, appealing against the unjust decrees of the local magistrates, and then sent back to the place they came from; this, of course, was tantamount to a *nolle prosequi*. At other times the wicked judges have been degraded and banished. One case is reported of a man who found his way to the capital from Fuh-kien to complain against the magistracy and police, who protected a clan by whom his only son had been shot, in consideration of a bribe of \$2,000. His case could not be understood at Peking in consequence of his local pronouncement, which indicates that all cases are not reported in writing. One appeal is reported against the governor of a province for not carrying into execution the sentence of death passed on two convicted murderers; and another appellant requests that two persons, who were bribed to undergo the sentence of the law instead of the real murderers, might not be substituted—he, perhaps, fearing their subsequent vengeance.

All officers of government are supposed to be accessible at any time, and the door of justice to be open to all who claim a hearing; and in fact, courts are held at all hours of night and day, though the regular time is from sunrise to noonday. The style of address varies according to the rank; *tajin*, or magnate, for the highest, *ta laoyé*, or great Sir, and *laoyé*, Sir, for the lower grade, are the most common. A drum is said to be placed at the inferior tribunals, as well as before the Court of Representation in Peking, which the plaintiff strikes in order to make his presence known, though from the number of hangers-on about the doors of official residences, the necessity of employing this mode of attracting notice is rare. At the gate of the governor-general's palace are placed six tablets, having appropriate inscriptions for those who have been wronged by wicked officers; for those who have suffered from thieves; for persons



falsely accused ; for those who have been swindled ; for such as have been grieved by other parties ; and lastly, for those who have secret information to impart. The people, however, are aware how useless it would be to inscribe their appeals upon these tablets ; they write them out and carry them up to his excellency, or to the proper official—seldom forgetting the indispensable present.

Magistrates are not allowed to go abroad in ordinary dress and without their official retinue, which varies for the different grades of rank. The usual attendants of the district magistrates are lictors with whips and chains—significant of the punishments they inflict ; they are preceded by two gong-



Mode of Carrying High Officers in Sedan.

bearers, who every few moments strike a certain number of raps to intimate their master's rank, and by two avant-couriers, who howl out an order for all to make room for the great man. A servant bearing aloft a *lo*, or state umbrella (of which a drawing is given on the title-page), also goes before him, further to increase his display and indicate his rank.<sup>1</sup> A subaltern usually runs by the side of his sedan, and his secretary and messengers, seated in more ordinary chairs or following on foot, make up the cortége. The highest officers are carried by eight bearers, others by four, and the lowest by two. Lanterns are used at night and red tablets in the daytime, to indicate his rank. Officers of higher ranks are attended by a few soldiers

<sup>1</sup> Heeren informs us that a similar insignia was used in Persia in early days.



in addition, and in the capital are required to have mounted attendants if they ride in carts ; those who bear the sedan are usually in a uniform of their master's devising. The parade and noise seen in the provinces are all hushed in Peking, where the presence of majesty subdues the glory of the officers which it has created. When in court the officer sits behind a desk upon which are placed writing materials ; his secretaries, clerks, and interpreters being in waiting, and the lictors with their instruments of punishment and torture standing around. Persons who are brought before him kneel in front of the tribunal. His official seal, and cups containing tallies which are thrown down to indicate the number of blows to be given the culprits, stand upon the table, and behind his seat a *kí-lin*, or unicorn, is depicted on the wall. There are inscriptions hanging around the room, one of which exhorts him to be merciful. There is little pomp or show, either in the office or attendants, compared with our notions of what is usual in such matters among Asiatics. The former is a dirty, unswept, tawdry room, and the latter are beggarly and impertinent.

No counsel is allowed to plead, but the written accusations, pleas, or statements required must be prepared by licensed notaries, who may also read them in court, and who, no doubt, take opportunity to explain circumstances in favor of their client. These notaries buy their situations, and repay themselves by a fee upon the documents ; they are the only persons who are analogous to the lawyers in western countries, and most of them have the reputation of extorting largely for their services. Of course there is no such thing as a jury, or a chief justice stating the case to associate judges to learn their opinion ; nor is anything like an oath required of the witnesses.

The presiding officer can call in others to assist him in the trial to any extent he pleases. In one Canton court circular it is stated that no less than sixteen officers assisted the governor-general and governor in the trial of one criminal. The report of the trial is as summary as the recital of the bench of judges is minute : "H. E. Gov. Tǎng arrived to join the futai in examining a criminal ; and at 8 A.M., under a salute of guns, the doors of the great hall of audience were thrown open, and their





PRISONER CONDEMNED TO THE CANGUE, IN COURT  
 (His son praying to take his place.)



excellencies took their seats, supported by all the other functionaries assembled for the occasion. The police officers of the judge were then directed to bring forward the prisoner, Yeh A-shun, a native of Tsingyuen hien; he was forthwith brought in, tried, and led out. The futai then requested the imperial death-warrant, and sent a deputation of officers to conduct the criminal to the market-place and there decapitate him. Soon after the officers returned, restored the death-warrant to its place, and reported that they had executed the criminal." The prisoner, or his friends for him, are allowed to appear in every step of the inquiry prior to laying the case before the Emperor, and punishment is threatened to all the magistrates through whose hands it passes if they neglect the appeal; but this extract shows the usage of the courts.

The general policy of officers is to quash cases and repress appeals, and probably they do so to a great degree by bringing extorted confessions of the accused party and the witnesses in proof of the verdict. Governor Li of Canton issued a prohibition in 1834 against the practice of old men and women presenting petitions—complaining of the nuisance of having his chair stopped in order that a petition might be forced into it, and threatening to seize and punish the presumptuous intruders if they persisted in this custom. He instructs the district magistrates to examine such persons, to ascertain who pushed them forward, and to punish the instigators, observing, "if the people are impressed with a due dread of punishment, they will return to respectful habits." It seems to be the constant effort on the part of the officers to evade the importunities of the injured and shove by justice, and were it not owing to the perseverance of the people, a system of irremediable oppression would soon be induced. But the poor have little chance of being heard against the rich, and if they do appeal they are in most cases remanded to the second judgment of the very officer against whom they complain; and of course as this is equivalent to a refusal from the high grades to right them at all, commotions gradually grow out of it, which are managed according to the exigencies of the case by those who are likely to be involved in their responsibility. The want of an irresistible



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police to compel obedience has a restraining effect on the rulers, who know that Lynch law may perhaps be retaliated upon them if they exasperate the people too far. A prefect was killed in Chauchau fu some years ago for his cruelty, and the people excused their act by saying that it was done because the officer had failed to carry out the Emperor's good rule, and they would not endure it longer. Amid such enormities it is no wonder if the peaceably disposed part of the community prefer to submit in silence to petty extortions and robberies, rather than risk the loss of all by unavailing complaints.

The code contains many sections regulating the proceedings of courts, and provides heavy punishments for such officers as are guilty of illegalities or cruelty in their decisions, but the recorded cases prove that most of these laws are dead letters. Section CCCCXVI. ordains that "after a prisoner has been tried and convicted of any offence punishable with temporary or perpetual banishment or death, he shall, in the last place, be brought before the magistrate, together with his nearest relations and family, and informed of the offence whereof he stands convicted, and of the sentence intended to be pronounced upon him in consequence; their acknowledgment of its justice or protest against its injustice, as the case may be, shall then be taken down in writing: and in every case of their refusing to admit the justice of the sentence, their protest shall be made the ground of another and more particular investigation." All capital cases must be reviewed by the highest authorities at the metropolis and in the provinces, and a final report of the case and decision submitted to the Emperor's notice. Section CCCCXV. requires that the law be quoted when deciding. The numerous wise and merciful provisions in the code for the due administration of justice only place the conduct of its authorized executives in a less excusable light, and prove how impossible it is to procure an equitable magistracy by mere legal requirements and penalties.

The confusion of the civil and criminal laws in the code, and the union of both functions in the same person, together with the torture and imprisonment employed to elicit a confession, serve as an indication of the state of legislation and jurispru-





dence. The common sense of a truthful people would revolt against the infliction of torture to get out the true deposition of a witness, and their sense of honor would resist the disgraceful exposure of the cangue for not paying debts. As the want of truth among a people indicates a want of honor, the necessity of more stringent modes of procedure suggests the practice of torture; its application is allowed and restricted by several sections of the code, but in China, as elsewhere, it has always been abused. Torture is practised upon both criminals and witnesses, in court and in prison; and the universal dread among the people of coming before courts, and having anything to do with their magistrates, is owing in great measure to the illegal sufferings they too often must endure. It has also a powerful deterrent effect in preventing crime and disorder. Neither imprisonment nor torture are ranked among the five punishments, but they cause more deaths, probably, among arrested persons than all other means.

Among the modes of torture employed in court, and reported in the *Gazette*, are some revolting to humanity, but which of them are legal does not appear. The clauses under Section I. in the code describe the legal instruments of torture; they consist of three boards with proper grooves for compressing the ankles, and five round sticks for squeezing the fingers, to which may be added the bamboo; besides these no instruments of torture are legally allowed, though other ways of putting the question are so common as to give the impression that some of them at least are sanctioned. Pulling or twisting the ears with roughened fingers, and keeping them in a bent position while making the prisoner kneel on chains, or making him kneel for a long time, are among the illegal modes. Striking the lips with sticks until they are nearly jellied, putting the hands in stocks before or behind the back, wrapping the fingers in oiled cloth to burn them, suspending the body by the thumbs and fingers, tying the hands to a bar under the knees, so as to bend the body double, and chaining by the neck close to a stone, are resorted to when the prisoner is contumacious. One magistrate is accused of having fastened up two criminals to boards by nails driven through their palms; one of them tore his hands



loose and was nailed up again, which caused his death ; using beds of iron, boiling water, red hot spikes, and cutting the tendon Achilles are also charged against him, but the Emperor exonerated him on account of the atrocious character of the criminals. Compelling them to kneel upon pounded glass, sand, and salt mixed together, until the knees become excoriated, or simply kneeling upon chains is a lighter mode of the same infliction. Mr. Milne mentions seeing a wretch undergoing this torture, his hands tied behind his back to a stake held in its position by two policemen ; if he swerved to relieve the agony of his position, a blow on his head compelled him to resume it. The agonies of the poor creature were evident from his quivering lips, his pallid and senseless countenance, and his tremulous voice imploring relief, which was refused with a cold, mocking command, "Suffer or confess."<sup>1</sup>

Flogging is one of the five authorized punishments, but it is used more than any other means to elicit confession ; the bamboo, rattan, cudgel, and whip are all employed. When death ensues the magistrate reports that the criminal died of sickness, or hushes it up by bribing his friends, few of whom are ever allowed access within the walls of the prison to see and comfort the sufferers. From the manner in which such a result is spoken of it may be inferred that immediate death does not often take place from torture. A magistrate in Sz'chuen being abused by a man in court, who also struck the attendants, ordered him to be put into a coffin which happened to be near, when suffocation ensued ; he was in consequence dismissed the service, punished one hundred blows, and transported three years. One check on outrageous torture is the fear that the report of their cruelty will come to the ears of their superiors, who are usually ready to avail of any mal-administration to get an officer removed, in order to fill the post. In this case, as in other parts of Chinese government, the dread of one evil prevents the commission of another.

The five kinds of punishment mentioned in the code are from ten to fifty blows with the lesser bamboo, from fifty to

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<sup>1</sup> W. C. Milne, *Life in China*, London, 1857, p. 99.



one hundred with the greater, transportation, perpetual banishment, and death, each of them modified in various ways. The small bamboo weighs about two pounds, the larger two and two-thirds pounds. Public exposure in the *kia*, or cangue, is considered rather as a kind of censure or reprimand than a punishment, and carries no disgrace with it, nor comparatively much bodily suffering if the person be fed and screened from the sun. The frame weighs between twenty and thirty pounds, and is so made as to rest upon the shoulders without chafing the neck, but so broad as to prevent the person feeding himself. The name, residence, and offence of the delinquent are written upon it for the information of every passer-by, and a policeman is stationed over him to prevent escape. Branding is applied to deserters and banished persons. Imprisonment and fines are not regarded as legal punishments, but rather correctives; and flogging, as Le Comte says, "is never wanting, there being no condemnation in China without this previous disposition, so that it is unnecessary to mention it in their condemnation; this being always understood to be their first dish." When a man is arrested he is effectually prevented from breaking loose by putting a chain around his neck and tying his hands.



Mode of Exposure in the Cangue.

Most punishments are redeemable by the payment of money if the criminal is under fifteen or over seventy years of age, and a table is given in the code for the guidance of the magistrate in such cases. An act of grace enables a criminal con-



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demned even to capital punishment to redeem himself, if the offence be not one of wilful malignity ; but better legislation would have shown the good effects of not making the punishments so severe. It is also ordered in Section XVIII., that “ any offender under sentence of death for a crime not excluded from the contingent benefit of an act of grace, who shall have infirm parents or grandparents alive over seventy years of age, and no other male child over sixteen to support them, shall be recommended to the mercy of his Majesty ; and if only condemned to banishment, shall receive one hundred blows and redeem himself by a fine.” Many atrocious laws may be forgiven for one such exhibition of regard for the care of decrepid parents. Few governments exhibit such opposing principles of actions as the Chinese : a strange blending of cruelty to prisoners with a maudlin consideration of their condition, and a constant effort to coax the people to obedience while exercising great severity upon individuals, are everywhere manifest. One who has lived in the country long, however, knows well that they are not to be held in check by rope-yarn laws or whimpering justices, and unless the rulers are a terror to evil-doers, the latter will soon get the upper hand. Dr. Field well considers this point in his interesting notes describing his visit to a *yamun* at Canton.<sup>1</sup> The general prosperity of the Empire proves in some measure the equity of its administration.

Banishment and slavery are punishments for minor official delinquencies, and few officers who live long in the Emperor's employ do not take an involuntary journey to Mongolia, Turkestan, or elsewhere, in the course of their lives. The fates and conduct of banished criminals are widely unlike ; some doggedly serve out their time, others try to ingratiate themselves with their masters in order to alleviate or shorten the time of service, while hundreds contrive to escape and return to their homes, though this subjects them to increased punishment. Persons banished for treason are severely dealt with if they return without leave, and those convicted of crime in their

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. H. M. Field, *From Egypt to Japan*, Chap. XXIV., passim. New York, 1877. *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., pp. 214, 260.



place of banishment are increasingly punished; one man was sentenced to be outlawed for an offence at his place of banishment, but seeing that his aged mother had no other support than his labor, the Emperor ordered that a small sum should be paid for her living out of the public treasury. Whipping a man through the streets as a public example to others is frequently practised upon persons detected in robbery, assault, or some other minor offences. The man is manacled, and one policeman goes before him carrying a tablet, on which are



Publicly Whipping a Thief through the Streets.

written his name, crime, and punishment, accompanied by another holding a gong. In some cases little sticks bearing flags are thrust through his ears, and the licitor appointed to oversee the fulfilment of the sentence follows the executioner, who strikes the criminal with his whip or rattan as the rap on the gong denotes that the appointed number is not yet complete.

Decapitation and strangling are the legal modes of executing criminals, though Kí Kung having taken several incendiaries at Canton, in 1843, who were convicted of firing the city for purposes of plunder, starved them to death in the public squares of



the city. The least disgraceful mode of execution is strangulation, which is performed by tying a man to a post and tightening the cord which goes round his neck by a winch ; the infliction is very speedy, and apparently less painful than hanging. The least crime for which death is awarded appears to be a third and aggravated theft, and defacing the branding inflicted for former offences. Decollation is considered more disgraceful than strangling, owing to the dislike the Chinese have of dissevering the bodies which their parents gave them entire. There are two modes of decapitation, that of simple decollation being considered, again, as less disgraceful than being "cut into ten thousand pieces," as the phrase *ling chih* has been rendered. The military officer who superintends the execution is attended by a guard, to keep the populace from crowding upon the limits and prevent resistance on the part of the prisoners. The bodies are given up to the friends, except when the head is exposed as a warning in a cage where the crime was committed. If no one is present to claim the corpse it is buried in the public pit. The criminals are generally so far exhausted that they make no resistance, and submit to their fate without a groan—much more, without a dying speech to the spectators. In ordinary cases the executions are postponed until the autumnal assize, when the Emperor revises and confirms the sentences of the provincial governors ; criminals guilty of extraordinary offences, as robbery attended with murder, arson, rape, breaking into fortifications, highway robbery, and piracy, may be immediately beheaded without reference to court, and as the expense of maintenance and want of prison room are both to be considered, it is the fact that criminals condemned for one or other of these crimes comprise the greater part of the unREFERRED executions in the provinces.

It is impossible to ascertain the number of persons executed in China, for the life of a condemned criminal is thought little of ; in the court circular it is merely reported that "the execution of the criminals was completed," without mentioning their crimes, residences, or names. At the autumnal revises at Peking the number sentenced is given in the *Gazette* ; 935 were sentenced in 1817, of which 133 were from the province of





Kwangtung; in 1826 there were 581; in 1828 the number was 789, and in the next year 579 names were marked off, none of whose crimes, it is inferrible, are included in the list of offences mentioned above. The condemnations are sent from the capital by express, and the executions take place immediately. Most of the persons condemned in a province are executed in its capital, and to hear of the death of a score or more of felons on a single day is no uncommon thing. The trials are more speedy than comports with our notions of justice, and the executions are performed in the most summary manner. It is reported on one occasion that the governor-general of Canton ascended his judgment-seat, examined three prisoners brought before him, and having found them guilty, condemned them, asked himself for the death-warrant (for he temporarily filled the office of governor), and, having received it, had the three men carried away in about two hours after they were first brought before him. A few days after he granted the warrant to execute a hundred bandits in prison. During the terrible rebellion in Kwangtung, in 1854-55, the prisoners taken by the Imperialists were usually transported to Canton for execution. In a space of fourteen months, up to January, 1856, about eighty-three thousand malefactors suffered death in that city alone, besides those who died in confinement; these men were arrested and delivered to execution by their countrymen, who had suffered untold miseries through their sedition and rapine.

When taken to execution the prisoners are clothed in clean clothes.<sup>1</sup> A military officer is present, and the criminals are brought on the ground in hod-like baskets hanging from a pole borne of two, or in cages, and are obliged to kneel toward the Emperor's residence, or toward the death-warrant, which indicates his presence, as if thanking their sovereign for his care. The list is read aloud and compared with the tickets on the prisoners; as they kneel, a licitor seizes their pinioned hands and jerks them upward so that the head is pushed down horizontally, and a single down stroke with the heavy hanger severs

<sup>1</sup> Persons who commit suicide also dress themselves in their best, the common notion being that in the next world they will wear the same garments in which they died.



it from the neck. In the slow and ignominious execution, or *ling chih*, the criminal is tied to a cross and hacked to pieces; the executioner is nevertheless often hired to give the coup-de-grace at the first blow. It is not uncommon for him to cut out the gall-bladder of notorious robbers and sell it, to be eaten as a specific for courage. There is an official executioner besides the real one, the latter being sometimes a criminal taken out of the prisons.

Probably the number of persons who suffer by the sword of the executioner is not one-half of those who die from the effects of torture and privations in prisons. Not much is known of the internal arrangement of the *hells*, as prisons are called; they seem to be managed with a degree of kindness and attention to the comfort of the prisoners, so far as the intentions of government are concerned, but the cruelties of the turnkeys and older prisoners to exact money from the new comers are terrible. In Canton there are jails in the city under the control of four different officers, the largest covering about an acre, and capable of holding upward of five hundred prisoners. Since it is the practice of distant magistrates to send their worst prisoners up to the capital, these jails are not large enough, and jail distempers arise from over-crowding; two hundred deaths were reported in 1826 from this and other causes, and one hundred and seventeen cases in 1831. Private jails were hired to accommodate the number, and one governor reports having found twenty-two such places in Canton where every kind of cruelty was practised. The witnesses and accusers concerned in appellate causes had, he says, also been brought up to the city and imprisoned along with the guilty party, where they were kept months without any just reason. In one case, where a defendant and plaintiff were imprisoned together, the accuser fell upon the other and murdered him. Sometimes the officer is unable from press of business to attend to a case, and confines all the principals and witnesses concerned until he can examine them, but the government takes no means to provide for them during the interval, and many of the poorer ones die. No security or bail is obtainable on the word of a witness or his friends, so that if unable to fee the jailers he is in nearly as bad a case as the





criminal. Extending bail to an accused criminal is nearly unknown, but female prisoners are put in charge of their husbands or parents, who are held responsible for their appearance. The constant succession of criminals in the provincial head prison renders the posts of jailers and turnkeys very lucrative. The letters of the Roman Catholic missionaries from China during the last century, found in the *Lettres Édifiantes* and *Annales de la Foi*, contain many sad pictures of the miseries of prison life there.

The prisons are arranged somewhat on the plan of a large stable, having an open central court occupying nearly one-fourth of the area, and small cribs or stalls covered by a roof extending nearly around it, so contrived that each company of prisoners shall be separated from its neighbors on either side night and day, though more by night than by day. The prisoners cook for themselves in the court, and are secured by manacles and gyves, and a chain joining the hands to the neck; one hand is liberated in the daytime in order to allow them to take care of themselves. Heinous criminals are more heavily ironed, and those in the prisons attached to the judge's office are worse treated than the others. Each criminal should receive a daily ration of two pounds of rice, and about two cents with which to buy fuel, but the jailer starves them on half this allowance if they are unable to fee him; clothing is also scantily provided, but those who have money can procure almost every convenience. Each crib full of criminals is under the control of a turnkey, who with a few old offenders spends much time torturing newly arrived persons to force money from them, by which many lose their lives, and all suffer far more in this manner than they do from the officers of government. Well may the people call their prisons hells, and say, when a man falls into the clutches of the jailers or police, "the flesh is under the cleaver."

There are many processes for the recovery of debts and fulfilment of contracts, some legal and others customary, the latter depending upon many circumstances irrelevant to the merits of the case. The law allows that debtors be punished by bambooing according to the amount of the debt. A creditor often resorts to illegal means to recover his claim, which give rise to



many excesses ; sometimes he quarters himself upon the debtor's family or premises, at others seizes him or some of his family and keeps them prisoners, and, in extreme cases, sells them. Unscrupulous debtors are equally skilful and violent in eluding, cheating, and resisting their incensed creditors, according as they have the power. They are liable, when three months have expired after the stipulated time of payment, to be bamboosed, and their property attached. In most cases, however, disputes of this sort are settled without recourse to government, and if the debtor is really without property, he is not imprisoned till he can procure it. The effects of absconding debtors are seized and divided by those who can get them. Long experience, moreover, of each other's characters has taught them, in contracting debts, to have some security at the outset, and therefore in settling up there is not so much loss as might be supposed considering the difficulty of collecting debts. Accusations for libel, slander, breach of marriage contract, and other civil or less criminal offences are not all brought before the authorities, but are settled by force or arbitration among the people themselves and their elders.

The nominal salaries of Chinese officers have already been stated (p. 294). It is a common opinion among the people that on an average they receive about ten times their salaries ; in some cases they pay thirty, forty and more thousand dollars beforehand for the situation. One encouragement to the harassing vexations of the official secretaries and police is the dislike of the people to carry their cases before officers who they know are almost compelled to fleece and peel them ; they think it cheaper and safer to bear a small exaction from an underling than run the risk of a greater from his master.

If the preventives against popular violence which the supreme government has placed around itself could be strengthened by an efficient military force, its power would be well secured indeed ; but then, as in Russia, it would probably become, by degrees, an intolerable tyranny. The troops are, in fact, everywhere present, ostensibly to support the laws, protect the innocent, and punish the guilty ; such of them as are employed by the authorities as guards and policemen are, on the





whole, efficient and courteous, though miserably paid, while the regiments in garrison are contemptible to both friend and foe.

The efficacy of the system of checks upon the high courts and provincial officers is increased by their intrigues and conflicting ambition, and long experience has shown that the Emperor's power has little to fear from proconsular rebellion. The inefficiency of the army is a serious evil to the people in one respect, for more power in that arm would repress banditti and pirates; while the sober part of the community would coöperate in a hearty effort to quell them. The greatest difficulty the Emperor finds in upholding his authority lies in the general want of integrity in the officers he employs; good laws may be made, but he has few upright agents to execute them. This has been abundantly manifested in the laws against opium and gambling; no one could be found to carry them into execution, though everybody assented to their propriety.

The chief security on the side of the people against an unmitigated oppression such as now exists in Turkey, besides those already pointed out, lies as much as anywhere in their general intelligence of the true principles on which the government is founded and should be executed. With public opinion on its side the government is a strong one, but none is less able to execute its designs when it runs counter to that opinion, although those designs may be excellent and well intended. Elements of discord are found in the social system which would soon effect its ruin were they not counteracted by other influences, and the body politic goes on like a heavy, shakily, lumbering van, which every moment threatens a crashing, crumbling fall, yet goes on still tottering, owing to the original goodness of its construction. From the enormous population of this ancient van, it is evident that any attempt to remodel it must seriously affect one or the other of its parts, and that when once upset it may be impossible to reconstruct it in its original form. There is encouragement to hope that the general intelligence and shrewdness of the government and people of China, their language, institutions, industry, and love of peace, will all act as powerful conservative influences in working out the changes which cannot now be long delayed; and that she will



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maintain her unity and industry while going through a thorough reform of her political, social, and religious systems.

It is very difficult to convey to the reader a fair view of the administration of the laws in China. Notwithstanding the cruelty of officers to the criminals before them, they are not all to be considered as tyrants; because insurrections arise, attended with great loss of life, it must not be supposed that society is everywhere disorganized; the Chinese are so prone to falsify that it is difficult to ascertain the truth, yet it must not be inferred that every sentence is a lie; selfishness is a prime motive for their actions, yet charity, kindness, filial affection, and the unbought courtesies of life still exist among them. Although there is an appalling amount of evil and crime in every shape, it is mixed with some redeeming traits; and in China, as elsewhere, good and bad are intermingled. Some of the evils in the social system arise from the operation of the principles of mutual responsibility, while this very feature produces sundry good effects in restraining people who have no higher motive than the fear of injuring the innocent. We hear so much of the shocking cruelties of courts and prisons that the vast number of cases before the bench are all supposed to exhibit the same fatiguing reiteration of suffering, injustice, bribery, and cruelty. One must live in the country to see how the antagonistic principles found in Chinese society act and react upon each other, and are affected by the wicked passions of the heart. Officers and people are bad almost beyond belief to one conversant only with the courtesy, justice, purity, and sincerity of Christian governments and society; and yet we think they are not as bad as the old Greeks and Romans, and have no more injustice or torture in their courts, nor impurity or mendacity in their lives. As in our own land we are apt to forget that the recitals of crimes and outrages which the daily papers bring before our eyes furnish no index of the general condition of society, so in China, where that condition is immeasurably worse, we must be mindful that this is likewise true.





## CHAPTER IX.

## EDUCATION AND LITERARY EXAMINATIONS.

AMONG the points relating to the Chinese people which have attracted the attention of students in the history of intellectual development, their long duration and literary institutions have probably taken precedence. To estimate the causes of the first requires much knowledge of the second; and from them one is gradually led onward to an examination of the government, religion, and social life of this people in the succeeding epochs of their existence. The inquiry will reveal much that is instructive, and show us that, if they have not equalled many other nations in the arts and adornments of life, they have attained a high degree of comfort and developed much that is creditable in education, the science of rule, and security of life and property.

Although the powers of mind exhibited by the greatest writers in China are confessedly inferior to those of Greece and Rome for genius and original conceptions, the good influence exerted by them over their countrymen is far greater, even at this day, than was ever obtained by western sages, as Plato, Aristotle, or Seneca. The thoroughness of Chinese education, the purity and effectiveness of the examinations, or the accuracy and excellency of the literature must not be compared with those of modern Christian countries, for there is really no common measure between the two; they must be taken with other parts of Chinese character, and comparisons drawn, if necessary, with nations possessing similar opportunities. The importance of generally instructing the people was acknowledged even before the time of Confucius, and practised to a good degree at an age when other nations in the world had no such system; and



although in his day feudal institutions prevailed, and offices and rank were not attainable in the same manner as at present, on the other hand magistrates and noblemen deemed it necessary to be well acquainted with their ancient writings. It is said in the *Book of Rites* (B.C. 1200), "that for the purposes of education among the ancients, villages had their schools, districts their academies, departments their colleges, and principalities their universities." This, so far as we know, was altogether superior to what obtained among the Jews, Persians, and Syrians of the same period.

The great stimulus to literary pursuits is the hope thereby of obtaining office and honor, and the only course of education followed is the classical and historical one prescribed by law. Owing to this undue attention to the classics, the minds of the scholars are not symmetrically trained, and they disparage other branches of literature which do not directly advance this great end. Every department of letters, except jurisprudence, history, and official statistics, is disesteemed in comparison; and the literary graduate of fourscore will be found deficient in most branches of general learning, ignorant of hundreds of common things and events in his national history, which the merest schoolboy in the western world would be ashamed not to know in his. This course of instruction does not form well-balanced minds, but it imbues the future rulers of the land with a full understanding of the principles on which they are to govern, and the policy of the supreme power in using those principles to consolidate its own authority.

Centralization and conservatism were the leading features of the teachings of Confucius which first recommended them to the rulers, and have decided the course of public examinations in selecting officers who would readily uphold these principles. The effect has been that the literary class in China holds the functions of both nobles and priests, a perpetual association, *gens aeterna in qua nemo nascitur*, holding in its hands public opinion and legal power to maintain it. The geographical isolation of the people, the nature of the language, and the absence of a landed aristocracy, combine to add efficiency to this system; and when the peculiarities of Chinese character,



and the nature of the class-books which do so much to mould that character, are considered, it is impossible to devise a better plan for insuring the perpetuity of the government, or the contentment of the people under that government.

It was about A.D. 600, that Taitung, of the Tang dynasty, instituted the present plan of preparing and selecting civilians by means of study and degrees, founding his system on the facts that education had always been esteemed, and that the ancient writings were accepted by all as the best instructors of the manners and tastes of the people. According to native historians, the rulers of ancient times made ample provision for the cultivation of literature and promotion of education in all its branches. They supply some details to enable us to understand the mode and the materials of this instruction, and glorify it as they do everything ancient, but probably from the want of authentic accounts in their own hands, they do not clearly describe it. The essays of M. Édouard Biot on the *History of Public Instruction in China*, contains well-nigh all the information extant on this interesting subject, digested in a very lucid manner. Education is probably as good now as it ever was, and its ability to maintain and develop the character of the people as great as at any time; it is remarkable how much it really has done to form, elevate, and consolidate their national institutions. The Manchu monarchs were not at first favorably disposed to the system of examinations, and frowned upon the literary hierarchy who claimed all honors as their right; but the next generation saw the advantages and necessity of the *concours*, in preserving its own power.

Boys commence their studies at the age of seven with a teacher; for, even if the father be a literary man he seldom instructs his sons, and very few mothers are able to teach their offspring to read. Maternal training is supposed to consist in giving a right direction to the morals, and enforcing the obedience of the child; but as there are few mothers who do more than compel obedience by commands, or by the rod, so there are none who can teach the infantile mind to look up to its God in prayer and praise.

Among the many treatises for the guidance of teachers, the



*Siao Hioh*, or 'Juvenile Instructor,' is regarded as most authoritative. When establishing the elements of education, this book advises fathers to "choose from among their concubines those who are fit for nurses, seeking such as are mild, indulgent, affectionate, benevolent, cheerful, kind, dignified, respectful, and reserved and careful in their conversation, whom they will make governesses over their children. When able to talk, lads must be instructed to answer in a quick, bold tone, and girls in a slow and gentle one. At the age of seven, they should be taught to count and name the cardinal points; but at this age the sexes should not be allowed to sit on the same mat nor eat from the same table. At eight, they must be taught to wait for their superiors, and prefer others to themselves. At ten, the boys must be sent abroad to private tutors, and there remain day and night, studying writing and arithmetic, wearing plain apparel, learning to demean themselves in a manner becoming their age, and acting with sincerity of purpose. At thirteen, they must attend to music and poetry; at fifteen, they must practise archery and charioteering. At the age of twenty, they are in due form to be admitted to the rank of manhood, and learn additional rules of propriety, be faithful in the performance of filial and fraternal duties, and though they possess extensive knowledge, must not affect to teach others. At thirty, they may marry and commence the management of business. At forty, they may enter the service of the state; and if their prince maintains the reign of reason, they must serve him, but otherwise not. At fifty, they may be promoted to the rank of ministers; and at seventy, they must retire from public life."

Another injunction is, "Let children always be taught to speak the simple truth; to stand erect and in their proper places, and listen with respectful attention." The way to become a student, "is, with gentleness and self-abasement, to receive implicitly every word the master utters. The pupil, when he sees virtuous people, must follow them, when he hears good maxims, conform to them. He must cherish no wicked designs, but always act uprightly; whether at home or abroad, he must have a fixed residence, and associate with the benevolent, carefully regulating his personal deportment, and controlling the feelings



of his heart. He must keep his clothes in order. Every morning he must learn something new, and rehearse the same every evening." The great end of education, therefore, among the ancient Chinese, was not so much to fill the head with knowledge, as to discipline the heart and purify the affections. One of their writers says, "Those who respect the virtuous and put away unlawful pleasures, serve their parents and prince to the utmost of their ability, and are faithful to their word; these, though they should be considered unlearned, we must pronounce to be educated men." Although such terms as purity, filial affection, learning, and truth, have higher meanings in a Christian education than are given them by Chinese masters, the inculcation of them in any degree and so decided a manner does great credit to the people, and will never need to be superseded—only raised to a higher grade.<sup>1</sup>

In intercourse with their relatives, children are taught to attend to the minutest points of good breeding; and are instructed in everything relating to their personal appearance, making their toilet, saluting their parents, eating, visiting, and other acts of life. Many of these directions are trivial even to puerility, but they are none too minute in the ideas of the Chinese, and still form the basis of good manners, as much as they did a score of centuries ago; and it can hardly be supposed that Confucius would have risked his influence upon the grave publication of trifles, if he had not been well acquainted with the character of his countrymen. Yet nothing is trifling which conduces to the growth of good manners among a people, though it may not have done all that was wished.<sup>2</sup>

Rules are laid down for students to observe in the prosecution of their studies, which reflect credit on those who set so high a standard for themselves. Dr. Morrison has given a synopsis of a treatise of this sort, called the 'Complete Collection of Family Jewels,' and containing a minute specification of

<sup>1</sup> Compare Du Halde, *Description de l'Empire de la Chine*, Tome II., pp. 365-384; A. Wylie, *Notes*, p. 68; *Chinese Repository*, Vols. V., p. 81, and VI., pp. 185, 393, and 562; *China Review*, Vol. VI., pp. 120, 195, 253, 328, etc.; *New Englander*, May, 1878.

<sup>2</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., pp. 83-87, 306-316.



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duties to be performed by all who would be thorough students. The author directs the tyro to form a fixed resolution to press forward in his studies, setting his mark as high as possible, and thoroughly understanding everything as he goes along. "I have always seen that a man who covets much and devotes himself to universal knowledge, when he reads he presumes on the quickness and celerity of his genius and perceptions, and chapters and volumes pass before his eyes, and issue from his mouth as fluently as water rolls away; but when does he ever apply his mind to rub and educe the essence of a subject? In this manner, although much be read, what is the use of it? Better little and fine, than much and coarse." He also advises persons to have two or three good volumes lying on their tables, which they can take up at odd moments, and to keep commonplace books in which they can jot down such things as occur to them. They should get rid of distracting thoughts if they wish to advance in their studies; as "if a man's stomach has been filled by eating greens and other vegetables, although the most precious dainties with exquisite tastes should be given him, he cannot swallow them, he must first get rid of a few portions of the greens; so in reading, the same is true of the mixed thoughts which distract the mind, which are about the dusty affairs of a vulgar world." The rules given by these writers correspond to those laid down among ourselves, in such books as Todd's *Manual for Students*, and reveal the steps which have given the Chinese their intellectual position.<sup>1</sup>

For all grades of scholars, there is but one mode of study; the imitative nature of the Chinese mind is strikingly exhibited in the few attempts on the part of teachers to improve upon the stereotyped practice of their predecessors, although persons of as original minds as the country affords are constantly engaged in education. When the lad commences his studies, an impressive ceremony takes place—or did formerly, for it seems to have fallen into desuetude: the father leads his son to the teacher, who kneels down before the name of some one or other of the ancient sages, and supplicates their blessing upon his

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<sup>1</sup> Morrison's *Chinese Dictionary*, Vol. I., Part I., pp. 749–758.



pupil; after which, seating himself, he receives the homage and petition of the lad to guide him in his lessons.<sup>1</sup> As is the case in Moslem countries, a present is expected to accompany this initiation into literary pursuits. In all cases this event is further marked by giving the lad his *shu ming* or 'book name,' by which he is called during his future life. The furniture of the school merely consists of a desk and a stool for each pupil, and an elevated seat for the master, for maps, globes, blackboards, diagrams, etc., are yet to come in among its articles of furniture. In one corner is placed a tablet or an inscription on the wall, dedicated to Confucius and the god of Letters; the sage is styled the 'Teacher and Pattern for All Ages,' and incense is constantly burned in honor of them both.

The location of school-rooms is usually such as would be considered bad elsewhere, but by comparison with other things in China, is not so. A mat shed which barely protects from the weather, a low, hot upper attic of a shop, a back room in a temple, or rarely a house specially built for the purpose, such are the school-houses in China. The chamber is hired by the master, who regulates his expenses and furnishes his apartment according to the number and condition of his pupils; their average number is about twenty, ranging between ten and forty in day schools, and in private schools seldom exceeding ten. The most thorough course of education is probably pursued in the latter, where a well-qualified teacher is hired by four or five persons living in the same street, or mutually related by birth or marriage, to teach their children at a stipulated salary. In such cases the lads are placed in bright, well-aired apartments, superior to the common school-room. The majority of teachers have been unsuccessful candidates for literary degrees, who having spent the prime of their days in fruitless attempts to attain office, are unfit for manual labor, and unable to enter on mercantile life. In Canton, a teacher of twenty boys receives from half a dollar to a dollar per month from each pupil; in country villages, three, four or five dollars a year are given, with the addition, in most cases, of a small present of eatables

<sup>1</sup> This custom obtains also in Bokhara.



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from each scholar three or four times a year. Private tutors receive from \$150 to \$350 or more per annum, according to particular engagement. There are no boarding-schools, nor anything answering to infant schools; nor are public or charity schools established by government, or by private benevolence for the education of the poor.

The first hours of study are from sunrise till ten A.M., when the boys go to breakfast; they reassemble in an hour or more, and continue at their books till about five P.M., when they disperse for the day. In summer, they have no lessons after dinner, but an evening session is often held in the winter, and evening schools are occasionally opened for mechanics and others who are occupied during the day. When a boy comes into school in the morning, he bows reverentially before the tablet of Confucius, salutes his teacher, and then takes his seat. The vacations during the year are few; the longest is before new year, at which time the engagement is completed, and the school closes, to be reöpened after the teacher and parents have made a new arrangement. The common festivals, of which there are a dozen or more, are regarded as holydays, and form very necessary relaxations in a country destitute of the rest of the Sabbath. The requisite qualifications of a teacher are gravity, severity, and patience, and acquaintance with the classics; he has only to teach the same series of books in the same fashion in which he learned them himself and keep a good watch over his charge.

When the lads come together at the opening of the school, their attainments are ascertained; the teacher endeavors to have his pupils nearly equal in this respect, but inasmuch as they are all put to precisely the same tasks, a difference is not material. If the boys are beginners, they are brought up in a line before the desk, holding the *San-tsz' King*, or 'Trimetrical Classic,' in their hands, and taught to read off the first lines after the teacher until they can repeat them without help. He calls off the first four lines as follows:

*Jin chí tsu, sing pun shen ;*  
*Sing siang kin, sih siang yuen ;*





when his pupils simultaneously cry out :

*Jin chi tsu, sing pun shen ;  
Sing siang kin, sih siang yuen.*

Mispronunciations are corrected until each can read the lesson accurately ; they are then sent to their seats to commit the sounds to memory. As the sounds are all entire words (not letters, nor syllables, of which they have no idea), the boys are not perplexed, as ours are, with symbols which have no meaning. All the children study aloud, and when one is able to recite the task, he is required to *back* it—come up to the master's desk, and stand with his back toward him while rehearsing it.

The *San-tsz' King* was compiled by Wang Pih-hao of the Sung dynasty (A. D. 1050) for his private school. It contains ten hundred and sixty-eight words, and half that number of different characters, arranged in one hundred and seventy-eight double lines. It has been commented upon by several persons, one of whom calls it “a ford which the youthful inquirer may readily pass, and thereby reach the fountain-head of the higher courses of learning, or a passport into the regions of classical and historical literature.” This hornbook begins with the nature of man, and the necessity and modes of education, and it is noticeable that the first sentence, the one quoted above, which a Chinese learns at school, contains one of the most disputed doctrines in the ancient heathen world :

“Men at their birth, are by nature radically good ;  
Though alike in this, in practice they widely diverge.  
If not educated, the natural character grows worse ;  
A course of education is made valuable by close attention.  
Of old, Mencius' mother selected a residence,  
And when her son did not learn, cut out the [half-wave] web.  
To nurture and not educate is a father's error ;  
To educate without rigor shows a teacher's indolence.  
That boys should not learn is an unjust thing ;  
For-if they do not learn in youth, what will they do when old ?  
As gems unwrought serve no useful end,  
So men untought will never know what right conduct is.”

The importance of filial and fraternal duties are then inculcated by precept and example, to which succeeds a synopsis of



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the various branches of learning in an ascending series, under several heads of numbers ; the three great powers, the four seasons and four cardinal points, the five elements and five constant virtues, the six kinds of grain and six domestic animals, the seven passions, the eight materials for music, nine degrees of kindred, and ten social duties. A few extracts will exhibit the mode in which these subjects are treated.

“There are three powers,—heaven, earth, and man.  
There are three lights,—the sun, moon, and stars.  
There are three bonds,—between prince and minister, justice ;  
Between father and son, affection ; between man and wife, concord.

Humanity, justice, propriety, wisdom, and truth,—  
These five cardinal virtues are not to be confused.  
Rice, millet, pulse, wheat, sorghum, millet grass,  
Are six kinds of grain on which men subsist.

Mutual affection of father and son, concord of man and wife ;  
The older brother's kindness, the younger one's respect ;  
Order between seniors and juniors, friendship among associates ;  
On the prince's part regard, on the minister's true loyalty ;—  
These ten moral duties are ever binding among men.”

To this technical summary succeed rules for a course of academical studies, with a list of the books to be learned, and the order of their use, followed by a synopsis of the general history of China, in an enumeration of the successive dynasties. The work concludes with incidents and motives to learning drawn from the conduct of ancient sages and statesmen, and from considerations of interest and glory. The examples cited are curious instances of pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, and form an inviting part of the treatise.

“Formerly Confucius had young Hiang Toh for his teacher ;  
Even the sages of antiquity studied with diligence.  
Chau, a minister of state, read the Confucian Dialogues,  
And he too, though high in office, studied assiduously.  
One copied lessons on reeds, another on slips of bamboo ;  
These, though without books, eagerly sought knowledge.  
[To vanquish sleep] one tied his head [by the hair] to a beam, and another  
pierced his thigh with an awl ;  
Though destitute of instructors, these were laborious in study.  
One read by the glowworm's light, another by reflection from snow ;



These, though their families were poor, did not omit to study.  
 One carried faggots, and another tied his books to a cow's horn,  
 And while thus engaged in labor, studied with intensity.  
 Su Lau-tsiuen, when he was twenty-seven years old  
 Commenced close study, and applied his mind to books;  
 This man, when old, *grieved* that he commenced so late;  
 You who are young must early think of these things.  
 Behold Liang Hau, at the ripe age of eighty-two,  
 In the imperial hall, amongst many scholars, gains the first rank;  
 This he accomplished, and all regarded him a prodigy;  
 You, my young readers, should now resolve to be diligent.  
 Yung, when only eight years old, could recite the Odes;  
 And Pí, at the age of seven, understood the game of chess;  
 These displayed ability, and all deemed them to be rare men;  
 And you, my hopeful scholars, ought to imitate them.  
 Tsai Wán-ki could play upon stringed instruments;  
 Sié Tau-wán, likewise, could sing and chant;  
 These two, though girls, were bright and well informed;  
 You, then, my lads, should surely rouse to diligence.  
 Liu Ngan of Tang, when only seven years old,  
 Proving himself a noble lad, was able to correct writing:  
 He, though very young, was thus highly promoted.  
 You, young learners, strive to follow his example,  
 For he who does so, will acquire like honors.

“Dogs watch by night; the cock announces the morning;  
 If any refuse to learn, how can they be esteemed men?  
 The silkworm spins silk, the bee gathers honey;  
 If men neglect to learn, they are below the brutes.  
 He who learns in youth, to act wisely in mature age,  
 Extends his influence to the prince, benefits the people,  
 Makes his name renowned, renders his parents honorable;  
 Reflects glory on his ancestors, and enriches his posterity.  
 Some for their offspring, leave coffers filled with gold;  
 While I to teach children, leave this one little book.  
 Diligence has merit; play yields no profit;  
 Be ever on your guard! Rouse all your energies!”

These quotations illustrate the character of the *Trimetrical Classic*, and show its imperfections as a book for young minds. It is a syllabus of studies rather than a book to be learned, and ill suited to entice the boy on in his tasks by giving him mental food in an attractive form. Yet its influence has been perhaps as great as the classics during the last four dynasties, from its general use in primary schools, where myriads of lads have “backed” it who have had no leisure to study much



more, and when they had crossed this ford could travel no farther. The boy commences his education by learning these maxims; and by the time he has got his degree—and long before, too—the highest truths and examples known in the land are more deeply impressed on his mind than are ever Biblical truths and examples on graduates of Yale, Oxford, Heidelberg or the Sorbonne. Well was it for them that they had learned nothing in it which they had better forget, for its deficiencies, pointed out by Bridgman in his translation, should not lead us to overlook its suggestive synopsis of principles and examples. The commentary explains them very fully, and it is often learned as thoroughly as the text. Many thousands of tracts containing Christian truths written in the same style and with the same title, have been taught with good effect in the mission schools in China.<sup>1</sup>

The next hornbook put into the boy's hands is the *Pih Kia Sing*, or 'Century of Surnames.' It is a list of the family or clan names commonly in use. Its acquisition also gives him familiarity with four hundred and fifty-four common words employed as names, a knowledge, too, of great importance lest mistakes be made in choosing a wrong character among the scores of homophonous characters in the language. For instance, out of eighty-three common words pronounced *kí*, six only are clan names, and it is necessary to have these very familiar in the daily intercourse of life. The nature of the work forbids its being studied, but the usefulness of its contents probably explains its position in this series.<sup>2</sup>

The third in the list is the *Tsien Tsz' Wán*, or 'Millenary Classic,' unique among all books in the Chinese language, and whose like could not be produced in any other, in that it consists

<sup>1</sup> Compare Dr. Morrison in the *Horæ Sinicæ*, pp. 122–146; B. Jenkins, *The Three-Character Classic, romanized according to the Shanghai dialect*, Shanghai, 1860. The Classic has also been translated into Latin, French, German, Russian, and Portuguese. For the Trimetrical Classic of the Tai-ping régime see a version in the *North China Herald*, No. 147, May 21, 1853, by Dr. Medhurst; also a translation by Rev. S. C. Malan, of Balliol College, Oxford. London, 1856.

<sup>2</sup> E. C. Bridgman in the *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., p. 152. *Livre de Cent familles*, Perny, *Dict.*, App., No. XIV., pp. 156 ff.





of just a thousand characters, no two of which are alike in form or meaning. The author, Chau Hing-tsz', flourished about A.D. 550, and according to an account given in the history of the Liang dynasty, wrote it at the Emperor's request, who had ordered his minister Wang Hi-chi to write out a thousand characters, and give them to him, to see if he could make a connected ode with them. This he did, and presented his performance to his majesty, who rewarded him with rich presents in token of his approval. Some accounts (in order that so singular a work might not want for corresponding wonders) add that he did the task in a single night, under the fear of condign punishment if he failed, and the mental exertion was so great as to turn his hair white. It consists of two hundred and fifty lines, in which rhyme and rhythm are both carefully observed, though there is no more poetry in it than in a multiplication table. The contents of the book are similar but more discursive than those of the *Trimetrical Classic*. Up to the one hundred and second line, the productions of nature and virtues of the early monarchs, the power and capacities of man, his social duties and mode of conduct, with instructions as to the manner of living, are summarily treated. Thence to the one hundred and sixty-second line, the splendor of the palace, and its high dignitaries, with other illustrious persons and places, are referred to. The last part of the work treats of private and literary life, the pursuits of agriculture, household government, and education, interspersed with some exhortations, and a few illustrations. A few disconnected extracts from Dr. Bridgman's translation<sup>1</sup> will show the mode in which these subjects are handled. The opening lines are,

"The heavens are sombre ; the earth is yellow ;  
The whole universe [at the creation] was one wide waste ;"

after which it takes a survey of the world and its products, and Chinese history, in a very sententious manner, down to the thirty-seventh line, which opens a new subject.

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., p. 229.



## THE MIDDLE KINGDOM.

“ Now this our human body is endowed  
 With four great powers and five cardinal virtues :  
 Preserve with reverence what your parents nourished,—  
 How dare you destroy or injure it ?  
 Let females guard their chastity and purity,  
 And let men imitate the talented and virtuous.  
 When you know your own errors then reform ;  
 And when you have made acquisitions do not lose them.  
 Forbear to complain of the defects of other people,  
 And cease to brag of your own superiority.  
 Let your truth be such as may be verified,  
 Your capacities, as to be measured with difficulty.

“ Observe and imitate the conduct of the virtuous,  
 And command your thoughts that you may be wise.  
 Your virtue once fixed, your reputation will be established ;  
 Your habits once rectified, your example will be correct.  
 Sounds are reverberated in the deep valleys,  
 And the vacant hall reëchoes all it hears ;  
 So misery is the penalty of accumulated vice,  
 And happiness the reward of illustrious virtue.

“ A cubit of jade stone is not to be valued,  
 But an inch of time you ought to contend for.

“ Mencius esteemed plainness and simplicity ;  
 And Yu the historian held firmly to rectitude.  
 These nearly approached the golden medium,  
 Being laborious, humble, diligent, and moderate.  
 Listen to what is said, and investigate the principles explained :  
 Watch men's demeanor, that you may distinguish their characters.  
 Leave behind you none but purposes of good ;  
 And strive to act in such a manner as to command respect.  
 When satirized and admonished examine yourself,  
 And do this more thoroughly when favors increase.

“ Years fly away like arrows, one pushing on the other ;  
 The sun shines brightly through his whole course.  
 The planetarium keeps on revolving where it hangs ;  
 And the bright moon repeats her revolutions.  
 To support fire, add fuel ; so cultivate the root of happiness,  
 And you will obtain eternal peace and endless felicity.”

The commentary on the *Thousand Character Classic* contains many just observations and curious anecdotes to explain this book, whose text is so familiar to the people at large that its lines or characters are used as labels instead of figures, as they take up less room. If Western scholars were as familiar with the acts and sayings of King Wăn, of Su Tsin, or of Kwan Chung, as they are with those of Sesostriis, Pericles, or Horace,



these incidents and places would naturally enough be deemed more interesting than they now are. But where the power of genius, or the vivid pictures of a brilliant imagination, are wanting to illustrate or beautify a subject, there is comparatively little to interest Europeans in the authors and statesmen of such a distant country and remote period.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth in this series, called *Yiu Hioh Shí-tieh*, or 'Odes for Children,' is written in rhymed pentameters, and contains only thirty-four stanzas of four lines. A single extract will show its character, which is, in general, a brief description and praise of literary life, and allusion to the changes of the season, and the beauties of nature.

It is of the utmost importance to educate children ;  
 Do not say that your families are poor,  
 For those who can handle well the pencil,  
 Go where they will, need never ask for favors.

One at the age of seven, showed himself a divinely endowed youth,  
 'Heaven,' said he, 'gave me my intelligence :  
 Men of talent appear in the courts of the holy monarch,  
 Nor need they wait in attendance on lords and nobles.

'In the morning I was an humble cottager,  
 In the evening I entered the court of the Son of Heaven :  
 Civil and military offices are not hereditary,  
 Men must, therefore, rely on their own efforts.

'A passage for the sea has been cut through mountains,  
 And stones have been melted to repair the heavens ;  
 In all the world there is nothing that is impossible ;  
 It is the heart of man alone that is wanting resolution.

'Once I myself was a poor indigent scholar,  
 Now I ride mounted in my four-horse chariot,  
 And all my fellow-villagers exclaim with surprise.'  
 Let those who have children thoroughly educate them.

The examples of intelligent youth rising to the highest offices of state are numerous in all the works designed for beginners,

<sup>1</sup> Compare *Das Tsiän dsü wen, oder Buch von Tausend Wörtern, aus dem Schinesischen, mit Berücksichtigung der Koraischen und Japanischen Uebersetzung, ins Deutsche übertragen*, Ph. Fr. de Siebold, *Nippon*, Abh. IV., pp. 165-191 ; B. Jenkins, *The Thousand-Character Classic, romanized*, etc. Shanghai, 1860 ; *Thsien-Tseu-Wen, Le Livre des Mille Mots*, etc., par Stanislas Julien (with Chinese text), Paris, 1864 ; *China Review*, Vol. II., pp. 182 ff.



and stories illustrative of their precocity are sometimes given in toy-books and novels. One of the most common instances is here quoted, that of Confucius and Hiang Toh, which is as well known to every Chinese as is the story of George Washington barking the cherry-tree with his hatchet to American youth.

“The name of Confucius was Yu, and his style Chungní; he established himself as an instructor in the western part of the kingdom of Lu. One day, followed by all his disciples, riding in a carriage, he went out to ramble, and on the road, came across several children at their sports; among them was one who did not join in them. Confucius, stopping his carriage, asked him, saying, ‘Why is it that you alone do not play?’ The lad replied, ‘All play is without any profit; one’s clothes get torn, and they are not easily mended; above me, I disgrace my father and mother; below me, even to the lowest, there is fighting and altercation; so much toil and no reward, how can it be a good business? It is for these reasons that I do not play.’ Then dropping his head, he began making a city out of pieces of tile.

“Confucius, reproving him, said, ‘Why do you not turn out for the carriage?’ The boy replied, ‘From ancient times till now it has always been considered proper for a carriage to turn out for a city, and not for a city to turn out for a carriage.’ Confucius then stopped his vehicle in order to discourse of reason. He got out of the carriage, and asked him, ‘You are still young in years, how is it that you are so quick?’ The boy replied, saying, ‘A human being, at the age of three years, discriminates between his father and his mother; a hare, three days after it is born, runs over the ground and furrows of the fields; fish, three days after their birth, wander in rivers and lakes; what heaven thus produces naturally, how can it be called brisk?’

“Confucius added, ‘In what village and neighborhood do you reside, what is your surname and name, and what your style?’ The boy answered, ‘I live in a mean village and in an insignificant land; my surname is Hiang, my name is Toh, and I have yet no style.’

“Confucius rejoined, ‘I wish to have you come and ramble with me; what do you think of it?’ The youth replied, ‘A stern father is at home, whom I am bound to serve; an affectionate mother is there, whom it is my duty to cherish; a worthy elder brother is at home, whom it is proper for me to obey, with a tender younger brother whom I must teach; and an intelligent teacher is there from whom I am required to learn. How have I leisure to go a rambling with you?’

“Confucius said, ‘I have in my carriage thirty-two chessmen; what do you say to having a game together?’ The lad answered, ‘If the Emperor love gaming, the Empire will not be governed; if the nobles love play, the government will be impeded; if scholars love it, learning and investigation will be lost and thrown by; if the lower classes are fond of gambling, they will utterly lose the support of their families; if servants and slaves love to game, they will get a cudgelling; if farmers love it, they miss the time for ploughing and sowing; for these reasons I shall not play with you.’

“Confucius rejoined, ‘I wish to have you go with me, and fully equalize



the Empire ; what do you think of this ?' The lad replied, 'The Empire cannot be equalized ; here are high hills, there are lakes and rivers ; either there are princes and nobles, or there are slaves and servants. If the high hills be levelled, the birds and beasts will have no resort ; if the rivers and lakes be filled up, the fishes and the turtles will have nowhere to go ; do away with kings and nobles, and the common people will have much dispute about right and wrong ; obliterate slaves and servants, and who will there be to serve the prince ! If the Empire be so vast and unsettled, how can it be equalized ?'

"Confucius again asked, 'Can you tell, under the whole sky, what fire has no smoke, what water no fish ; what hill has no stones, what tree no branches ; what man has no wife, what woman no husband ; what cow has no calf, what mare no colt ; what cock has no hen, what hen no cock ; what constitutes an excellent man, and what an inferior man ; what is that which has not enough, and what which has an overplus ; what city is without a market, and who is the man without a style ?'

"The boy replied, 'A glowworm's fire has no smoke, and well-water no fish ; a mound of earth has no stones, and a rotten tree no branches ; genii have no wives, and fairies no husbands ; earthen cows have no calves, nor wooden mares any colts ; lonely cocks have no hens, and widowed hens no cocks ; he who is worthy is an excellent man, and a fool is an inferior man ; a winter's day is not long enough, and a summer's day is too long ; the imperial city has no market, and little folks have no style.'

"Confucius inquiring said, 'Do you know what are the connecting bonds between heaven and earth, and what is the beginning and ending of the dual powers ? What is left, and what is right ; what is out, and what is in ; who is father, and who is mother ; who is husband, and who is wife. [Do you know] where the wind comes from, and from whence the rain ? From whence the clouds issue, and the dew arises ? And for how many tens of thousands of miles the sky and earth go parallel ?'

"The youth answering said, 'Nine multiplied nine times make eighty-one, which is the controlling bond of heaven and earth ; eight multiplied by nine makes seventy-two, the beginning and end of the dual powers. Heaven is father, and earth is mother ; the sun is husband, and the moon is wife ; east is left, and west is right ; without is out, and inside is in ; the winds come from Tsang-wu, and the rains proceed from wastes and wilds ; the clouds issue from the hills, and the dew rises from the ground. Sky and earth go parallel for ten thousand times ten thousand miles, and the four points of the compass have each their station.'

"Confucius asking, said, 'Which do you say is the nearest relation, father and mother, or husband and wife ?' The boy responded, 'One's parents are near ; husband and wife are not [so] near.'

"Confucius rejoined, 'While husband and wife are alive, they sleep under the same coverlet ; when they are dead they lie in the same grave ; how then can you say that they are not near ?' The boy replied, 'A man without a wife is like a carriage without a wheel ; if there be no wheel, another one is made, for he can doubtless get a new one ; so, if one's wife die, he seeks again, for he also can obtain a new one. The daughter of a worthy family must certainly marry an honorable husband ; a house having ten rooms always



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has a plate and a ridgepole ; three windows and six lattices do not give the light of a single door ; the whole host of stars with all their sparkling brilliancy do not equal the splendor of the solitary moon : the affection of a father and mother—alas, if it be once lost !

“Confucius sighing, said, ‘How clever ! how worthy !’ The boy asking the sage said, ‘You have just been giving me questions, which I have answered one by one ; I now wish to seek information ; will the teacher in one sentence afford me some plain instruction ? I shall be much gratified if my request be not rejected.’ He then said, ‘Why is it that mallards and ducks are able to swim ; how is it that wild geese and cranes sing ; and why are firs and pines green through the winter ?’ Confucius replied, ‘Mallards and ducks can swim because their feet are broad ; wild geese and cranes can sing because they have long necks ; firs and pines remain green throughout the winter because they have strong hearts.’ The youth rejoined, ‘Not so ; fishes and turtles can swim, is it because they all have broad feet ? Frogs and toads can sing, is it because their necks are long ? The green bamboo keeps fresh in winter, is it on account of its strong heart ?’

“Again interrogating, he said, ‘How many stars are there altogether in the sky ?’ Confucius replied, ‘At this time inquire about the earth ; how can we converse about the sky with certainty ?’ The boy said, ‘Then how many houses in all are there on the earth ?’ The sage answered, ‘Come now, speak about something that’s before our eyes ; why must you converse about heaven and earth ?’ The lad resumed, ‘Well, speak about what’s before our eyes—how many hairs are there in your eyebrows ?’

“Confucius smiled, but did not answer, and turning round to his disciples called them and said, ‘This boy is to be feared ; for it is easy to see that the subsequent man will not be like the child.’ He then got into his carriage and rode off.”<sup>1</sup>

Next in course to this rather trifling primer comes the *Hiao King*, or ‘Canons of Filial Duty,’ a short tractate of only 1,903 characters, which purports to be the record of a conversation held between Confucius and his disciple Tsāng Tsan on the principles of filial piety. Its authenticity has been disputed by critics, but their doubts are not shared by their countrymen, who commit it to memory as the words of the sage. The legend is that a copy was discovered in the wall of his dwelling, and compared with another secreted by Yen Chí at the burning of the books ; from the two Liu Hiang chose eighteen of the chapters contained in it as alone genuine, and in this shape it has since remained. The sixth section of the Imperial Catalogue is entirely devoted to writers on the *Hiao King*, one of whom was

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. X., p. 614.



Yuentsung, an emperor of the Tang dynasty (A.D. 733). Another comment was published in 32 volumes in Kanghi's reign, discussing the whole subject in one hundred chapters. Though it does not share in critical eyes the confidence accorded to the nine classics, the brevity and subject matter of this work have commended it to teachers as one of the best books in the language to be placed in the hands of their scholars; thus its influence has been great and enduring. It has been translated by Bridgman, who regards the first six sections as the words of Confucius, while the other twelve contain his ideas. Two quotations are all that need be here given to show its character.

SECTION I.—*On the origin and nature of filial duty.*—Filial duty is the root of virtue, and the stem from which instruction in the moral principle springs. Sit down, and I will explain this to you. The first thing which filial duty requires of us is, that we carefully preserve from all injury, and in a perfect state, the bodies which we have received from our parents. And when we acquire for ourselves a station in the world, we should regulate our conduct by correct principles, so as to transmit our names to future generations, and reflect glory on our parents. This is the ultimate aim of filial duty. Thus it commences in attention to parents, is continued through a course of services rendered to the prince, and is completed by the elevation of ourselves. It is said in the *Book of Odes*,

Ever think of your ancestors;  
 Reproducing their virtue.

SECTION V.—*On the attention of scholars to filial duty.*—With the same love that they serve their fathers, they should serve their mothers; and with the same respect that they serve their fathers, they should serve their prince; unmixed love, then, will be the offering they make to their mothers; unfeigned respect the tribute they bring to their prince; while toward their fathers both these will be combined. Therefore they serve their prince with filial duty and are faithful to him; they serve their superiors with respect and are obedient to them. By constant obedience and faithfulness toward those who are above them, they are enabled to preserve their stations and emoluments, and to offer the sacrifices which are due to their deceased ancestors and parents. Such is the influence of filial piety when performed by scholars. It is said in the *Book of Odes*,

When the dawn is breaking, and I cannot sleep,  
 The thoughts in my breast are of our parents.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare Père Cibot in *Mémoires concernant les Chinois*, Tome IV., pp. 1 ff.; Dr. Legge, *The Sacred Books of China*, Part I. *The Shû-king, Religious Portions of the Shih-king, the Hsiâo-king*, Oxford, 1879; *Asiatic Journal*, Vol. XXIX., pp. 302 ff., 1839.



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The highest place in the list of virtues and obligations is accorded to filial duty, not only in this, but in other writings of Confucius and those of his school. "There are," to quote from another section, "three thousand crimes to which one or the other of the five kinds of punishment is attached as a penalty; and of these no one is greater than disobedience to parents. When ministers exercise control over the monarch, then there is no supremacy; when the maxims of the sages are set aside, then the law is abrogated; and so those who disregard filial duty are as though they had no parents. These three evils prepare the way for universal rebellion."

This social virtue has been highly lauded by all Chinese writers, and its observance inculcated upon youth and children by precept and example. Stories are written to show the good effects of obedience, and the bad results of its contrary sin, which are put into their hands, and form also subjects for pictorial illustration, stanzas for poetry, and materials for conversation. The following examples are taken from a toy-book of this sort, called the *Twenty-four Filials*, one of the most popular collections on the subject.

"During the Chau dynasty there lived a lad named Tsāng Tsan (also Tsz'-yu), who served his mother very dutifully. Tsāng was in the habit of going to the hills to collect fagots; and once, while he was thus absent, many guests came to his house, toward whom his mother was at a loss how to act. She, while expecting her son, who delayed his return, began to gnaw her fingers. Tsāng suddenly felt a pain in his heart, and took up his bundle of fagots in order to return home; and when he saw his mother, he kneeled and begged to know what was the cause of her anxiety. She replied, 'there have been some guests here, who came from a great distance, and I bit my finger in order to arouse you to return to me.'

"In the Chau dynasty lived Chung Yu, named also Tsz'-lu, who, because his family was poor, usually ate herbs and coarse pulse; and he also went more than a hundred  $\frac{1}{2}$  to procure rice for his parents. Afterward, when they were dead, he went south to the country of Tsu, where he was made commander of a hundred companies of chariots; there he became rich, storing up grain in myriads of measures, reclining upon cushions, and eating food served to him in numerous dishes; but sighing, he said, 'Although I should now desire to eat coarse herbs and bring rice for my parents, it cannot be!'

"In the Chau dynasty there flourished the venerable Lai, who was very obedient and reverential toward his parents, manifesting his dutifulness by exerting himself to provide them with every delicacy. Although upward of



seventy years of age, he declared that he was not yet old; and usually dressed himself in parti-colored embroidered garments, and like a child would playfully stand by the side of his parents. He would also take up buckets of water, and try to carry them into the house; but feigning to slip, would fall to the ground, wailing and crying like a child: and all these things he did in order to divert his parents.

"During the Han dynasty lived Tung Yung, whose family was so very poor that when his father died he was obliged to sell himself in order to procure money to bury his remains. After this he went to another place to gain the means of redeeming himself; and on his way he met a lady who desired to become his wife, and go with him to his master's residence. She went with him, and wove three hundred pieces of silk, which being completed in two months, they returned home; on the way, having reached the shade of the cassia tree where they before met, the lady bowed and ascending, vanished from his sight.

"During the Han dynasty lived Ting Lan, whose parents both died when he was young, before he could obey and support them; and he reflected that for all the trouble and anxiety he had caused them, no recompense had yet been given. He then carved wooden images of his parents, and served them as if they had been alive. For a long time his wife would not reverence them; but one day, taking a bodkin, she in derision pricked their fingers. Blood immediately flowed from the wound; and seeing Ting coming, the images wept. He examined into the circumstances, and forthwith divorced his wife.

"In the days of the Han dynasty lived Koh Kü, who was very poor. He had one child three years old; and such was his poverty that his mother usually divided her portion of food with this little one. Koh says to his wife, 'We are so poor that our mother cannot be supported, for the child divides with her the portion of food that belongs to her. Why not bury this child? Another child may be born to us, but a mother once gone will never return.' His wife did not venture to object to the proposal; and Koh immediately dug a hole of about three cubits deep, when suddenly he lighted upon a pot of gold, and on the metal read the following inscription: 'Heaven bestows this treasure upon Koh Kü, the dutiful son; the magistrate may not seize it, nor shall the neighbors take it from him.'

"Mäng Tsung, who lived in the Tsin dynasty, when young lost his father. His mother was very sick; and one winter's day she longed to taste a soup made of bamboo sprouts, but Mäng could not procure any. At last he went into the grove of bamboos, clasped the trees with his hands, and wept bitterly. His filial affection moved nature, and the ground slowly opened, sending forth several shoots, which he gathered and carried home. He made a soup with them, of which his mother ate and immediately recovered from her malady.

"Wu Mäng, a lad eight years of age, who lived under the Tsin dynasty, was very dutiful to his parents. They were so poor that they could not afford to furnish their bed with mosquito-curtains; and every summer's night, myriads of mosquitos attacked them unrestrainedly, feasting upon their flesh and blood. Although there were so many, yet Wu would not drive them away, lest they should go to his parents, and annoy them. Such was his affection."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. VI., p. 131.



The last book learned before entering on the classics has had almost as great an influence as any of them, and none of the works of later scholars are so well calculated to show the ideas of the Chinese in all ages upon the principles of education, intercourse of life, and rules of conduct as this; precepts are illustrated by examples, and the examples referred back to precepts for their moving cause. This is the *Siao Hioh*, or "Juvenile Instructor," and was intended by Chu Hí, its author, as a counterpart of the *Tu Hiao*, on which he had written a commentary. It has had more than fifty commentators, one of whom says, "We confide in the *Siao Hioh* as we do in the gods, and revere it as we do our parents." It is divided into two books, the "fountain of learning," and "the stream flowing from it," arranged in 20 chapters and 385 short sections. The first book has four parts and treats of the first principles of education; of the duties we owe our kindred, rulers, and fellow-men, of those we owe ourselves in regard to study, demeanor, food, and dress; and lastly gives numerous examples from ancient history, beginning with very early times down to the end of the Chau dynasty, B.C. 249, confirmatory of the maxims inculcated, and the good effects resulting from their observance. The second book contains, in its first part, a collection of wise sayings of eminent men who flourished after B.C. 200, succeeded by a series of examples of distinguished persons calculated to show the effects of good principles; both designed to establish the truth of the teachings of the first book. One or two quotations, themselves extracted from other works, will suffice to show something of its contents.

"Confucius said, 'Friends must sharply and frankly admonish each other, and brothers must be gentle toward one another.'"

"Tsz'-kung, asking about friendship, Confucius said, 'Faithfully to inform and kindly to instruct another is the duty of a friend; if he is not tractable, desist; do not disgrace yourself.'"

"Whoever enters with his guests, yields precedence to them at every door; when they reach the innermost one, he begs leave to go in and arrange the seats, and then returns to receive the guests; and after they have repeatedly declined he bows to them and enters. He passes through the right door, they through the left. He ascends the eastern, they the western steps. If a guest be of a lower grade, he must approach the steps of the host, while the latter





must repeatedly decline this attention ; then the guest may return to the western steps, he ascending, both host and guest must mutually yield precedence : then the host must ascend first, and the guests follow. From step to step they must bring their feet together, gradually ascending—those on the east moving the right foot first, those on the west the left."

The great influence which these six school-books have had is owing to their formative power on youthful minds, a large proportion of whom never go beyond them (either from want of time, means, or desire), but are really here furnished with the kernel of their best literature.

The tedium of memorizing these unmeaning sounds is relieved by writing the characters on thin paper placed over copy slips. The writing and the reading lessons are the same, and both are continued for a year or two until the forms and sounds of a few thousand characters are made familiär, but no particular effort is taken to teach their meanings. It is after this that the teacher goes over the same ground, and with the help of the commentary, explains the meaning of the words and phrases one by one, until they are all understood. It is not usual for the beginner to attend much to the meaning of what he is learning to read and write, and where the labor of committing arbitrary characters is so great and irksome, experience has probably shown that it is not wise to attempt too many things at once. The boy has been familiarizing himself with their shapes as he sees them all the time around him, and he learns what they mean in a measure before he comes to school. The association of form with ideas, as he cons his lesson and writes their words, gradually strengthens, and results in that singular interdependence of the eye and ear so observable among the scholars of the far East. They trust to what is read to help in understanding what is heard much more than is the case in phonetic languages. No effort is made to facilitate the acquisition of the characters by the boys in school by arranging them according to their component parts ; they are learned one by one, as boys are taught the names and appearance of minerals in a cabinet. The effects of a course of study like this, in which the powers of the tender mind are not developed by proper nourishment of truthful knowledge, can hardly be otherwise than to stunt the genius, and drill the fac-



ulties of the mind into a slavish adherence to venerated usage and dictation, making the intellects of Chinese students like the trees which their gardeners so toilsomely dwarf into pots and jars—plants, whose unnaturalness is congruous to the insipidity of their fruit.

The number of years spent at school depends upon the means of the parents. Tradesmen, mechanics, and country gentlemen endeavor to give their sons a competent knowledge of the usual series of books, so that they can creditably manage the common affairs of life. No other branches of study are pursued than the classics and histories, and what will illustrate them, meanwhile giving much care and practice to composition. No arithmetic or any department of mathematics, nothing of the geography of their own or other countries, of natural philosophy, natural history, or scientific arts, nor the study of other languages, are attended to. Persons in these classes of society put their sons into shops or counting-houses to learn the routine of business with a knowledge of figures and the style of letter-writing; they are not kept at school more than three or four years, unless they mean to compete at the examinations. Working men, desirous of giving their sons a smattering, try to keep them at their books a year or two, but millions must of course grow up in utter ignorance. It is, however, an excellent policy for a state to keep up this universal honor paid to education where the labor is so great and the return so doubtful, for it is really the homage paid to the principles taught.

Besides the common schools, there are grammar or high schools and colleges, but they are far less effective. In Canton, there are fourteen grammar schools and thirty colleges, some of which are quite ancient, but most of them are neglected. Three of the largest contain each about two hundred students and two or three professors. The chief object of these institutions is to instruct advanced scholars in composition and elegant writing; the tutors do a little to turn attention to general literature, but have neither the genius nor the means to make many advances. In rural districts students are encouraged to meet at stated times in the town-house, where the headman, or deputy of the sz' or





township, examines them on themes previously proposed by him.<sup>1</sup> In large towns, the local officers, assisted by the gentry and graduates, hold annual examinations of students, at which premiums are given to the best essayists. At such an examination in Amoy in March, 1845, there were about a thousand candidates, forty of whom received sums varying from sixty to sixteen cents.

One of the most notable, as well as the most ancient of collegiate institutions, is the *Kwoh-tsz' Kien*, or 'School for the Sons of the State,' whose extensive buildings in Peking, now empty and dilapidated, show how much easier it is to found and plan a good thing than to maintain its efficiency. This state school originated as early as the Chau dynasty, and the course of study as given in the *Ritual of Chau* was much the same three thousand years ago as at present. Its officers consisted of a rector, usually a high minister of state, aided by five councillors, two directors, two proctors, two secretaries, a librarian, two professors in each of the six halls, and latterly five others for each of the colleges for Bannermen. These halls are named Hall of the Pursuit of Wisdom, the Sincere of Heart, of True Virtue, of Noble Aspiration, of Broad Acquirements, and the Guidance of Nature. The curriculum was not intended to go beyond the classics and the six liberal arts of music, charioteering, archery, etiquette, writing, and mathematics; but as if to encourage the professors to "seek out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven," as Solomon advises, they were told to take their students to the original sources of strategy, astronomy, engineering, music, law, and the like, and points out the defects and merits of each author. The *Kwoh-tsz' Kien* possesses now only the husk of its ancient goodness; and if its professors were not honored, and made eligible to be distinct magistrates after three years' term, the buildings would soon be left altogether empty. Instead of reviving and rearranging it, the Chinese Government

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<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IV., p. 414. See also Vol. VI., pp. 229-241; Vol. IV., pp. 1-10; Vol. XI., pp. 545-557; and Vol. XIII., pp. 626-641, for further notices of the modes and objects of education; Biot, *Essai sur l'Histoire de l'Instruction Publique en Chine*, and his translation of the *Chao-li*, Vol. II., p. 27, Paris, 1851. *Chinese Recorder*, September, 1871.



has wisely supplanted it by a new college with its new professors and new course of studies—the *Tung-wān Kwan* mentioned on p. 436. Native free schools, established by benevolent persons in city or country, are not uncommon, and serve to maintain the literary spirit; some may not be very long-lived, but others take their place. In Peking, each of the Banners has its school, and so has the Imperial Clan; retired officials contribute to schools opened for boys connected with their native districts living in the capital. Such efforts to promote education are expected from those who have obtained its high prizes.

How great a proportion of the people in China can read, is a difficult question to answer, for foreigners have had no means of learning the facts in the case, and the natives never go into such inquiries. More of the men in cities can read than in the country, and more in some provinces than in others. In the district of Nanhai, which forms part of the city of Canton, an imperfect examination led to the belief that nearly all the men are able to read, except fishermen, agriculturists, coolies, boat-people, and fuelers, and that two or three in ten devote their lives to literary pursuits. In less thickly settled districts, not more than four- or five-tenths, and even less, can read. In Macao, perhaps half of the men can read. From an examination of the hospital patients at Ningpo, one of the missionaries estimated the readers to form not more than five per cent. of the men; while another missionary at the same place, who made inquiry in a higher grade of society, reckoned them at twenty per cent. The villagers about Amoy are deplorably ignorant; one lady who had lived there over twenty years, writes that she had never found a woman who could read, but these were doubtless from among the poorer classes. It appears that as one goes north, the extent and thoroughness of education diminishes. Throughout the Empire the ability to understand books is not commensurate with the ability to read the characters, and both have been somewhat exaggerated. Owing to the manner in which education is commenced—learning the forms and sounds of characters before their meanings are understood—it comes to pass that many persons can call over the names of the characters while they do not comprehend in the least the sense of what they read. They can



pick out a word here and there, it may be a phrase or a sentence, but they derive no clearer meaning from the text before them than a lad, who has just learned to scan, and has proceeded half through the Latin Reader, does from reading Virgil; while in both cases an intelligent audience, unacquainted with the facts, might justly infer that the reader understood what he was reading as well as his hearers did. Moreover, in the Chinese language, different subjects demand different characters; and although a man may be well versed in the classics or in fiction, he may be easily posed by being asked to explain a simple treatise in medicine or in mathematics, in consequence of the many new or unfamiliar words on every page. This is a serious obstacle in the way of obtaining a general acquaintance with books. The mind becomes weary with the labor of study where its toil is neither rewarded by knowledge nor beguiled by wit; consequently, few Chinese are well read in their natural literature. The study of books being regarded solely as the means wherewith to attain a definite end, it follows naturally that when a cultivated man has reached his goal he should feel little disposed to turn to these implements of his profession for either instruction or pleasure.

Wealthy or official parents, who wish their sons to compete for literary honors, give them the advantages of a full course in reading and rhetoric under the best masters. Composition is the most difficult part of the training of a Chinese student, and requires unwearied application and a retentive memory. He who can most readily quote the classics, and approach the nearest to their terse, comprehensive, energetic diction and style, is, *cæteris paribus*, most likely to succeed; while the man who can most quickly throw off well rhymed verses takes the palm from all competitors. In novels, the ability to compose elegant verses as fast as the pencil can fly is usually ascribed to the hero of the plot. How many of those who intend to compete for degrees attend at the district colleges or high schools is not known; but they are resorted to by students about the time of the examinations in order to make the acquaintance of those who are to compete with them. No public examinations take place in either day or private schools, nor do parents often visit them, but rewards for remarkable proficiency are occasionally



conferred. There is little gradation of studies, nor are any diplomas conferred on students to show that they have gone through a certain course. Punishments are severe, and the rattan or bamboo hangs conspicuously near the master, and its liberal use is considered necessary: "To educate without rigor, shows the teacher's indolence," is the doctrine, and by scolding, starving, castigation, and detention, the master tries to instil habits of obedience and compel his scholars to learn their task.

Notwithstanding the high opinion in which education is held, the general diffusion of knowledge, and the respect paid to learning in comparison with mere title and wealth, the defects of the tuition here briefly described, in extent, means, purposes, and results, are very great. Such, too, must necessarily be the case until new principles and new information are infused into it. Considered in its best point of view, this system has effected all that it can in enlarging the understanding, purifying the heart, and strengthening the minds of the people; but in none of these, nor in any of the essential points at which a sound education aims (as we understand the matter), has it accomplished half that is needed. The stream never rises even as high as its source, and the teachings of Confucius and Mencius have done all that is possible to make their countrymen thinking, useful, and intelligent men.

Turn we now from this brief sketch of primary education among the Chinese, to a description of the mode of examining students and conferring the degrees which have been made the passport to office, and learn what are the real merits of the system. Persons from almost every class of society may become candidates for degrees under the certificates of securities, but none are eligible for the second diploma who have not already received the first. It therefore happens that the republican license apparently allowed to well-nigh every subject, in reality reserves the prizes for the few most talented or wealthy persons in the community. A majority of the clever, learned, ambitious, and intelligent spirits in the land look forward to these examinations as the only field worthy of their efforts, and where they are most likely to find their equals and friends. How much better





for the good of society, too, is this arena than the camp or the feudal court, the tournament or the monastery !

There are four regular literary degrees, with some intermediate steps of a titular sort. The first is called *siu-tsai*, meaning 'flowering talent,' because of the promise held out of the future success of the scholar ; it has often been rendered 'bachelor of arts' as its nearest equivalent. The examinations to obtain it are held under the supervision of the *chihien* in a public building belonging to the district situated near his yamun ; and the chief literary officer, called *hioh-ching*, 'corrector of learning,' or *kiao-yu*, 'teacher of the commands,' has the immediate control. When assembled at the hall of examination, the district magistrate, the deputy chancellor, and prefect, having prepared the lists of the undergraduates and selected the themes, allow only one day for writing the essays. The number of candidates depends upon the population and literary spirit of the district ; in the districts of Nanhai and Pwanyu, upward of two thousand persons competed for the prize in 1832, while in Hiangshan not half so many came together. The rule for apportioning them was at first according to the annual revenue. When the essays are handed in, they are looked over by the board of examiners, and the names of the successful students entered on a roll, and pasted upon the walls of the magistrate's hall ; this honor is called *hien ming*, i.e., 'having a name in the village.' Out of the four thousand candidates referred to above, only thirteen in one district, and fourteen in the other, obtained a name in the village ; the entire population of these two districts is not much under a million and a half. Many of the competitors at this primary tripos are unable to finish their essays in the day, others make errors in writing, and others show gross ignorance, all of which so greatly diminish their numbers, that only those who stand near the head of the list of *hien ming* do really or usually enter on the next trial before the prefect. But all have had an equal chance, and few complain that their performances were disregarded, for they can try as often as they please.

Those who pass the first examination are entered as candidates for the second, which takes place in the chief town of the



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department before the literary chancellor and the prefect, assisted by a literary magistrate called *kiao-shao*, 'giver of instructions;' it is more rigorous than that held before the *chihien*, though similar to it in nature. The prefect arranges the candidates from each district by themselves according to their standing on their several lists, and it is this vantage ground which makes the first trial in one's native place so important to the ambitious scholar. The themes on which they have tested their scholarship are published for the information of friends and the other examiners. If the proportion given above of successful candidates at the district examinations hold for each district, there would not be more than two hundred students assembled at the prefect's hall, but the number is somewhat increased by persons who have purchased the privilege; still the second trial is made among a small number in proportion to the first, and yet more trifling when compared with the amount of population. The names of the successful students at the second trial are exposed on the walls of the office, which is called *fu ming*, i.e., 'having a name in the department,' and these only are eligible as candidates for the third trial. In addition to their knowledge of the classics, the candidates at this trial are often required to write off the text of the *Shing Yu*, or 'Sacred Edict,' from memory, as this work consists of maxims for the guidance of officers. The literary chancellor exercises a superintendence over the previous examinations, and makes the circuit of the province to attend them in each department, twice in three years. There are various ranks among these educational officials, corresponding to the civilians in the province; transfers are occasionally made from one service to the other, and the oversight of the latter is always given at the examinations wherever they are held. Most of the literary officers, however, remain in their own line, as it is highly honorable and more permanent. At the third trial in the provincial capital, he confers the first degree of *siu-tsai* upon those who are chosen out of the whole list as the best scholars.

There are several classes of bachelors, depending somewhat on the manner in which they obtained their degree; those who get it in the manner here described take the precedence. The



possession of this degree protects the person from corporeal punishment, raises him above the common people, renders him a conspicuous man in his native place, and eligible to enter the triennial examination for the second degree. Those who have more money than learning, purchase this degree for sums varying from \$200 up to \$1,000, and even higher; in later years, according to the necessities of the government, diplomas have been sold as low as \$25 to \$50, but such men seldom rise. They are called *kien-sǎng*, and, as might be supposed, are looked upon somewhat contemptuously by those who have passed through the regular examinations, and "won the battle with their own lance." A degree called *kung-sǎng* is purchased by or bestowed upon the *siu-tsai*, but is so generally recognized that it has almost become a fifth degree, which does not entitle them to the full honors of a *kü-jin*. What proportion of scholars are rewarded by degrees is not known, but it is a small number compared with the candidates. A graduate of considerable intelligence at Ningpo estimated the number of *siu-tsai* in that city at four hundred, and in the department at nearly a thousand. In Canton City, the number of *shin-kin*, or gentry, who are allowed to wear the sash of honor, and have obtained literary degrees, is not over three hundred; but in the whole province there are about twelve thousand bachelors in a population of nineteen millions. Those who have not become *siu-tsai* are still regarded as under the oversight of the *kiao-yu* and others of his class, who still receive their essays; but the body of provincial *siu-tsai* are obliged to report themselves and attend the prefectural trips before the chancellor, under penalty of losing all the privileges and rank obtained. This law brings them before those who may take cognizance of misdeeds, for these men are often very oppressive and troublesome to their countrymen. The graduates in each district are placed under the control of a chief, whose power is almost equal to the deputy chancellor's; from them are taken the two securities required by each applicant to enter the trips.

The candidates for *siu-tsai* are narrowly examined when they enter the hall, their pockets, shoes, wadded robes, and ink-stones, all being searched, lest precomposed essays or other aids to com-



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position be smuggled in. When they are all seated in the hall in their proper places, the wickets, doors, windows, and other entrances are all guarded, and pasted over with strips of paper. The room is filled with anxious competitors arranged in long seats, pencil in hand, and ready to begin. The theme is given out, and every one immediately writes off his essay, carefully noting how many characters he erases in composing it, and hands it up to the board of examiners; the whole day is allotted to the task, and a signal-gun announces the hour when the doors are thrown open, and the students can disperse. A man is liable to lose his acquired honor of *siu-tsai* if at a subsequent inspection he is found to have discarded his studies, and he is therefore impelled to pursue them in order to maintain his influence, even if he does not reach the next degree.<sup>1</sup>

Since the first degree is sometimes procured by influence and money, it is the examination for the second, called *kü-jin*, or 'promoted men,' held triennially in the provincial capitals before two imperial commissioners, that separates the candidates into students and officers, though all the students who receive a diploma by no means become officers. This examination is held at the same time in all the eighteen provincial capitals, viz., on the 9th, 12th, and 15th days of the eighth moon, or about the middle of September; while it is going on, the city appears exceedingly animated, in consequence of the great number of relatives and friends assembled with the students. The persons who preside at the examination, besides the imperial commissioners, are ten provincial officers, with the *futai* at their head, who jointly form a board of examiners, and decide upon the merits of the essays. The number of candidates who entered the lists at Canton in the years 1828 and 1831 was 4,800; in 1832 there were 6,000, which is nearer the usual number. In the largest provinces it reaches as many as 7,000, 8,000, and upward.

Previous to entering the *Kung Yuen*, each candidate has given in all the necessary proofs and particulars, which entitle

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. II., p. 249; Vol. XVI., pp. 67-72. Doolittle, *Social Life of the Chinese*, Vol. I., pp. 376-443. Dr. Martin, *The Chinese*.





INTERIOR OF KUNG YUEN, OR 'EXAMINATION HALL,' PEKING.



him to a cell, and receives the ticket which designates the one he is to occupy. He enters the night before, and is searched to see that no manuscript essay, "skinning paper," or miniature edition of the classics, is secreted on his person. If anything of the sort is discovered, he is punished with the cangue, degraded from his first degree, and forbidden again to compete at the examination; his father and tutor are likewise punished. Some of the pieces written for this purpose are marvels of penmanship, and the most finished compositions; one set contained an essay on every sentence in the Four Books, each of the sheets covered with hundreds of characters, and the paper so thin that they could be easily read through it. The practice is, however, quite common, notwithstanding the penalties, and one censor requested a law to be passed forbidding small editions to be printed, and booksellers' shops to be searched for them.

The general arrangement of the examination halls in all the provincial capitals is alike. A description of that at Canton, given on page 166, is typical of them all.

The Hall at Peking, situated on the eastern side, not far from the observatory, contains ten thousand cells, and these do not always suffice for the host which assembles. The Hall at Fuh-chau is equally large; each cell is a little higher than a man's head, and is open on but one side—letting in more rain and wind during inclement days than is comfortable. Confinement in these cramped cells is so irksome as to frequently cause the death of aged students, who are unable to sustain the fatigue, but who still enter the arena in hopes of at last succeeding. Cases have occurred where father, son, and grandson, appeared at the same time to compete for the same prize. Dr. Martin<sup>1</sup> found that out of a list of ninety-nine successful competitors for the second degree, sixteen were over forty years of age, one sixty-two, and one eighty-three. The average age of the whole number was over thirty—while in comparison with like statistics for the third degree, a proportionate increase might be looked for. The unpleasantness of the strait cell is much increased by the smoke arising from the cooking, and by the heat of the weather. All ser-

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<sup>1</sup> *The Chinese*, p. 50.



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vants are provided by government, but each candidate takes in the rice and fuel which he needs, together with cakes, tea, candles, bedding, etc., as he can afford ; no one can go in with him. The enclosure presents a bustling scene during the examination, and its interest intensifies until the names of the successful scholars are published. Should a student die in his cell, the body is pulled through a hole made in the wall of the enclosure, and left there for his friends to carry away. Whenever a candidate breaks any of the prescribed regulations of the contest, his name and offence are reported, and his name is "pasted out" by placarding it on the outer door of the hall, after which he is not allowed to enter until another examination comes around. More than a hundred persons are thus "pasted out" each season, but no heavy disgrace seems to attach to them in consequence.

On the first day after the doors have been sealed up, four themes are selected by the examiners from the Four Books, one of which subjects must be discussed in a poetical essay. The minimum length of the compositions is a hundred characters, and they must be written plainly and elegantly, and sent in without any names attached. In 1828, the acumen of four thousand eight hundred candidates was exercised during the first day on these themes : "Tsāng-tsz' said, 'To possess ability, and yet ask of those who do not ; to know much, and yet inquire of those who know little ; to possess, and yet appear not to possess ; to be full, and yet appear empty.'"—"He took hold of things by the two extremes, and in his treatment of the people maintained the golden medium." "A man from his youth studies eight principles, and when he arrives at manhood, he wishes to reduce them to practice."—The fourth essay, to be written in pentameters, had for its subject, "The sound of the oar, and the green of the hills and water." Among the themes given out in 1843, were these : "He who is sincere will be intelligent, and the intelligent man will be faithful."—"In carrying out benevolence, there are no rules." In 1835, one was, "He acts as he ought, both to the common people and official men, receives his revenue from Heaven, and by it is protected and highly esteemed." Among other more practical texts are the following : "Fire-arms began with the use of rockets in the Chau





dynasty ; in what book do we first meet with the word for cannon ? Is the defence of Kaifung fu its first recorded use ? Kublai khan, it is said, obtained cannon of a new kind ; from whom did he obtain them ? When the Ming Emperors, in the reign of Yungloh, invaded Cochinchina, they obtained a kind of cannon called the weapons of the gods ; can you give an account of their origin ? ”

The three or five themes (for the number seems to be optional) selected from the Five Classics are similar to these, but as those works are regarded as more recondite than the Four Books, so must the essayists try to take a higher style. An officer goes around to gather in the papers, which are first handed to a body of scholars in waiting, who look them over to see if the prescribed rules have all been observed, and reject those which infringe them. The rest are then copied in red ink, to prevent recognition of the handwriting, and the original manuscripts given to the governor. The copies are submitted to another class of old scholars for their criticism, each of whom marks the essays he deems best with a red circle, and these only are placed in the hands of the chancellors sent from Peking for their decision. The examining board are aided by twelve scholars of repute, to each of whom forty or fifty essays are given to read. The students are dismissed during the night of the ninth day, and reassemble before sunrise of the eleventh ; all whose essays were rejected on the first review are refused entrance to their cells. At the second tripos, five themes are given out from the Five Classics, and everything proceeds as before in respect to the disposal of the manuscripts. The students are liberated early on the thirteenth as before by companies, under a salute and music as they leave the great door ; their number has been much reduced by this time. On the next morning the roll is called, and those who answer to their names for the last struggle are furnished with five themes for essays, one for poetry, taken from the classics or histories, upon doubtful matters of government, or such problems as might arise in law and finance. These questions take even a more extended range, including topics relating to the laws, history, geography, and customs of the Empire in former times, doubtful points touching the classical



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works, and the interpretation of obscure passages, and biographical notices of statesmen. It is forbidden, however, to discuss any points relating to the policy of the present family, or the character and learning of living statesmen; but the conduct of their rulers is now and then alluded to by the candidates. Manuals of questions on such subjects as candidates are examined in, are commonly exposed for sale in shops about the time of these examinations.<sup>1</sup> By noon of the sixteenth day of the eighth moon, all the candidates throughout the Empire have left their halls, and the examination is over.

The manner in which subjects are handled may be readily illustrated by introducing an essay upon this theme: "When persons in high stations are sincere in the performance of relative and domestic duties, the people generally will be stimulated to the practice of virtue." It is a fair specimen of the jejune style of Chinese essayists, and the mode of reasoning in a circle which pervades their writings.

"When the upper classes are really virtuous, the common people will inevitably become so. For, though the sincere performance of relative duties by superiors does not originate in a wish to stimulate the people, yet the people do become virtuous, which is a proof of the effect of sincerity. As benevolence is the radical principle of all good government in the world, so also benevolence is the radical principle of relative duties amongst the people. Traced back to its source, benevolent feeling refers to a first progenitor; traced forward, it branches out to a hundred generations yet to come. The source of personal existence is one's parents, the relations which originate from Heaven are most intimate; and that in which natural feeling blends is felt most deeply. That which is given by Heaven and by natural feeling to all, is done without any distinction between noble or ignoble. One feeling pervades all. My thoughts now refer to him who is placed in a station of eminence, and who may be called a good man. The good man who is placed in an eminent station, ought to lead forward the practice of virtue; but the way to do so is to begin with his own relations, and perform his duties to them.

"In the middle ages of antiquity, the minds of the people were not yet dissipated—how came it that they were not humble and observant of relative duties, when they were taught the principles of the five social relations? This having been the case, makes it evident that the enlightening of the people must depend entirely on the cordial performance of immediate relative duties. The person in an eminent station who may be called a good man, is he who appears at the head of all others in illustrating by his practice the relative duties.

<sup>1</sup> Biot, *Essai sur l'Instruction en Chine*, p. 603.



In ages nearer to our own, the manners of the people were not far removed from the dutiful; how came it that any were disobedient to parents, and without brotherly affection, and that it was yet necessary to restrain men by inflicting the eight forms of punishment? This having been the case, shows that in the various modes of obtaining promotion in the state, there is nothing regarded of more importance than filial and fraternal duties. The person in an eminent station who may be called a good man, is he who stands forth as an example of the performance of relative duties.

“The difference between a person filling a high station and one of the common people, consists in the department assigned them, not in their relation to Heaven: it consists in a difference of rank, not in a difference of natural feeling; but the common people constantly observe the sincere performance of relative duties in people of high stations. In being at the head of a family and preserving order amongst the persons of which it is composed, there should be sincere attention to politeness and decorum. A good man placed in a high station says, ‘Who of all these are not related to me, and shall I receive them with mere external forms?’ The elegant entertainment, the neatly arranged tables, and the exhilarating song, some men esteem mere forms, but the good man esteems that which dictates them as a divinely instilled feeling, and attends to it with a truly benevolent heart. And who of the common people does not feel a share of the delight arising from fathers, and brothers, and kindred? Is this joy resigned entirely to princes and kings?

“In favors conferred to display the benignity of a sovereign, there should be sincerity in the kindness done. The good man says, ‘Are not all these persons whom I love, and shall I merely enrich them by largesses?’ He gives a branch as the sceptre of authority to a delicate younger brother, and to another he gives a kingdom with his best instructions. Some men deem this as merely extraordinary good fortune, but the good man esteems it the exercise of a virtue of the first order, and the effort of inexpressible benevolence. But have the common people no regard for the spring whence the water flows, nor for the root which gives life to the tree and its branches? Have they no regard for their kindred? It is necessary both to reprehend and to urge them to exercise these feelings. The good man in a high station is sincere in the performance of relative duties, because to do so is virtuous, and not on account of the common people. But the people, without knowing whence the impulse comes, with joy and delight are influenced to act with zeal in this career of virtue; the moral distillation proceeds with rapidity, and a vast change is effected.

“The rank of men is exceedingly different; some fill the imperial throne, but every one equally wishes to do his utmost to accomplish his duty; and success depends on every individual himself. The upper classes begin and pour the wine into the rich goblet; the poor man sows his grain to maintain his parents; the men in high stations grasp the silver bowl, the poor present a pigeon; they arouse each other to unwearied cheerful efforts, and the principles implanted by Heaven are moved to action. Some things are difficult to be done, except by those who possess the glory of national rule; but the kind feeling is what I myself possess, and may increase to an unlimited degree.



## THE MIDDLE KINGDOM.

The prince may write verses appropriate to his vine bower ; the poor man can think of his gourd shelter ; the prince may sing his classic odes on fraternal regards ; the poor man can muse on his more simple allusions to the same subject, and asleep or awake indulge his recollections ; for the feeling is instilled into his nature. When the people are aroused to relative virtues, they will be sincere ; for where are there any of the common people that do not desire to perform relative duties ? But without the upper classes performing relative duties, this virtuous desire would have no point from which to originate, and therefore it is said, ' Good men in high stations, as a general at the head of his armies, will lead forward the world to the practice of social virtues.' "

The discipline of mind and memory which these examinations draw out furnishes a grade of intellect which only needs the friction and experience of public life to make statesmen out of scholars, and goes far to account for the influence of Chinese in Asia. The books studied in preparation for such trials must be remembered with extraordinary accuracy, though we may wish they contained more truth and better science. The following are among the questions proposed in 1853, and must be taken as an average : " In the Han dynasty, there were three commentators on the *Yih King*, whose explanations, and divisions into chapters and sentences were all different : can you give an account of them ? " — " Sz'ma Tsien took the classics and ancient records in arranging his history according to their facts ; some have accused him of unduly exalting the Taoists and thinking too highly of wealth and power. Pan Ku is clear and comprehensive, but on Astronomy and the Five Elements, he has written more than enough. Give examples and proof of these two statements. " — " Chin Shao had admirable abilities for historical writings. In his *San Kwoh Chi* he has depreciated Chu-koh Liang, and made very light of Í and Í, two other celebrated characters. What does he say of them ? " This kind of question involves a wide range of reading within the native literature, though it of course contracts the mind to look upon that literature as containing all that is worth anything in the world.

Twenty-five days are allowed for the examining board to decide on the essays ; and few tasks can be instanced more irksome to a board of honest examiners than the perusal of between fifty and seventy-five thousand papers on a dozen subjects, through which the most monotonous uniformity must necessarily run,



and out of which they have to choose the seventy or eighty best—for the number of successful candidates cannot vary far from this, according to the size of the province. The examiners, as has already been described, are aided by literary men in sifting this mass of papers, which relieves them of most of the labor, and secures a better decision. If the number of students be five thousand, and each writes thirteen essays, there will be sixty-five thousand papers, which allots two hundred and sixty essays for each of the ten examiners. With the help of the assistants who are intrusted with their examination, most of the essays obtain a reading, no doubt, by some qualified scholar. There is, therefore, no little sifting and selection, so that when at the last the commissioners choose three rolls of essays and poems from each of the sessions belonging to the same scholar, to pass their final judgment, the company of candidates likely to succeed has been reduced as small in proportion as those in Gideon's host who lapped water. One of the examining committee, in 1832, who sought to invigorate his nerves or clear his intellect for the task by a pipe of opium, fell asleep in consequence, and on awaking, found that many of the essays had caught fire and been consumed. It is generally supposed that hundreds of them are unread, but the excitement of the occasion, and the dread on the part of the examining board to irritate the body of students, act as checks against gross omissions. Very trivial errors are enough to condemn an essay, especially if the examiners have not been gained to look upon it kindly. Section LII. of the code regulates the conduct of the examiners, but the punishments are slight. One candidate, whose essay had been condemned without being read, printed it, which led to the punishment of the examiner, degradation of the graduate, and promulgation of a law forbidding this mode of appealing to the public. Another essay was rejected because the writer had abbreviated a single character.

When the names of the successful wranglers are known, they are published by a crier at midnight, on or before the tenth of the ninth moon; at Canton, he mounts the highest tower, and, after a salute, announces them to the expectant city; the next morning, lists of the lucky scholars are hawked about the streets,



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and rapidly sent to all parts of the province. The proclamation which contains their names is pasted upon the governor's office under a salute of three guns; his excellency comes out and bows three times towards the names of the *promoted men*, and retires under another salute. The disappointed multitude must then rejoice in the success of the few, and solace themselves with the hope of better luck next time; while the successful ones are honored and feasted in a very distinguished manner, and are the objects of flattering attention from the whole city. On an appointed day, the governors, commissioners, and high provincial officers banquet them all at the futai's palace; inferior officers attend as servants, and two lads, fantastically dressed, and holding fragrant branches of the olive (*Olea fragrans*) in their hands grace the scene with this symbol of literary attainments. The number of A.M., licentiates, or *kü-jin*, who triennially receive their degrees in the Empire, is upwards of thirteen hundred: the expense of the examinations to the government in various ways, including the presents conferred on the graduates, can hardly be less than a third of a million of taels. Besides the triennial examinations, special ones are held every ten years, and on extraordinary occasions, as a victory, a new reign, or an imperial marriage. One was granted in 1835 because the Empress-dowager had reached her sixtieth year.

The third degree of *tsin-sz*, 'entered scholars,' or doctors, is conferred triennially at Peking upon the successful licentiates who compete for it, and only those among the *kü-jin*, who have not already taken office, are eligible as candidates. On application at the provincial treasury, they are entitled to a part of their travelling expenses to court, but it doubtless requires some interest to get the mileage granted, for many poor scholars are detained from the metropolitan examination, or must beg or borrow in order to reach it. The procedure on this trial is the same as in the provinces, but the examiners are of higher rank; the themes are taken from the same works, and the essays are but little else than repetitions of the same train of thought and argument. After the degrees are conferred upon all who are deemed worthy, which varies from one hundred and fifty to four hundred each time, the doctors are introduced to the Emperor,





and do him reverence, the three highest receiving rewards from him. At this examination, candidates, instead of being promoted, are occasionally degraded from their acquired standing for incompetency, and forbidden to appear at them again. The graduates are all inscribed upon the list of candidates for promotion, by the Board of Civil Office, to be appointed on the first vacancy; most of them do in fact enter on official life in some way or other by attaching themselves to high dignitaries, or getting employment in some of the departments at the capital. One instance is recorded of a student taking all the degrees within nine months; and some become *hanlin* before entering office. Others try again and again, till gray hairs compel them to retire. There are many subordinate offices in the Academy, the Censorate, or the Boards, which seem almost to have been instituted for the employment of graduates, whose success has given them a partial claim upon the country. The Emperor sometimes selects clever graduates to prepare works for the use of government, or nominates them upon special literary commissions;<sup>1</sup> It can easily be understood that no small address in managing and appeasing such a crowd of disciplined active minds is required on the part of the bureaucracy, and only the long experience of many generations of the graduates could suffice to keep the system so vigorous as it is.

The fourth and highest degree of *hanlin* is rather an office than a degree, for those who attain it are enrolled as members of the Imperial Academy, and receive salaries. The triennial examination for this distinction is held in the Emperor's palace, and is conducted on much the same plan as all preceding ones, though being in the presence of the highest personages in the Empire, it exceeds them in honor.<sup>2</sup> Manchus and Mongols

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IX., p. 541; Vol. III., p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> See Morrison's *Chinese Dictionary*, Vol. I., Part I., pp. 759-779, for the laws and usages of the several trials. Also Doolittle's *Social Life*, Vol. I., Chaps. XV., XVI., and XVII.; Biot, *Essai sur l'Histoire de l'Instruction Publique en Chine*; W. A. P. Martin, *The Chinese*, pp. 39 ff.; *Journal Asiatique*, Tomes III., pp. 257 and 321, IV., p. 3, and VII. (3d Series, 1839), pp. 32-81; *Journal Asiatic Soc. Bengal*, Vol. XXVIII., No. 1, 1859; *Journal N. C. Br. R. As. Soc.*, New Series, Vol. VI., pp. 129 ff.; *China Review*, Vol. II., p. 309.



compete at these trials with the Chinese, but many facts show that the former are generally favored at the expense of the latter; the large proportion of men belonging to these races filling high offices indicates who are the rulers of the land. The candidates are all examined at Peking; one instance is recorded of a Chinese who passed himself off for a Manchu, but afterward confessed the dissimulation; the head of the division was tried in consequence of his oversight. It is the professed policy of the government to discourage literary pursuits among them, in order to maintain the ancient energy of the race; but where the real power is lodged in the hands of civilians, it is impossible to prevent so powerful a component of the population from competing with the others for its possession.

The present dynasty introduced examinations and gradations among the troops on the same principles as obtain in the civil service; nothing more strikingly proves the power of literary pursuits in China, than this vain attempt to harmonize the profession of arms in all its branches with them. Their enemies were, however, no better disciplined and equipped than they themselves were. Candidates for the first degree present themselves before the district magistrate, with proper testimonials and securities. On certain days they are collected on the parade-grounds, and exhibit their skill in archery (on foot and in the saddle), in wielding swords and lifting weights, graduated to test their muscle. The successful men are assembled afterward before the prefect; and again at a third trial before the literary chancellor, who at the last tripos tests them on their literary attainments, before giving them their degrees of *siu-tsai*. The number of successful military *siu-tsai* is the same as the literary. They are triennially called together by the governor at the provincial capital to undergo further examination for *kü-jin* in four successive trials of the same nature. These occasions are usually great gala days, and three or four scores of young warriors who carry off prizes at these tournaments receive honors and degrees in much the same style as their literary compeers. The trials for the highest degree are held at Peking; and the long-continued efforts in this service generally obtain for the young men posts in the body-guard of





the governors or staff appointments. The forty-nine successful candidates out of several thousands at the triennial examination for *kü-jin* in Canton, November, 1832, all hit the target on foot six times successively, and on horseback six times; once with the arrow they hit a ball lying on the ground as they passed it at a gallop; and all were of the first class in wielding the iron-handled battle-axe, and lifting the stone-loaded beam. The candidates are all persons of property, who find their own horses, dresses, arms, etc., and are handsomely dressed, the horses, trimmings, and accoutrements in good order—the arrows being without barbs, to prevent accidents. One observer says, “the marks at which they fired, covered with white paper, were about the height of a man and somewhat wider, placed at intervals of fifty yards; the object was to strike these marks successively with their three arrows, the horses being kept at full speed. Although the bull’s-eye was not always hit, the target was never missed: the distance did not exceed fifteen or twenty feet.”<sup>1</sup>

Since military honors depend so entirely on personal skill, it may partly account for the inferior rank the graduates hold in comparison with civilians. No knowledge of tactics, gunnery, engineering, fortifications, or even letters in general, seems to be required of them; and this explains the inefficiency of the army, and the low estimation its officers are held in. Sir J. Davis mentions one military officer of enormous size and strength, whom he saw on the *Pei ho*, who had lately been promoted for his personal prowess; and speaks of another attached to the guard on one of the boats, who was such a foolish fellow that none of the civilians would associate with him.<sup>2</sup> All the classes eligible to civil promotion can enter the lists for military honors; the Emperor is present at the examination for the highest, and awards prizes, such as a cap decorated with a peacock’s feather; but no system of prizes or examinations can supply the want of knowledge and courage. Military distinctions not being much sought by the people, and conferring but

<sup>1</sup> Ellis, *Embassy to China*, p. 87; *Chinese Repository*, Vol. XVI., p. 62; Vol. IV., p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Davis, *Sketches*, Vol. I., pp. 99, 101.



little emolument or power, do not stand as high in public estimation as the present government wishes. The selection of officers for the naval service is made from the land force, and a man is considered quite as fit for that branch after his feats of archery, as if the trials had been in yacht-sailing or manning the yards.

Such is the outline of the system of examinations through which the civil and military services of the Chinese government are supplied, and the only part of their system not to be paralleled in one or other of the great monarchies of past or present times; though the counterpart of this may have also existed in ancient Egypt. "It is the only one of their inventions," as has been remarked, "which is perhaps worth preserving, and has not been adopted by other countries, and carried to greater perfection than they were equal to." But such a system would be unnecessary in an enlightened Christian country, where the people, pursuing study for its own sake, are able and willing to become as learned as their rulers desire without any such inducement. Nor would they submit to the trammels and trickery attendant on competition for office; the ablest politicians are by no means found among the most learned scholars. The honor and power of official position have proved to be ample stimulus and reward for years of patient study. Not one in a score of graduates ever obtains an office, not one in a hundred of competitors ever gets a degree; but they all belong to the literary class, and share in its influence, dignity, and privileges. Moreover, these books render not only those who get the prizes well acquainted with the true principles on which power should be exercised, but the whole nation—gentry and commoners—know them also. These unemployed *literati* form a powerful middle class, whose members advise the work-people, who have no time to study, and aid their rulers in the management of local affairs. Their intelligence fits them to control most of the property, while few acquire such wealth as gives them the power to oppress. They make the public opinion of the country, now controlling it, then cramping it; alternately adopting or resisting new influences, and sometimes successfully thwarting the acts of officials,



when the rights of the people are in danger of encroachment; or at other times combining with the authorities to repress anarchy or relieve suffering.

This class has no badge of rank, and is open to every man's highest talent and efforts, but its complete neutralization of hereditary rights, which would have sooner or later made a privileged oligarchy and a landed or feudal aristocracy, proves its vitalizing, democratic influence. It has saved the Chinese people from a second disintegration into numerous kingdoms, by the sheer force of instruction in the political rights and duties taught in the classics and their commentaries. While this system put all on equality, human nature, as we know, has no such equality. At its inception it probably met general support from all classes, because of its fitness for the times, and soon the resistance of multitudes of hopeful students against its abrogation and their consequent disappointment in their life-work aided its continuance. As it is now, talent, wealth, learning, influence, paternal rank, and intrigue, each and all have full scope for their greatest efforts in securing the prizes. If these prizes had been held by a tenure as slippery as they are at present in the American Republic, or obtainable only by canvassing popular votes, the system would surely have failed, for "the game would not have been worth the candle." But in China the throne gives a character of permanency to the government, which opposes all disorganizing tendencies, and makes it for the interest of every one in office to strengthen the power which gave it to him. This loyalty was remarkably shown in the recent rebellion, in which, during the eighteen years of that terrible carnage and ruin, not one imperial official voluntarily joined the Tai-pings, while hundreds died resisting them.

There is no space here for further extracts from the classics which will adequately show their character. They would prove that Chinese youth, as well as those in Christian lands, are taught a higher standard of conduct than they follow. The former are, however, drilled in the very best moral books the language affords; if the Proverbs of Solomon and the New Testament were studied as thoroughly in our schools as the



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Four Books are in China, our young men would be better fitted to act their part as good and useful citizens.

In this way literary pursuits have taken precedence of war-like, and no unscrupulous Cæsar or Napoleon has been able to use the army for his own aggrandizement. The army of China is contemptible, certainly, if compared with those of Western nations, and its use is rather like a police, whose powers of protection or oppression are exhibited according to the tempers of those who employ them. But in China the army has not been employed, as it was by those great captains, to destroy the institutions on which it rests; though its weakness and want of discipline often make it a greater evil than good to the people. But had the military waxed strong and efficient, it would certainly have become a terror in the hands of ambitious monarchs, a drain on the resources of the land, perhaps a menace to other nations, or finally a destroyer of its own. The officials were taught, when young, what to honor in their rulers; and, now that they hold those stations, they learn that discreet, upright magistrates do receive reward and promotion, and experience has shown them that peace and thrift are the ends and evidence of good government, and the best tests of their own fitness for office.

Another observable result of this republican method of getting the best-educated men into office is the absence of any class of slaves or serfs among the population. Slavery exists in a modified form of corporeal mortgage for debt, and thousands remain in this serfdom for life through one reason or another. But the destruction of a feudal baronage involved the extinction of its correlative, a villein class, and the oppression of poor debtors, as was the case in Rome under the consuls. Only freemen are eligible to enter the *concours*, but the percentage of slaves is too small to influence the total. To this cause, too, may, perhaps, to a large degree, be ascribed the absence of anything like caste, which has had such bad effects in India.

The system could not be transplanted; it is fitted for the genius of the Chinese, and they have become well satisfied with its workings. Its purification would do great good, doubtless, if the mass of the people are to be left in their present





state of ignorance, but their elevation in knowledge would, ere long, revolutionize the whole. There can be no doubt as to the important and beneficial results it has accomplished, with all its defects, in perpetuating and strengthening the system of government, and securing to the people a more equitable and vigorous body of magistrates than they could get in any other way. It offers an honorable career to the most ambitious, talented, or turbulent spirits in the country, which demands all their powers; and by the time they enter upon office, those aspirations and powers have been drilled and molded into useful service, and are ever after devoted to the maintenance of the system they might otherwise have wrecked. Most of the real benefits of Chinese education and this system of examinations are reached before the conferment of the degree of *kü-jin*. These consist in diffusing a general respect and taste for letters among the people; in calling out the true talent of the country to the notice of the rulers in an honorable path of effort; in making all persons so thoroughly acquainted with the best moral books in the language that they cannot fail to exercise some salutary restraint; in elevating the general standard of education so much that every man is almost compelled to give his son a little learning in order that he may get along in life; and finally, through all these influences, powerfully contributing to uphold the existing institutions of the Empire.

From the intimate knowledge thus obtained of the writings of their best minds, Chinese youth learn the principles of democratic rule as opposed to personal authority; and from this instruction it has resulted that no monarch has ever been able to use a standing army to enslave the people, or seize the proceeds of their industry for his own selfish ends. Nothing in Chinese politics is more worthy of notice than the unbounded reverence for the Emperor, while each man resists unjust taxation, and joins in killing or driving away oppressive officials. Educated men form the only aristocracy in the land; and the attainment of the first degree, by introducing its owner into the class of *gentry*, is considered ample compensation for all the expense and study spent in getting it. On the whole, it may safely be asserted that these examinations have done more to maintain



the stability, and explain the continuance, of the Chinese government than any other single cause.

The principal defects and malversations in the system can soon be shown. Some are inherent, but others rather prove the badness of the material than of the system and its harmonious workings. One great difficulty in the way of the graduated students attaining office according to their merits is the favor shown to those who can buy nominal and real honors. Two censors, in 1822, laid a document before his Majesty, in which the evils attendant on selling office are shown; viz., elevating priests, highwaymen, merchants, and other unworthy or uneducated men, to responsible stations, and placing insurmountable difficulties in the way of hard-working, worthy students reaching the reward of their toil. They state that the plan of selling offices commenced during the Han dynasty, but speak of the greater disgrace attendant upon the plan at the present time, because the avails all go into the privy purse instead of being applied to the public service; they recommend, therefore, a reduction in the disbursements of the imperial establishment. Among the items mentioned by these oriental Joseph Humes, which they consider extravagant, are a lac of taels (100,000) for flowers and rouge in the seraglio, and 120,000 in salaries to waiting-boys; two lacs were expended on the gardens of Yuenming, and almost half a million of taels upon the parks at Jeh ho, while the salaries to officers and presents to women at Yuenming were over four lacs. "If these few items of expense were abolished," they add, "there would be a saving of more than a million of taels of useless expenditure; talent might be brought forward to the service of the country, and the people's wealth be secured."

In consequence of the extensive sale of offices, they state that more than five thousand *tsin-sz'* doctors, and more than twenty-seven thousand *kü-jin* licentiates, are waiting for employment; and those first on the list obtained their degrees thirty years ago, so that the probability is that when at last employed, they will be too old for service, and be declared superannuated in the first examination of official merits and demerits. The rules to be observed at the regular examinations



are strict, but no questions are asked the buyers of office; and they enter, too, on their duties as soon as the money is paid. The censors quote three sales, whose united proceeds amounted to a quarter of a million of taels, and state that the whole income from this source for twenty years was only a few lacs. Examples of the flagitious conduct of these purse-proud magistrates are quoted in proof of the bad results of the plan. "Thus the priest Siang Yang, prohibited from holding office, bought his way to one; the intendant at Ningpo, from being a mounted highwayman, bought his way to office; besides others of the vilest parentage. But the covetousness and cruelty of these men are denominated purity and intelligence; they inflict severe punishments, which make the people terrified, and their superiors point them out as possessing decision: these are our able officers!"

After animadverting on the general practice "of all officers, from governor-generals down to village magistrates, combining to gain their purposes by hiding the truth from the sovereign," and specifying the malversations of Tohtsin, the premier, in particular, they close their paper with a protestation of their integrity. "If your Majesty deems what we have now stated to be right, and will act thereon in the government, you will realize the designs of the souls of your sacred ancestors; and the army, the nation, and the poor people, will have cause for gladness of heart. Should we be subjected to the operation of the hatchet, or suffer death in the boiling caldron, we will not decline it."

These censors place the proceeds of "button scrip" far too low, for in 1826, the sale produced about six millions of taels, and was continued at intervals during the three following years. In 1831, one of the sons of Howqua was created a *kü-jin* by patent for having subscribed nearly fifty thousand dollars to repair the dikes near Canton; and upon another was conferred the rank and title of "director of the salt monopoly" for a lac of taels toward the war in Turkestan. Neither of these persons ever held any office of power, nor probably did they expect it; and such may be the case with many of those who are satisfied with the titles and buttons, feathers and robes,



which their money procures. The sale of office is rather accepted as a State necessity which does not necessarily bring tyrants upon the bench; but when, as was the case in 1863, Peiching, head of the Examining Board at Peking, fraudulently issued two or three diplomas, his execution vindicated the law, and deterred similar tampering with the life-springs of the system. During the present dynasty, military men have been frequently appointed to magistracies, and the detail of their offices intrusted to needy scholars, which has tended, still further, to disgust and dishearten the latter from resorting to the literary arena.

The language itself of the Chinese, which has for centuries aided in preserving their institutions and strengthening national homogeneity amid so many local varieties of speech, is now rather in the way of their progress, and may be pointed to as another unfortunate feature which infects this system of education and examination; for it is impossible for a native to write a treatise on grammar about another language in his own tongue, through which another Chinese can, unaided, learn to speak that language. This people have, therefore, no ready means of learning the best thoughts of foreign minds. Such being the case, the ignorance of their first scholars as regards other races, ages, and lands has been their misfortune far more than their fault, and they have suffered the evils of their isolation. One has been an utter ignorance of what would have conferred lasting benefit resulting from the study of outside conceptions of morals, science, and politics. Inasmuch as neither geography, natural history, mathematics, nor the history or languages of other lands forms part of the curriculum, these men, trained alone in the classics, have naturally grown up with distorted views of their own country. The officials are imbued with conceit, ignorance, and arrogance as to its power, resources, and comparative influence, and are helpless when met by greater skill or strength. However, these disadvantages, great as they are and have been, have mostly resulted naturally from their secluded position, and are rapidly yielding to the new influences which are acting upon government and people. To one contemplating this startling metamorphosis,



the foremost wish, indeed, must be that these causes do not disintegrate their ancient economies too fast for the recuperation and preservation of whatever is good therein.

Another evil is the bribery practised to attain the degrees. By certain signs placed on the essays, the examiner can easily pick out those he is to approve; \$8,000 was said to be the price of a bachelor's degree in Canton, but this sum is within the reach of few out of the six thousand candidates. The poor scholars sell their services to the rich, and for a certain price will enter the hall of examination, and personate their employer, running the risk and penalties of a disgraceful exposure if detected; for a less sum they will drill them before examination, or write the essays entirely, which the rich booby must commit to memory. The purchase of forged diplomas is another mode of obtaining a graduate's honors, which, from some discoveries made at Peking, is so extensively practised, that when this and other corruptions are considered, it is surprising that any person can be so eager in his studies, or confident of his abilities, as ever to think he can get into office by them alone. In 1830, the *Gazette* contained some documents showing that an inferior officer, aided by some of the clerks in the Board of Revenue, during the successive superintendence of twenty presidents of the Board had sold twenty thousand four hundred and nineteen forged diplomas; and in the province of Nganhwui, the writers in the office attached to the Board of Revenue had carried on the same practice for four years, and forty-six persons in that province were convicted of possessing them. All the principal criminals convicted at this time were sentenced to decapitation, but these cases are enough to show that the real talent of the country does not often find its way into the magistrate's seat without the aid of money; nor is it likely that the tales of such delinquencies often appear in the *Gazette*. Literary chancellors also sell bachelors' degrees to the exclusion of deserving poor scholars; the office of the *hiohching* of Kiangsi was searched in 1828 by a special commission, and four lacs of taels found in it; he hung himself to avoid further punishment, as did also the same dignitary in Canton in 1833, as was supposed, for a similar cause. It is in this way, no doubt, that



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the ill-gotten gains of most officers return to the general circulation.

Notwithstanding these startling corruptions, which seem to involve the principle on which the harmony and efficiency of the whole machinery of state stand, it cannot be denied, judging from the results, that the highest officers of the Chinese government do possess a very respectable rank of talent and knowledge, and carry on the unwieldy machine with a degree of integrity, patriotism, industry, and good order which shows that the leading minds in it are well chosen. The person who has originally obtained his rank by a forged diploma, or by direct purchase, cannot hope to rise or to maintain even his first standing, without some knowledge and parts. One of the three commissioners whom Kíying associated with himself in his negotiations with the American minister in 1844, was a supernumerary *chihien* of forbidding appearance, who could hardly write a common document, but it was easy to see the low estimation the ignomus was held in. It may therefore be fairly inferred that enough large prizes are drawn to incite successive generations of scholars to compete for them, and thus to maintain the literary spirit of the people. At these examinations the superior minds of the country are brought together in large bodies, and thus they learn each others views, and are able to check official oppressions with something like a public opinion. In Peking the concourse of several thousands, from the remotest provinces, to compete at or assist in the triennial examinations, exerts a great and healthy influence upon their rulers and themselves. Nothing like it ever has been seen in any other metropolis.

The enjoyment of no small degree of power and influence in their native village, is also to be considered in estimating the rewards of studious toil, whether the student get a diploma or not; and this local consideration is the most common reward attending the life of a scholar. In those villages where no governmental officer is specially appointed, such men are almost sure to become the headmen and most influential persons in the very spot where a Chinese loves to be distinguished. Graduates are likewise allowed to erect flag-staffs, or put up a red sign



over the door of their houses showing the degree they have obtained, which is both a harmless and gratifying reward of study ; like the additions of *Cantab.* or *Oxon.*, D.D. or LL.D., to their owner's names in other lands.

The fortune attending the unsuccessful candidates is various. Thousands of them get employment as school-teachers, pettifogging notaries, and clerks in the public offices, and others who are rich return to their families. Some are reduced by degrees to beggary, and resort to medicine, fortune-telling, letter-writing, and other such shifts to eke out a living. Many turn their attention to learning the modes of drawing up deeds and forms used in dealings regarding property ; others look to aiding military men in their duties, and a few turn authors, and thus in one way or another contrive to turn their learning to account.

During the period of the examinations, when the students are assembled in the capital, the officers of government are careful not to irritate them by punishment, or offend their *esprit de corps*, but rather, by admonitions and warnings, induce them to set a good example. The personal reputation of the officer himself has much to do with the influence he exerts over the students, and whether they will heed his *caveats*. One of the examiners in Chehkiang, irritated by the impertinence of a bachelor, who presumed upon his immunity from corporeal chastisement, twisted his ears to teach him better manners ; soon after, the student and two others of equal degree were accused before the same magistrate for a libel, and one of them beaten forty strokes upon his palms. At the ensuing examination, ten of the *siu-tsai*, indignant at this unauthorized treatment, refused to appear, and all the candidates, when they saw who was to preside, dispersed immediately. In his memorial upon the matter, the governor-general recommends both this officer, and another one who talked much about the affair and produced a great effect upon the public mind, to be degraded, and the bachelors to be stripped of their honors. A magistrate of Honan, having punished a student with twenty blows, the assembled body of students rose and threw their caps on the ground, and walked off, leaving him alone. The prefect of Canton, in 1842, having become obnoxious to the citizens from



the part he took in ransoming the city when surrounded by the British forces, the students refused to receive him as their examiner, and when he appeared in the hall to take his seat, drove him out of the room by throwing their ink-stones at him; he soon after resigned his station. Perhaps the *siu-tsai* are more impatient than the *kü-jin* from being better acquainted with each other, and being examined by local officers, while the *kü-jin* are overawed by the rank of the commissioners, and, coming from distant parts of a large province, have little mutual sympathy or acquaintance. The examining boards, however, take pains to avoid displeasing any gathering of graduates.

We have seen, then, in what has been of necessity a somewhat cursory *resumé*, the management and extent of an institution which has opened the avenues of rank to all, by teaching candidates how to maintain the principles of liberty and equality they had learned from their oft-quoted 'ancients.' All that these institutions need, to secure and promote the highest welfare of the people—as they themselves, indeed, aver—is their faithful execution in every department of government; as we find them, no higher evidence of their remarkable wisdom can be adduced, than the general order and peace of the land. When one sees the injustice and oppressions in law courts, the feuds and deadly fights among clans, the prevalence of lying, ignorance, and pollution among commoners, and the unscrupulous struggle for a living going on in every rank of life, he wonders that universal anarchy does not destroy the whole machine. But 'the powers that be are ordained of God.' The Chinese seem to have attained the great ends of human government to as high a degree as it is possible for man to go without the knowledge of divine revelation. That, in its great truths, its rewards, its hopes, and its stimulus to good acts has yet to be received among them. The course and results of the struggle between the new and the old in the land of Sinim will form a remarkable chapter in the history of man.

With regard to female education, it is a singular anomaly among Chinese writers, that while they lay great stress upon maternal instruction in forming the infant mind, and leading it





on to excellence, no more of them should have turned their attention to the preparation of books for girls, and the establishment of female schools. There are some reasons for the absence of the latter to be found in the state of society, notable among which must stand, of course, the low position of woman in every oriental community, and a general contempt for the capacity of the female mind. It is, moreover, impossible to procure many qualified schoolmistresses, and to this we must add the hazard of sending girls out into the streets alone, where they would run some risk of being stolen. The principal stimulus for boys to study—the hope and prospect of office—is taken away from girls, and Chinese literature offers little to repay them for the labor of learning it in addition to all the domestic duties which devolve upon them. Nevertheless, education is not entirely confined to the stronger sex; seminaries for young women are not at all uncommon in South China, and it is not unusual to find private tutors giving instruction to young ladies at their houses.<sup>1</sup> Though this must be regarded as a comparative statement, and holding much more for the southern than for the northern provinces, on the other hand, it may be asserted that literary attainments are considered creditable to a woman, more than is the case in India or Siam; the names of authoresses mentioned in Chinese annals would make a long list. Yuen Yuen, the governor-general of Canton, in 1820, while in office, published a volume of his deceased's daughter's poetical effusions; and literary men are usually desirous of having their daughters accomplished in music and poetry, as well as in composition and classical lore. Such an education is considered befitting their station, and reflecting credit on the family.

One of the most celebrated female writers in China is Pan Hwui-pan, also known as Pan Chao, a sister of the historian Pan Ku, who wrote the history of the former Han dynasty. She was appointed historiographer after his death, and completed his unfinished annals; she died at the age of seventy, and was honored by the Emperor Ho with a public burial, and

<sup>1</sup> Archdeacon Gray, *China*, Vol. I., p. 167.



the title of the Great Lady Tsao. About A.D. 80, she was made preceptress of the Empress, and wrote the first work in any language on female education; it was called *Nü Kiai* or *Female Precepts*, and has formed the basis of many succeeding books on female education. The aim of her writings was to elevate female character, and make it virtuous. She says, "The virtue of a female does not consist altogether in extraordinary abilities or intelligence, but in being modestly grave and inviolably chaste, observing the requirements of virtuous widowhood, and in being tidy in her person and everything about her; in whatever she does to be unassuming, and whenever she moves or sits to be decorous. This is female virtue." Instruction in morals and the various branches of domestic economy are more insisted upon in the writings of this and other authoresses, than a knowledge of the classics or histories of the country.

One of the most distinguished Chinese essayists of modern times, Luhchau, published a work for the benefit of the sex, called the *Female Instructor*; an extract from his preface will show what ideas are generally entertained on female education by Chinese moralists.

"The basis of the government of the Empire lies in the habits of the people, and the surety that their usages will be correct is in the orderly management of families, which last depends chiefly upon the females. In the good old times of Chau, the virtuous women set such an excellent example that it influenced the customs of the Empire—an influence that descended even to the times of the Ching and Wei states. If the curtain of the inner apartment gets thin, or is hung awry [*i.e.*, if the sexes are not kept apart], disorder will enter the family, and ultimately pervade the Empire. Females are doubtless the sources of good manners; from ancient times to the present this has been the case. The inclination to virtue and vice in women differs exceedingly; their dispositions incline contrary ways, and if it is wished to form them alike, there is nothing like education. In ancient times, youth of both sexes were instructed. According to the *Ritual of Chau*, 'the imperial wives regulated the law for educating females, in order to instruct the ladies of the palace in morals, conversation, manners, and work; and each led out her respective classes, at proper times, and arranged them for examination in the imperial presence.' But these treatises have not reached us, and it cannot be distinctly ascertained what was their plan of arrangement. . . .

"The education of a woman and that of a man are very dissimilar. Thus, a man can study during his whole life; whether he is abroad or at home, he



can always look into the classics and history, and become thoroughly acquainted with the whole range of authors. But a woman does not study more than ten years, when she takes upon her the management of a family, where a multiplicity of cares distract her attention, and having no leisure for undisturbed study, she cannot easily understand learned authors; not having obtained a thorough acquaintance with letters, she does not fully comprehend their principles; and like water that has flowed from its fountain, she cannot regulate her conduct by their guidance. How can it be said that a standard work on female education is not wanted! Every profession and trade has its appropriate master; and ought not those also who possess such an influence over manners [as females] to be taught their duties and their proper limits? It is a matter of regret, that in these books no extracts have been made from the works of Confucius in order to make them introductory to the writings on polite literature; and it is also to be regretted that selections have not been made from the commentaries of Ching, Chu, and other scholars, who have explained his writings clearly, as also from the whole range of writers, gathering from them all that which was appropriate, and omitting the rest. These are circulated among mankind, together with such books as the *Juvenile Instructor*; yet if they are put into the hands of females, they cause them to become like a blind man without a guide, wandering hither and thither without knowing where he is going. There has been this great deficiency from very remote times until now.

"Woman's influence is according to her moral character, therefore that point is largely explained. First, concerning her obedience to her husband and to his parents; then in regard to her complaisance to his brothers and sisters, and kindness to her sisters-in-law. If unmarried, she has duties toward her parents, and to the wives of her elder brothers; if a principal wife, a woman must have no jealous feelings; if in straitened circumstances, she must be contented with her lot; if rich and honorable, she must avoid extravagance and haughtiness. Then teach her, in times of trouble and in days of ease, how to maintain her purity, how to give importance to right principles, how to observe widowhood, and how to avenge the murder of a relative. Is she a mother, let her teach her children; is she a step-mother, let her love and cherish her husband's children; is her rank in life high, let her be condescending to her inferiors; let her wholly discard all sorcerers, superstitious nuns, and witches; in a word let her adhere to propriety and avoid vice.

"In conversation, a female should not be froward and garrulous, but observe strictly what is correct, whether in suggesting advice to her husband, in remonstrating with him, or teaching her children, in maintaining etiquette, humbly imparting her experience, or in averting misfortune. The deportment of females should be strictly grave and sober, and yet adapted to the occasion; whether in waiting on her parents, receiving or reverencing her husband, rising up or sitting down, when pregnant, in times of mourning, or when fleeing in war, she should be perfectly decorous. Rearing the silkworm and working cloth are the most important of the employments of a female; preparing and serving up the food for the household, and setting in order the



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sacrifices, follow next, each of which must be attended to; after them, study and learning can fill up the time.”<sup>1</sup>

The work thus prefaced, is similar to Sprague's *Letters to a Daughter*, rather than to a text-book, or a manual intended to be read and obeyed rather than recited by young ladies. Happy would it be for the country, however, if the instructions given by this moralist were followed; it is a credit to a pagan, to write such sentiments as the following: “During infancy, a child ardently loves its mother, who knows all its traits of goodness: while the father, perhaps, cannot know about it, there is nothing which the mother does not see. Wherefore the mother teaches more effectually, and only by her unwise fondness does her son become more and more proud (as musk by age becomes sourer and stronger), and is thereby nearly ruined.”—“Heavenly order is to bless the good and curse the vile; he who sins against it will certainly receive his punishment sooner or later: from lucid instruction springs the happiness of the world. If females are unlearned, they will be like one looking at a wall, they will know nothing: if they are taught, they will know, and knowing they will imitate their examples.”

It is vain to expect, however, that any change in the standing of females, or extent of their education, will take place until influences from abroad are brought to bear upon them—until the same work that is elsewhere elevating them to their proper place in society by teaching them the principles on which that elevation is founded, and how they can themselves maintain it, is begun. The Chinese do not, by any means, make slaves of their females, and if a comparison be made between their condition in China and other modern unevangelized countries, or even with ancient kingdoms or Moslem races, it will in many points acquit them of much of the obloquy they have received on this behalf.

There are some things which tend to show that more of the sex read and write sufficiently for the ordinary purposes of life, than a slight examination would at first indicate. Among these may be mentioned the letter-writers compiled for their use, in which instructions are given for every variety of note and epis-

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. IX., p. 542.





tle, except, perhaps, love letters. The works just mentioned, intended for their improvement, form an additional fact. A Manchu official of rank, named Sin-kwän, who rose to be governor of Kiangsi in Kiaking's reign, wrote a primer in 1838, for girls, called the *Nü-rh Yü*, or '*Words for Women and Girls.*' It is in lines of four characters, and consists of aphorisms and short precepts on household management, behavior, care of children, neatness, etc., so written as to be easily memorized. It shows one of the ways in which literary men interest themselves, in educating youth, and further that there is a demand for such books. A few lines from this primer will exhibit its tenor

Vile looks should never meet your eye,  
Nor filthy words defile your ear ;  
Ne'er look on men of utterance gross,  
Nor tread the ground which they pollute.  
Keep back the heart from thoughts impure,  
Nor let your hands grow fond of sloth ;  
Then no o'ersight or call deferred  
Will, when you're pressed, demand your time

In all your care of tender babes,  
Mind lest they're fed or warmed too much ;  
The childish liberty first granted  
Must soon be checked by rule and rein ;  
Guard them from water, fire, and fools ;  
Mind lest they're hurt or maimed by falls.  
All flesh and fruits when ill with colds  
Are noxious drugs to tender bairns—  
Who need a careful oversight,  
Yet want some license in their play.  
Be strict in all you bid them do,  
For this will guard from ill and woe.

The pride taken by girls in showing their knowledge of letters is evidence that it is not common, while the general respect in which literary ladies are held proves them not to be so very rare ; though for all practical good, it may be said that half of the Chinese people know nothing of books. The fact that female education is so favorably regarded is encouraging to those philanthropic persons and ladies who are endeavoring to establish female schools at the mission stations, since they have not prejudice to contend with in addition to ignorance.





## CHAPTER X.

### STRUCTURE OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE.

It might reasonably be inferred, judging from the attention paid to learning, and the honors conferred upon its successful votaries, that the literature of the Chinese would contain much to repay investigation. Such is not the case, however, to one already acquainted with the treasures of Western science, and, in fairness, such a comparison is not quite just. Yet it has claims to the regard of the general student, from its being the literature of so vast a portion of the human species, and the result of the labors of its wisest and worthiest minds during many successive ages. The fact that it has been developed under a peculiar civilization, and breathes a spirit so totally different from the writings of Western sages and philosophers, perhaps increases the curiosity to learn what are its excellences and defects, and obtain some criteria by which to compare it with the literature of other Asiatic or even European nations. The language in which it is written—one peculiarly mystical and diverse from all other media of thought—has also added to its singular reputation, for it has been surmised that what is “wrapped up” in such complex characters must be pre-eminently valuable for matter or elegant for manner, and not less curious than profound. Although a candid examination of this literature will disclose its real mediocrity in points of research, learning, and genius, there yet remains enough to render it worthy the attention of the oriental or general student.

Some of its peculiarities are owing to the nature of the language, and the mode of instruction, both of which have affected the style and thoughts of writers: for, having, when young,



been taught to form their sentences upon the models of antiquity, their efforts to do so have moulded their thoughts in the same channel. Imitation, from being a duty, soon became a necessity. The Chinese scholar, forsaking the leadings of his own genius, soon learned to regard his models as not only being all truth themselves, but as containing the sum total of all things valuable. The intractable nature of the language, making it impossible to study other tongues through the medium of his own, moreover tended to repress all desire in the scholar to become acquainted with foreign books; and as he knew nothing of them or their authors, it was easy to conclude that there was nothing worth knowing in them, nothing to repay the toil of study, or make amends for the condescension of ascertaining. The neighbors of the Chinese have unquestionably been their inferiors in civilization, good government, learning, and wealth; and this fact has nourished their conceit, and repressed the wish to travel, and ascertain what there was in remoter regions. In judging of the character of Chinese literature, therefore, these circumstances among others under which it has risen to its present bulk, must not be overlooked; we shall conclude that the uniformity running through it is perhaps owing as much to the isolation of the people and servile imitation of their models, as to their genius: each has, in fact, mutually acted upon and influenced the other.

The "homoglot" character of the Chinese people has arisen more from the high standard of their literature, and the political institutions growing out of its canonical books (which have impelled and rewarded the efforts of students to master the language), than from any one other cause. This feature offers a great contrast to the polyglot character which the Romans possessed even to the last, and suggests the cause and results as interesting topics of inquiry. The Egyptian, Jewish, Syriac, Greek, and Latin languages had each its own national literature, and its power was enough to retain these several nations attached to their own mother tongue, while the Gauls, Iberians, and other subject peoples, having no books, took the language and literature of their rulers and conquerors. Thus the kingdom, "part iron and part clay," fell apart as soon as the grasp of Rome



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was weakened ; while the tendency in China always has been to reunite and homologate.

In this short account of the Chinese tongue, it will be sufficient to give such notices of the origin and construction of the characters, and of the idioms and sounds of the written and spoken language, as shall convey a general notion of all its parts, and to show the distinction between the spoken and written media, and their mutual action. They are both archaic, because the symbols prevented all inflexion and agglutination in the sounds, and all signs to indicate what part of speech each belonged to. They are like the ten digits, containing no vocable and imparting their meaning more to the eye than the ear.

Chinese writers, unable to trace the gradual formation of their characters (for, of course, there could be no intelligible historical data until long after their formation), have ascribed them to Hwangti, one of their primeval monarchs, or even earlier, to Fuh-hí, some thirty centuries before Christ ; as if they deemed writing to be as needful to man as clothes or marriage, all of which came from Fuh-hí. A mythical personage, Tsang-kieh, who flourished about B.C. 2700, is credited with the invention of symbols to represent ideas, from noticing the marking on tortoise-shell, and thence imitating common objects in nature.

The Japanese have tried to attach their *kana* to the Chinese characters to indicate the case or tense, but the combination looks incongruous to an educated Chinese. We might express, though somewhat crudely, analogous combinations in English by endeavoring to write *1-ty*, *1-ness*, *1-ted*, for *unity*, *oneness*, *united*, or *3-1 God* for *triune God*.

At this crisis, when a medium for conveying and giving permanency to ideas was formed, Chinese historians say : "The heavens, the earth, and the gods, were all agitated. The inhabitants of hades wept at night ; and the heavens, as an expression of joy, rained down ripe grain. From the invention of writing, the machinations of the human heart began to operate ; stories false and erroneous daily increased, litigations and imprisonments sprang up ; hence, also, specious and artful language, which causes so much confusion in the world. It was



for these reasons that the shades of the departed wept at night. But from the invention of writing, polite intercourse and music proceeded; reason and justice were made manifest; the relations of social life were illustrated, and laws became fixed. Governors had laws to which they might refer; scholars had authorities to venerate; and hence, the heavens, delighted, rained down ripe grain. The classical scholar, the historian, the mathematician, and the astronomer can none of them do without writing; were there no written language to afford proof of passing events, the shades might weep at noonday, and the heavens rain down blood.”<sup>1</sup> This singular myth may, perhaps, cover a genuine fact worthy of more than passing notice—indicating a consentaneous effort of the early settlers on the Yellow River to substitute for the purpose of recording laws and events something more intelligible than the knotted cords previously in use. Its form presents a curious contrast to the personality of the fable of Cadmus and his invention of the Greek letters.

The date of the origin of this language, like that of the letters of Western alphabets, is lost in the earliest periods of post-diluvian history, but there can be no doubt that it is the most ancient language now spoken, and along with the Egyptian and cuneiform, among the oldest written languages used by man. The Ethiopic and Coptic, the Sanscrit and Pali, the Syriac, Aramaic, and Pehlvi, have all become dead languages; and the Greek, Latin, and Persian, now spoken, differ so much

<sup>1</sup> Professor H. A. Sayce, of Oxford, in reference to a suggested possible connection between the Chinese and primitive Accadian population of Chaldea, says in a letter to the *London Times*: “I would mention one fact which may certainly be considered to favor it. The cuneiform characters of Babylonia and Assyria are, as is well known, degenerated hieroglyphics, like the modern Chinese characters. The original hieroglyphics were invented by the Accadians before they descended into Babylonia from the mountains of Elam, and I have long been convinced that they were originally written in vertical columns. In no other way can I explain the fact that most of the pictures to which the cuneiform characters can be traced back stand upon their sides. There is evidence to show that the inventors of the hieroglyphics used papyrus, or some similar vegetable substance, for writing purposes before the alluvial plain of Babylonia furnished them with clay, and the use of such a writing material will easily account for the vertical direction in which the characters were made to run.”





from the ancient style, as to require special study to understand the books in them: while during successive eras, the written and spoken language of the Chinese has undergone few alterations, and done much to deepen the broad line of demarkation between them and other branches of the human race. The fact, then, that this is the only living language which has survived the lapse of ages is, doubtless, owing to its ideographic character and its entire absence of sound as an integral factor of any symbol. Their form and meaning were, therefore, only the more strongly united because each reader was at liberty to sound them as he pleased or had been taught by local instructors. He was not hindered, on account of his local *brogue*, from communicating ideas with those who employed the same signs in writing. Upon the subsequent rise of a great and valuable literature, the maintenance of the written language was the chief element of national life and integrity among those peoples who read and admired the books. Nor has this language, like those of the Hebrews, the Assyrians, and others already mentioned, ever fallen into disuse and been supplanted by the sudden rise and physical or intellectual vigor of some neighboring community speaking a *patois*. For we find that alphabetic languages, whose words represent at once meaning and sound, are as dependent upon local dialects as is the Chinese tongue upon its symbols; consequently, when in the former case the sounds had so altered that the meanings were obscured, the mode of writing was likely to be changed. The extent of its literature and uses made of it were then the only safeguard of the written forms; while as men learned to read books they became more and more prone to associate sense and form, regarding the sound as traditionary. We have, in illustration of this, to look no further than to our own language, whose cumbersome spelling is in a great measure resulting from a dislike of changing old associations of sense and form which would be involved in the adoption of a phonetic system.

The Chinese have had no inducement, at any stage of their existence, to alter the forms of their symbols, inasmuch as no nation in Asia contiguous to their own has ever achieved a literature which could rival theirs; no conqueror came to impose



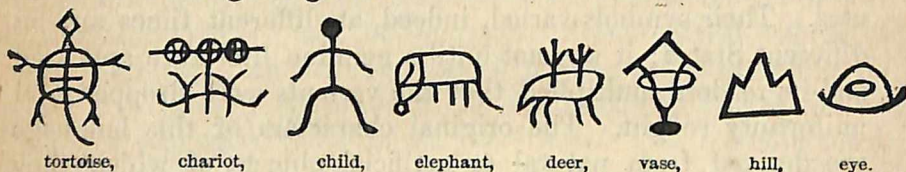
his tongue upon them ; their language completely isolated them from intellectual intercourse with others. This isolation, fraught with many disadvantages in the contracted nature of their literature, and the reflux, narrowing influence on their minds, has not been without its compensations. A national life of a unique sort has resulted, and to this self-nurtured language may be traced the origin of much of the peace, industry, population, and healthy pride of the Chinese people.

The Chinese have paid great and praiseworthy attention to their language, and furnished us with all needed books to its study. Premising that the original symbols were ideographic, the necessities of the case compelled their contraction as much as possible, and soon resulted in arbitrary signs for all common uses. Their symbols varied, indeed, at different times and in different States ; it was not until a genuine literature appeared and its readers multiplied that the variants were dropped and uniformity sought. The original characters of this language are derived from natural or artificial objects, of which they were at first the rude outlines. Most of the forms are preserved in the treatises of native philologists, where the changes they have gradually undergone are shown. The number of objects chosen at first was not great ; among them were symbols for the sun, moon, hills, animals, parts of the body, etc. ; and in drawing them the limners seem to have proposed nothing further than an outline sketch, which, by the aid of a little explanation, would be intelligible. Thus the picture  would probably be recognized by all who saw it as representing the *moon* ; that of  as a *fish* ; and so of others. It is apparent that the number of pictures which could be made in this manner would bear no proportion to the wants and uses of a language, and therefore recourse must soon be had to more complicated symbols, to combining those already understood, or to the adoption of arbitrary or phonetic signs. All these modes have been more or less employed.

Chinese philologists arrange all the characters in their language into six classes, called *luh shu*, or 'six writings.' The first, called *siang hing*, morphographs, or 'imitative symbols,' are those in which a plain resemblance can be traced between



the original form and the object represented; they are among the first characters invented, although the six hundred and eight placed in this class do not include all the original symbols. These pristine forms have since been modified so much that the resemblance has disappeared in most of them, caused chiefly by the use of paper, ink, and pencils, instead of the iron style and bamboo tablets formerly in use for writing; circular strokes being more distinctly made with an iron point upon the hard wood than with a hair pencil upon thin paper; angular strokes and square forms, therefore, gradually took the place of round or curved ones, and contracted characters came into use in place of the original imitative symbols. In this class such characters as the following are given :



altered to









The second class, only one hundred and seven in number, is called *ch'i sz'*, i.e., 'symbols indicating thought.' They differ from the preceding chiefly in that the characters are formed by combining previously formed symbols in such a way as to indicate some idea easily deducible from their position or combination, and pointing out some property or relative circumstance belonging to them. Chinese philologists consider these two classes as comprising all the symbols in the language, which depict objects either in whole or in part, and whose meaning is apparent from the resemblance to the object, or from the position of the parts. Among those placed in this class are,

- ☾ moon half appearing, signifies evening; now written 夕
- ☀ sun above the horizon, denotes morning; now written 旦
- ☺ something in the mouth, meaning sweet; now written 甘





The third class, amounting to seven hundred and forty characters, is called *hwui i*, i.e., 'combined ideas,' or ideographs, and comprises characters made up of two or three symbols to form a single idea, whose meanings are deducible either from their position, or supposed relative influence upon each other. Thus the union of the sun and moon,  *ming*, expresses brightness;  *kien*, a piece of wood in a doorway, denotes obstruction; two trees stand for a forest, as  *lin*; and three for a thicket, as  *san*; two men upon the ground conveys the idea of sitting; a *mouth* in a *door* signifies to ask; *man* and *words* means truth and to believe; *heart* and *death* imports forgetfulness; *dog* and *mouth* means to bark; *woman* and *broom* denotes a wife, referring to her household duties; *pencil* and *to speak* is a book, or to write. But in none of these compounded characters is there anything like that perfection of picture writing stated by some writers to belong to the language, which will enable one unacquainted with the meaning of the separate symbols to decide upon the signification of the combined group. On the contrary it is in most cases certain that the third idea made by combining two already known symbols, usually required more or less explanation to fix its precise meaning, and remove the doubt which would otherwise arise. For instance, the combination of the sun and moon might as readily mean a solar or lunar eclipse, or denote the idea of time, as brightness. A piece of wood in a doorway would almost as naturally suggest a *threshold* as an *obstruction*; and so of others. A straight line in a doorway would more readily suggest a closed or bolted door, which is the signification of  *shan*, anciently written ; but the idea intended to be conveyed by these combinations would need prior explanation as much as the primitive symbol, though it would thenceforth readily recur to mind when noticing the construction.

It is somewhat singular that the opinion should have obtained so much credence, that their meanings were easily deducible from their shape and construction. It might almost be said, that not a single character can be accurately defined from a mere inspection of its parts; and the meanings now given of some of those which come under this class are so arbitrary and



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far-fetched, as to show that Chinese characters have not been formed by rule and plummet more than words in other languages. The mistake which Du Ponceau so learnedly combats arose, probably, from confounding *sound* with *construction*, and inferring that, because persons of different nations, who used this as their written language, could understand it when written, though mutually unintelligible when speaking, that it addressed itself so entirely to the eye, as to need no previous explanation.

The fourth class, called *chuen chu*, 'inverted significations,' includes three hundred and seventy-two characters, being such as by some inversion, contraction, or alteration of their parts, acquire different meanings. This class is not large, but these and other modifications of the original symbols to express abstract and new ideas show that those who used the language either saw at once how cumbrous it would become if they went on forming imitative signs, or else that their invention failed, and they resorted to changes more or less arbitrary in characters already known to furnish distinctive signs for different ideas. Thus *yu* 𠂔 the *hand*, turning toward the right means the right; inclined in the other direction, as *tso* 𠂔 it means the left. The *heart* placed beneath *slave*, 怒 signifies anger; *threads obstructed*, as 𦉳, means to sunder; but turned the other way, as 𦉴, signifies continuous.

The fifth class, called *kiai shing*, i.e., 'uniting sound symbols,' or phonogram, contains twenty-one thousand eight hundred and ten characters, or nearly all in the language. They are formed of an imitative symbol united to one which merely imparts its sound to the compound; the former usually partakes more or less of the new idea, while the latter loses its own meaning, and gives only its name. In this respect, Chinese characters are superior to the Arabic numerals, inasmuch as combinations like 25, 101, etc., although conveying the same meaning to all nations using them, can *never* indicate sound. This plan of forming new combinations by the union of symbols expressing idea and sound, enables the Chinese to increase the number of characters without multiplying the original symbols; but these compounds, or *lexigraphs*, as Du Ponceau calls





them, do not increase very rapidly. In Annam they have become so numerous in the course of years that the Chinese books made in that country are hard to read. The probable mode in which this arose can best be explained by a case which occurred at Canton in 1832. Immature locusts were to be described in a proclamation, but the word *nan*, by which they were called, was not contained in any dictionary. It would be sufficient to designate this insect to all persons living where it was found by selecting a well-understood character, like 南 *south*, having the exact sound *nan*, by which the insect itself was called, and joining it to the determinative symbol 虫 *chung* insect. It would then signify, to every one who knew the sound and meaning of the component parts, the *insect nan*; and be read *nan*, 蝻 meaning this very insect to the people in Kwangtung. If this new combination was carried to a distant part of the country, where the insect itself was unknown, it would convey no more information to the Chinese who *saw* the united symbol, than the sounds *insect nan* would to an Englishman who *heard* them; to both persons a meaning must be given by describing the insect. If, however, the people living in this distant region called the phonetic part of the new character by another sound, as *nam*, *nem*, or *lam*, they would attach another name to the new compound, but the people on the spot would, perhaps, not understand them when they spoke it by that name. If they wrote it, however, both would give it the same signification, but a different sound.

In this way, the thousands of characters under this class have probably originated. But this rule of sounding them according to the phonetic part is not in all cases certain; for in the lapse of time, the sounds of many characters have changed, while those of the parts themselves have not altered; in other cases, the parts have altered, and the sounds remained; so that now only a great degree of probability as to the correct sound can be obtained by inspecting the component parts. The similarity in sound between most of the characters having the same phonetic part is a great assistance in reading Chinese, though very little in understanding it, and has had much influence in keeping the sounds unchanged.



There are a few instances of an almost inadvertent arrival at a true syllabic system, by which the initial consonant of one part, when joined to the final vowel of the other, gives the sound of the character; as *ma* and *f'i*, in the character 𪛗, when united in this way, make *mí*. The meanings of the components are *hemp* and *not*, that of the compound is *extravagant*, *wasteful*, etc., showing no relation to the primary signification. The number of such characters is very small, and the syllabic composition here noticed is probably fortuitous, and not intentional.

The sixth class, called *kia tsié*, i.e., 'borrowed uses,' includes metaphoric symbols and combinations, in which the meaning is deduced by a somewhat fanciful accommodation; their number is five hundred and ninety-eight. They differ but little from the second class of indicative symbols. For instance, the symbol 字 or 𠄎, meaning a written character, is composed of a *child* under a *shelter*—characters being considered as the well-nurtured offspring of hieroglyphics. The character for *hall* means also *mother*, because she constantly abides there. The word for *mind* or *heart* is *sin* 心, originally intended to represent that organ, but now used chiefly in a metaphorical sense. Chinese grammarians find abundant scope for the display of their fancy in explaining the etymology and origin of the characters, but the aid which their researches give toward understanding the language as at present used is small. This classification under six heads is modern, and was devised as a means of arranging what existed already, for they confess that their characters were not formed according to fixed rules, and have gradually undergone many changes.

The total number in the six classes is twenty-four thousand two hundred and thirty-five, being many less than are found in Kanghi's Dictionary, which amount to forty-four thousand four hundred and forty-nine; but in the larger sum are included the obsolete and synonymous characters, which, if deducted, would reduce it to nearly the same number. It is probable that the total of really different characters in the language sanctioned by good usage, does not vary greatly from twenty-five thousand, though authors have stated them at from fifty-four thousand





four hundred and nine, as Magaillans does, up to two hundred and sixty thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, as Montucci. The Chinese editor of the large lexicon on which Dr. Morrison founded his Dictionary, gives it as his opinion that there are fifty thousand characters, including synonyms and different forms; and taking in every variety of tones given to the words, and sounds for which no characters exist, that there are five thousand different words. But even the sum of twenty-five thousand different characters contains thousands of unusual ones which are seldom met with, and which, as is the case with old words in English, are not often learned.

The burden of remembering so many complicated symbols, whose form, sound, and meanings are all necessary to enable the student to read and write intelligibly, is so great that the result has been to diminish those in common use, and increase their meanings. This course of procedure really occurs in most languages, and in the Chinese greatly reduces the labor of acquiring it. It may be safely said, that a good knowledge of ten thousand characters will enable one to read any work in Chinese, and write intelligibly on any subject; and Prémare says a good knowledge of four or five thousand characters is sufficient for all common purposes, while two-thirds of that number might in fact suffice. The troublesome ones are either proper names or technics peculiar to a particular science. The nine canonical works contain altogether only four thousand six hundred and one *different* characters, while in the Five Classics alone there are over two hundred thousand words. The entire number of different characters in the code of laws translated by Staunton is under two thousand.

The invention of printing and the compilation of dictionaries have given to the form of modern characters a greater degree of certainty than they had in ancient times. The variants of some of the most common ones were exceedingly numerous before this period; Callery gives forty-two different modes of writing *pao*, 'precious;' and forty-one for writing *tsun*, 'honorable;' showing the absence of an acknowledged standard, and the slight intercourse between learned men. The best mode of arranging the characters so as to find them easily, has been a sub-



ject of considerable trouble to Chinese lexicographers, and the various methods they have adopted renders it difficult to consult their dictionaries without considerable previous knowledge of the language. In some, those having the same sound are grouped together, so that it is necessary to know what a character is called before it can be found ; and this arrangement has been followed in vocabularies designed principally for the use of the common people. One well-known vocabulary used at Canton, called the *Fün Yun*, or 'Divider of Sounds,' is arranged on this plan, the words being placed under thirty-three orders, according to their terminations. Each order is subdivided into three or four classes according to the tones, and all the characters having the same tone and termination are placed together, as *kam*, *lam*, *tam*, *nam*, etc. As might be supposed, it requires considerable time to find a character whose tone is not exactly known ; and even with the tone once mastered, the uncertainty is equally troublesome if the termination is not familiar : for singular as it may seem to those who are acquainted only with phonetic languages, a Chinese can, if anything, more readily distinguish between two words #*ming* and *ming*, whose tones are unlike, than he can between #*ming* and #*ming*, #*ming* or #*bing*, where the initial or final differs a little, and the tones are the same.

An improvement on this plan of arrangement was made by adopting a mode of expressing the sounds of Chinese characters introduced by the Buddhists, in the *Yuh Pien*, published A.D. 543, and ever since used in all dictionaries. This takes the initial of the sound of one character and the final of another, and combines them to indicate the sound of the given character ; as from *li-en* and *y-ing* to form *ling*. There are thirty-six characters chosen for the initial consonants, and thirty-eight for the final sounds, but the student is perplexed by the different characters chosen in different works to represent them.<sup>1</sup> The inhabitants of Amoy use a small lexicon called the *Shih-wu Yin*, or 'Fifteen Sounds,' in which the characters are classified

<sup>1</sup> Biot has a brief note upon the methods employed by native scholars for studying pronunciation. *Essai sur l'instruction en Chine*, p. 597.





on this principle, by first arranging them all under fifty finals, and then placing all those having the same termination in a regular series under fifteen initials. Supposing a new character, *chien*, is seen, whose sound is given, or the word is heard in conversation and its meanings are wanted, the person turns to the part of the book containing the final *ien*, which is designated perhaps by the character *kien*, and looks along the initials until he comes to *ch*, which is indicated by the character *chang*. In this column, all the words in the book read or spoken *chien*, or whatever tone they may be, are placed together according to their tones; and a little practice readily enables a person speaking the dialect to use this manual. It is, however, of little or no avail to persons speaking other dialects, or to those whose vernacular differs much from that of the compiler, whose own ear was his only guide. Complete dictionaries have been published on the phonetic plan, the largest of which, the *Wu Ché Yun Fu*, is arranged with so much minuteness of intonation as to puzzle even the best educated natives, and consequently abridge its usefulness as an expounder of words.

The unfitness of either of these modes of arrangement to find an unknown character, led to another classification according to their composition, by selecting the most prominent parts of each character as its key, or radical, and grouping those together in which the same key occurred. This plan was adopted subsequently to that of arranging the characters according to the sounds, about A.D. 543, when their number was put at five hundred and forty-two; they were afterward reduced to three hundred and sixty, and toward the close of the Ming dynasty finally fixed at two hundred and fourteen in the *Tsz' Lwi*. It is now in general use from the adoption of the abridged dictionary, the *Kanghi Tsz' Tien*; though this number could have been advantageously reduced, as has been shown by Gonçalves, its universal adoption, more than anything else, renders it the best system. All characters found under the same radical are placed consecutively, according to the number of strokes necessary to write them, but no regularity is observed in placing those having the same number of strokes. The term *primitive* has been technically applied to the remaining part of the



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character, which, though perhaps no older than the radical, is conveniently denoted by this word. The characters selected for the radicals are all common ones, and among the most ancient in the language; they are here grouped according to their meanings in order to show something of the leading ideas followed in combination.

*Corporal*.—Body, corpse, head, hair, down, whiskers, face, eye, ear, nose, mouth, teeth, tusk, tongue, hand, heart, foot, hide, leather, skin, wings, feathers, blood, flesh, talons, horn, bones.

*Biological*.—Man, woman, child; horse, sheep, tiger, dog, ox, hog, hog's head, deer; tortoise, dragon, reptile, mouse, toad; bird, gallinaceous fowls; fish; insect.

*Botanical*.—Herb, grain, rice, wheat, millet, hemp, leeks, melon, pulse, bamboo, sacrificial herb; wood, branch, sprout, petal.

*Mineral*.—Metal, stone, gems, salt, earth.

*Meteorological*.—Rain, wind, fire, water, icicle, vapor, sound; sun, moon, evening; time.

*Utensils*.—A chest, a measure, a mortar, spoon, knife, bench, couch, crockery, clothes, tiles, dishes, napkin, net, plough, vase, tripod, boat, carriage, pencil; bow, halberd, arrow, dart, ax, musical reed, drum, seal.

*Descriptives*.—Black, white, yellow, azure, carnation, sombre; color; high, long, sweet, square, large, small, strong, lame, slender, old, fragrant, acrid, perverse, base, opposed.

*Actions*.—To enter, to follow, to walk slowly, to arrive at, to stride, to walk, to run, to reach to, to touch, to stop, to fly, to overspread, to envelop, to encircle, to establish, to overshadow, to adjust, to distinguish, to divine, to see, to eat, to speak, to kill, to fight, to oppose, to stop, to embroider, to owe, to compare, to imitate, to bring forth, to use, to promulge.

*Miscellaneous*.—A desert, cave, field, den, mound, hill, valley, rivulet, cliff, retreat. A city; roof, gate, door, portico. One, two, eight, ten. Demon; an inch, mile; without, not, false; a scholar, statesman, letters; art, wealth; motion; self, myself, father; a point; again; wine; silk; joined hands; a long journey; print of a bear's foot; a surname; classifier of cloth.

The number of characters found under each of these radicals in Kanghi's Dictionary varies from five up to one thousand three hundred and fifty-four. The radical is not uniformly placed, but its usual position is on the left of the primitive. Some occur on the top, others on the bottom; some inclose the primitive, and many have no fixed place, making it evident that no uniform plan was adopted in the original construction. They must be thoroughly learned before the dictionary can be readily used,





and some practice had before a character can be quickly found.<sup>1</sup> The groups occurring under a majority of the radicals are more or less natural in their general meaning, a feature of the language which has already been noticed (page 375). Some of the radicals are interchanged, and characters having the same meaning sometimes occur under two or three different ones—variations which seem to have arisen from the little importance of a choice out of two or three similar radicals. Thus the same word *tsien*, 'a small cup,' is written under the three radicals *gem*, *porcelain*, and *horn*, originally, no doubt, referring to the material for making it. This interchange of radicals adds greatly to the number of duplicate forms, which are still further increased by a similar interchange of primitives having the same sound. These two changes very seldom occur in the same character, but there are numerous instances of synonymous forms under almost every radical, arising from an interchange of primitives, and also under analogous radicals caused by their reciprocal use. Thus, from both these causes, there are, under the radical *ma*, 'a horse,' one hundred and eighteen duplicate forms, leaving two hundred and ninety-three different words; of the two hundred and four characters under *niu*, 'an ox,' thirty-nine are synonymous forms; and so under other radicals. These characters do not differ in meaning more than *favor* and *favour*, or *lady* and *ladye*; they are mere variations in the form of writing, and though apparently adding greatly to the number of characters, do not seriously increase the difficulty of learning the language.

Variants of other descriptions frequently occur in books, which needlessly add to the labor of learning the language. Ancient forms are sometimes adopted by pedantic writers to show their learning, while ignorant and careless writers use abridged or vulgar forms, because they either do not know the correct form, or are heedless in using it. When such is the case, and the character cannot be found in the dictionary, the reader is entirely at fault, especially if he be a foreigner, though in China itself he would not experience much difficulty

<sup>1</sup> *Easy Lessons in Chinese*, pp. 3-29; *Chinese Repository*, Vol. III., pp. 1-37.



where the natives were at hand to refer to. Vulgar forms are very common in cheap books and letters, which are as unsanctioned by the dictionaries and good usage, as cockney phrases or miner's slang are in pure English. They arise, either from a desire on the part of the writer to save time by making a contracted form of few strokes instead of the correct character of many strokes; or he uses common words to express an energetic vulgar phrase, for which there are no authorized characters, but which will be easily understood phonetically by his readers. These characters would perchance not be understood at all outside of the range of the author's dialect, because the phrase itself was new; their individual meaning, indeed, has nothing to do with the interpretation of the sentence, for in this case they are merely signs of sound, like words in other languages, and lose their lexicographic character. For instance, the words *kia-fi* for coffee, *kap-tan* for captain, *mi-sz'* for *Mr.*, etc., however they were written, would be intelligible to a native of Canton if they expressed those sounds, because he was familiar with the words themselves; but a native of Shensi would not understand them, because, not knowing the things intended, he would naturally refer to the characters themselves for the meaning of the phrase, and thus be wholly misled. In such cases, the characters become mere syllables of a phonetic word. Foreign names are often transliterated by writers on geography or history, and their recognition is no easy task to their readers.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the variations in the forms of characters, there are six different styles of writing them, which correspond to black-letter, script, italic, roman, etc., in English. The first is called *Chuen shu* (from the name of the person who invented it), which foreigners have styled the *seal character*, from its use in seals and ornamental inscriptions. It is next to the picture hieroglyphics, the most ancient fashion of writing, and has undergone many changes in the course of ages. It is studied by those who cut seals or inscriptions, but no books are ever printed in it.

<sup>1</sup> One may gain some idea of this difficulty by referring to the geographical names contained in the Russo-Chinese Treaty, quoted on page 215.



1 書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋

2 書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋

3 書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋

4 書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋

5 書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋

6 書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋







The second is the *li shu*, or style of official attendants, which was introduced about the Christian era, as an elegant style to be employed in engrossing documents. It is now seen in prefaces and formal inscriptions, and requires no special study to read it, as it differs but slightly from the following.

The third is the *kiai shu*, or pattern style, and has been gradually formed by the improvements in good writing. It is the usual form of Chinese characters, and no man can claim a literary name among his countrymen if he cannot write neatly and correctly in this style.

The fourth is called *hing shu*, or running hand, and is the common hand of a neat writer. It is frequently used in prefaces and inscriptions, scrolls and tablets, and there are books prepared in parallel columns having this and the pattern style arranged for school-boys to learn to write both at the same time. The running hand cannot be read without a special study; and although this labor is not very serious when the language of books is familiar, still to become well acquainted with both of them withdraws many days and months of the pupil from progress in acquiring knowledge to learning two modes of writing the same word.

The fifth style is called *tsao tsz'*, or plant character, and is a freer description of running hand than the preceding, being full of abbreviations, and the pencil runs from character to character, without taking it from the paper, almost at the writer's fancy. It is more difficult to read than the preceding, but as the abbreviations are somewhat optional, the *tsao tsz'* varies considerably, and more or less resembles the running hand according to the will of the writer. The fancy of the Chinese for a "flowing pencil," and a mode of writing where the elegance and freedom of the calligraphy can be admired as much or more than the style or sentiment of the writing, as well as the desire to contract their multangular characters as much as possible, has contributed to introduce and perpetuate these two styles of writing. How much all these varieties of form superadd to the difficulty of learning the mere apparatus of knowledge need hardly be stated.

The sixth style is called *Sung shu*, and was introduced under the Sung dynasty in the tenth century, soon after printing on



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wooden blocks was invented. It differs from the third style, merely in a certain squareness and angularity of stroke, which transcribers for the press only are obliged to learn. Of these six forms of writing, the pattern style and running hand are the only two which the people learn to any great extent, although many acquire the knowledge of some words in the seal character, and the running hand of every person, especially those engaged in business, approaches more or less to the plant character. But foreigners will seldom find time or inclination to learn to write more than one form, to be able to read and communicate on all occasions.

Besides these styles, there are fanciful ones, called 'tadpole characters,' in imitation of various objects;<sup>1</sup> the Emperor Kienlung brought together thirty-two of them in an edition of his poem, the *Elegy upon the City of Mukden*.<sup>2</sup>

All the strokes in the characters are reduced to eight elementary ones, which are contained in the single character

永 *yung*, 'eternal.'



A dot, a line, a perpendicular, a hook, a spike, a sweep, a stroke, a dash-line.

Each of these is subdivided into many forms in copy-books, having particular names, with directions how to write them, and numerous examples introduced under each stroke.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The writer has an edition of the *Thousand Character Classic*, containing each couplet of eight words in a different form of character, making one hundred and twenty-five styles of type—too grotesque to be imitated, and probably never actually in use.

<sup>2</sup> See page 193. In order that the Manchu portion of this famous poem might not appear inferior to the Chinese, the Emperor ordered thirty-two varieties of Manchu characters to be *invented* and published in like manner with the others. Rémusat, *Mélanges*, Tome II., p. 59. Père Amiot, *Eloge de la Ville de Moukden*. Trad. en français. Paris, 1770.

<sup>3</sup> *Chinese Chrestomathy*, Chap. I., Secs. 5 and 6, where the rules for writing Chinese are given in full with numerous examples; *Easy Lessons in Chinese*, p. 59; *Chinese Repository*, Vol. III., p. 37.





The Chinese regard their characters as highly elegant, and take unwearied pains to learn to write them in a beautiful, uniform, well-proportioned manner. Students are provided with a painted board upon which to practise with a brush dipped in blackened water. The articles used in writing, collectively called *wan fang sz' pao*, or 'four precious things of the library,' are the pencil, ink, paper, and ink-stone. The best pencils are made of the bristly hair of the sable and fox, and cheaper ones from the deer, cat, wolf and rabbit; camel's hair is not used. A combination of softness and elasticity is required, and those who are skilled in their use discern a difference and an excellence altogether imperceptible to a novice. The hairs are laid in a regular manner, and when tied up are brought to a delicate tip; the handle is made of the twigs of a bamboo cultivated for the purpose. The ink, usually known as India ink, is made from the soot of burning oil, pine, fir, and other substances, mixed with glue or isinglass, and scented. It is formed into oblong cakes or cylinders, inscribed with the maker's name, the best kinds being put up in a very tasteful manner. A singular error formerly obtained credence regarding this ink, that it was inspissated from the fluid found in the cuttle-fish. When used, the ink is rubbed with water upon argillite, marble, or other stones, some of which are cut and ground in a beautiful manner. Chinese paper is made from bamboo, by triturating the woody fibre to a pulp in mortars after the pieces have been soaked in ooze, and then taking it up in moulds; the pulp is sometimes mixed with a little cotton fibre. Inferior sorts are made entirely from cotton refuse; and in the North, where the bamboo does not grow, the bark of the *Broussonetia*, or paper mulberry, furnishes material for a tough paper used for windows, wrappings, and account books, etc. Bamboo paper has no sizing in it, and is a frail material for preserving valuable writings, as it is easily destroyed by insects, mildew, or handling.<sup>1</sup>

In the days of Confucius, pieces of bamboo pared thin, palm

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<sup>1</sup> *Journal Asiatic Soc. Bengal*, Vol. III. (Sept., 1834), p. 477. S. Julien in the *Revue de l'Orient et de l'Algerie*, XX., p. 74, 1856.



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leaves, and reeds, were all used for writing upon with a sharp stick or stile. About the third century before Christ, silk and cloth were employed, and hair pencils made for writing. Paper was invented about the first century, and cotton-paper may have been brought from India, where it was in use more than a hundred years before. India ink was manufactured by the seventh century; and the present mode of printing upon blocks was adopted from the discovery of Fungtau in the tenth century, of taking impressions from engraved stones. In the style of their notes and letters, the Chinese show both neatness and elegance; narrow slips of tinted paper are employed, on which various emblematic designs are stamped in water lines, and enclosed in fanciful envelopes. It is common to affix a cipher instead of the name, or to close with a periphrasis or sentence well understood by the parties, and thereby avoid any signature; this, which originated, no doubt, in a fear of interception and unpleasant consequences, has gradually become a common mode of subscribing friendly epistles.

The mode of printing is so well fitted for the language that few improvements have been made in its manipulations, while the cheapness of books brings them within reach of the poorest. Cutting the blocks, and writing the characters, form two distinct branches of the business; printing the sheets, binding the volumes, and publishing the books, also furnish employment to other craftsmen. The first step is to write the characters upon thin paper, properly ruled with lines, two pages being cut upon one block, and a heavy double line surrounding them. The title of the work, chapter, and paging are all cut in a central column, and when the leaf is printed it is folded through this column so as to bring the characters on the edge and partly on both pages. Marginal notes are placed on the top of the page; comments, when greatly extended, occupy the upper part, separated from the text by a heavy line, or when mere scholia, are interlined in the same column in characters of half the size. Sometimes two works are printed together, one running through the volume on the upper half of the leaves, and separated from that occupying the lower half by a heavy line. Illustrations usually occupy separate pages at the commencement of the





book, but there are a few works with woodcuts of a wretched description, inserted in the body of the page. In books printed by government, each page is sometimes surrounded with dragons, or the title page is adorned in red by this emblem of imperial authority.

When the leaf has been written out as it is to be printed, it is turned over and pasted upon the block, face downward. The wood usually used by blockcutters is pear or plum; the boards are half or three-fourths of an inch thick, and planed for cutting on both sides. The paper, when dried upon the board, is carefully rubbed off with the wetted finger, leaving every character and stroke plainly delineated. The cutter then, with his chisels, cuts away all the blank spots in and around the characters, to the depth of a line or more, after which the block is ready for the printer, whose machinery is very simple. Seated before a bench, he lays the block on a bed of paper so that it will not move nor chafe. The pile of paper lies on one side, the pot of ink before him, and the pressing brush on the other. Taking the ink brush, he slightly rubs it across the block twice in such a way as to lay the ink equably over the surface; he then places a sheet of paper upon it, and over that another, which serves as a tympanum. The impression is taken with the fibrous bark of the gomuti palm; one or two sweeps across the block complete the impression, for only one side of the paper is printed. Another and cheaper method in common use for publishing slips of news, court circulars, etc., consists in cutting the characters in blocks of hard wax, from which as many as two hundred impressions can often be taken before they become entirely illegible. The ink is manufactured from lampblack mixed with vegetable oil; the printers grind it for themselves.

The sheets are taken by the binder, who folds them through the middle by the line around the pages, so that the columns shall register with each other, he then collates them into volumes, placing the leaves evenly by their folded edge, when the whole are arranged, and the covers pasted on each side. Two pieces of paper stitch it through the back, the book is trimmed, and sent to the bookseller. If required, it is stitched firmly with



thread, but this part, as well as writing the title on the bottom edges of the volume, and making the pasteboard wrapper, are usually deferred till the taste of a purchaser is ascertained. Books made of such materials\* are not as durable as European volumes, and those who can afford the expense frequently have valuable works inclosed in wooden boxes. They are printed of all sizes between small *sleeve* editions (as the Chinese call 24 and 32 mos) up to quartos, twelve or fourteen inches square, larger than which it is difficult to get blocks.

The price varies from one cent—for a brochure of twenty-five or thirty pages—to a dollar and a half a volume. It is seldom higher save for illustrated works. A volume rarely contains more than a hundred leaves, and in fine books their thickness is increased by inserting an extra sheet inside of each leaf. At Canton or Fuhchau, the *History of the Three States*, bound in twenty-one volumes 12mo, printed on white paper, is usually sold for seventy-five cents or a dollar per set. Kanghi's Dictionary, in twenty-one volumes 8vo, on yellow paper, sells for four dollars; and all the nine classics can be purchased for less than two. Books are hawked about the streets, circulating libraries are carried from house to house upon movable stands, and booksellers' shops are frequent in large towns. No censorship, other than a prohibition to write about the present dynasty, is exercised upon the press; nor are authors protected by a copyright law. Men of wealth sometimes show their literary taste by defraying the expense of getting the blocks of extensive works cut, and publishing them. Pwan Sz'ching, a wealthy merchant at Canton, published, in 1846, an edition of the *Pei Wän Yun Fu*, in one hundred and thirty thick octavo volumes, the blocks for which must have cost him more than ten thousand dollars. The number of good impressions which can be obtained from a set of blocks is about sixteen thousand, and by retouching the characters, ten thousand more can be struck off.

The disadvantages of this mode of printing are that other languages cannot easily be introduced into the page with the Chinese characters; the blocks occupy much room, are easily spoiled or lost; and are incapable of correction without much



expense. It possesses some compensatory advantages peculiar to the Chinese and its cognate languages, Manchu, Corean, Japanese, etc., all of which are written with a brush and have few or no circular strokes. Its convenience and cheapness, coupled with the low rate of wages, will no doubt make it the common mode of printing Chinese among the people for a long time.

The honor of being the first inventor of movable types undoubtedly belongs to a Chinese blacksmith named Pí Shing, who lived about A.D. 1000, and printed books with them nearly five hundred years before Gutenberg cut his matrices at Mainz. They were made of plastic clay, hardened by fire after the characters had been cut on the soft surface of a plate of clay in which they were moulded. The porcelain types were then set up in a frame of iron partitioned off by strips, and inserted in a cement of wax, resin, and lime to fasten them down. The printing was done by rubbing, and when completed the types were loosened by melting the cement, and made clean for another impression.

This invention seems never to have been developed to any practical application in superseding block-printing. The Emperor Kanghai ordered about two hundred and fifty thousand copper types to be engraved for printing publications of the government, and these works are now highly prized for their beauty. The cupidity of his successors led to melting these types into cash, but his grandson Kienlung directed the casting of a large font of lead types for government use.

The attention of foreigners was early called to the preparation of Chinese movable types, especially for the rapid manufacture of religious books, in connection with missionary work. The first fonts were made by P. P. Thoms, for the E. I. Company's office at Macao in 1815, for the purpose of printing Morrison's Dictionary. The characters were cut with chisels on blocks of type metal or tin, and though it was slow work to cut a full font, they gradually grew in numbers and variety till they served to print over twenty dictionaries and other works, designed to aid in learning Chinese, before they were destroyed by fire in 1856. A small font had been cast at Serampore in 1815,



and in 1838, the Royal Printing Office at Paris had obtained a set of blocks engraved in China, from which thick castings were made and the separate types obtained by sawing the plates. M. Le Grand, a type-founder in Paris, about the year 1836, prepared an extensive font of type with comparatively few matrices, by casting the radical and primitive on separate bodies; and the plan has been found, within certain limits, to save so much expense and room that it has been adopted in other fonts.

These experiments in Europe showed the feasibility of making and using Chinese type to any extent, but their results as to elegance and accuracy of form were not satisfactory, and proved that native workmen alone could meet the native taste. Rev. Samuel Dyer of the London Mission at Singapore began in 1838, under serious disadvantages, for he was not a practical printer, to cut the matrices for two complete fonts. He continued at his self-appointed task until his death in 1844, having completed only one thousand eight hundred and forty-five punches. His work was continued by R. Cole, of the American Presbyterian Missions, a skilful mechanic in his line, and in 1851 he was able to furnish fonts of two sizes with four thousand seven hundred characters each. Their form and style met every requirement of the most fastidious taste, and they are now in constant use.

While Mr. Dyer's fonts were suspended by his death, an attempt was made by a benevolent printer, Herr Beyerhaus of Berlin, to make one of an intermediate size on the Le Grand principle of divisible types; his proposal was taken up by the Presbyterian Board of Missions in New York, and after many delays a beautiful font was completed and in use about 1859. At this time, Mr. W. Gamble of that Mission in Shanghai, carried out his plan of making matrices by the electrotpe process, and completed a large font of small pica type in about as many months as Dyer and Beyerhaus had taken years. By means of these various fonts books are now printed in many parts of China, in almost any style, and type foundries cast in whatever quantities are needed. The government has opened an extensive printing office in Peking, and its example will encourage native booksellers to unite typography with xylographic print-





ing. More than this as conducing to the diffusion of knowledge among the people is the stimulus these cheap fonts of type have given to the circulation of newspapers in all the ports ; but for their convenient and economical use Chinese newspapers could not have been printed at all. It will be quite within the reach of native workmen, who are skilled in electrotyping, stereotyping, and casting type, to make types of all sizes and styles for their own books, as the growing intelligence of the people creates a demand for illustrated and scientific publications, as well as cheap ones.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing has conduced more to a misapprehension of the nature of the Chinese language than the way in which its phonetic character has been spoken of by different authors. Some, describing the primitive symbols, and the modifications they have undergone, have conveyed the impression that the whole language consisted of hieroglyphic or ideographic signs, which depicted ideas, and conveyed their meaning entirely to the eye, irrespective of the sound. For instance, Rémusat says, "The character is not the delineation of the sound, nor the sound the expression of the character ;" forgetting to ask himself how or when a character in any language ever delineated a sound. Yet every Chinese character is sounded as much as the words in alphabetic languages, and some have more than one to express their different meanings ; so that, although the character could not delineate the sound of the thing it denoted, the sound is the expression of the character. Others, as Mr. Lay,<sup>2</sup> have dissected the characters, and endeavored to trace back some analogy in the meanings of all those in which the same primitive is found, and by a sort of analysis, to find out how much of the signification of the radical was infused into the primitive to form the present meaning. His plan, in general terms, is to take all the characters containing a certain primitive, and find out how much of the meaning of that primitive is contained in each one ; then he reconstructs the series by defining the primitive, incidentally showing the intention of the framers of the characters in choos-

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. III., pp. 246-252, 528 ; Vol. XIV., p. 124 ; *Missionary Recorder*, January, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> *Chinese as They Are*, Chap. XXXIV.



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ing that particular one, and apportioning so much of its aggregate meaning to each character as is needed, and adding the meaning of the radical to form its whole signification. If we understand his plan, he wishes to construct a formula for each group containing the same primitive, in which the signification of the primitive is a certain function in that of all the characters containing it; to add up the total of their meanings, and divide the amount among the characters, allotting a quotient to each one. Languages are not so formed, however, and the Chinese is no exception. Some of Mr. Lay's statements are correct, but his theory is fanciful. It is impossible to decide what proportion was made by combining a radical and a primitive with any reference to their meanings, according to Mr. Lay's theory, and how many of them were simply phonetic combinations; probably nine-tenths of the compound characters have been constructed on the latter principle.

The fifth class of syllabic symbols were formed by combining the symbolic and syllabic systems, so as to represent sound chiefly, but bearing in the construction of each one some reference to its general signification. The original hieroglyphics contained no sound, *i.e.*, were not formed of phonetic constituents; the object depicted had a name, but there was no clue to it. It was impossible to do both—depict the object, and give its name in the same character. At first, the number of people using these ideographic symbols being probably small, every one called them by the same name, as soon as he knew what they represented, and began to read them. But when the ideas attempted to be written far exceeded in number the symbols, or, what is more likely, the invention of the limmers, recourse was had to the combination of the symbols already understood to express the new idea. This was done in several modes, as noticed above, but the syllabic system needs further explanation, from the extent to which it has been carried. The character 蝻 *nan*, to denote the young of the locust, has been adduced. The same principle would be applied in *reading* every new character, of which the phonetic primitive merely was recognized, although its meaning might not be known. Probably all the characters in the fifth class were sounded in strict accordance with their





phonetic primitives when constructed, but usage has changed some of their sounds, and many characters belonging to other classes, apparently containing the same primitive, are sounded quite differently; this tends to mislead those who infer the sound from the primitive. This mode of constructing and naming the characters also explains the reason why there are so few sounds compared with the number of characters; the phonetic primitive perpetuated its name in all its progeny.

More than seven-eighths of the characters have been formed from less than two thousand symbols, and it is difficult to imagine how it could have been used so long and widely without some such method to relieve the memory of the burden of retaining thousands of arbitrary marks. But, until the names and meanings of the original symbols are learned, neither the sound nor sense of the compound characters will be more apparent to a Chinese than they are to any one else; until those are known, their combinations cannot be understood, nor even then the meaning wholly deduced; each character must be learned by itself, just as words in other languages. The sounds given the original symbols doubtless began to vary early after coming into use. Intercommunication between different parts of the country was not so frequent as to prevent local dialects from arising; but however strong the tendency of the spoken monosyllables to coalesce into polysyllables, the intractable symbols kept them apart. It is surprising, too, what a tendency the mind has to trust to the eye rather than to the ear, in getting and retaining the sense of a book; it is shown in many ways, and arises from habit more than any real difficulty in catching the idea *vivâ voce*. If the characters could have coalesced, their names would soon have run together, and been modified as they are in other languages. The classics, dictionaries, and unlimited uses of a written language, maintained the same meaning; but as their sounds must be learned traditionally, endless variations and patois arose. Moreover, as new circumstances and increasing knowledge give rise to new words in all countries, so in China, new scenes and expressions arise requiring to be incorporated into the written language. Originally they were unwritten though well understood sounds; and when first writ-



ten must be explained, as is the case with foreign words like *tabu*, *ukase*, *vizier*, etc., *ad infin.*, when introduced into English. Different writers might, however, employ different primitives to express the sound, not aware that it had already been written, and hence would arise synonyms; they might use dissimilar radicals, and this as well would increase the modes of writing the sound. But the inconvenience of thus multiplying characters would be soon perceived in the obscurity of the sentence, for if the new character was not in the dictionary, its sound and composition were not enough to explain the meaning. When the language had attained a certain copiousness, the mode of education and the style of literary works compelled scholars to employ such characters only as were sanctioned by good use, or else run the risk of not being understood.

The unwritten sounds, however, could not wait for this slow mode of adoption, but the risk of being misunderstood by using characters phonetically led to descriptive terms, conveying the idea and not the sound. Where alphabetic languages adopt a technic for a new thing, the Chinese make a new phrase. This is illustrated by the terms *Hung-mao jin*, or 'Red Bristled men,' for Englishmen; *Hwa-kí*, or 'Flowery Flag,' for Americans; *Si-yang*, or 'Western Ocean,' for Portuguese, etc., used at Canton, instead of the proper names of those countries. Cause and effect act reciprocally upon each other in this instance; the effect of using unsanctioned characters to express unwritten sounds, is to render a composition obscure, while the restriction to a set of characters compels their meaning to be sufficiently comprehensive to include all occasions. Local, unwritten phrases, and unauthorized characters, are so common, however, owing to the partial communication between distant parts of so great a country and mass of people, that it is evident, if this bond of union were removed by the substitution of an alphabetical language, the Chinese would soon be split into many small nations. However desirable, therefore, might be the introduction of a written language less difficult of acquisition, and more flexible, there are some reasons for wishing it to be delayed until more intelligence is diffused and juster principles of government obtain. When the people themselves feel the need of it,





they will contrive some better medium for the promotion of knowledge.

The monosyllabic sound of the primitive once imparted to the ideophonous compound, explains the existence of so many characters having the same sound. When these various characters were presented to the eye of the scholar, no trouble was felt in recognizing their sense and sound, but confusion was experienced in speaking. This has been obviated in two ways. One is by repeating a word, or joining two of similar meanings but of different sounds, to convey a single idea; or else by adding a classifying word to express its nature. Both these modes do in fact form a real dissyllable, and it would appear so in an alphabetical language. The first sort of these *hien-hioh sz'*, or 'clam-shell words,' as they are called, are not unfrequent in books, far more common in conversation and render the spoken more diffuse than the written language—more so, perhaps, than is the case in other tongues. Similar combinations of three, four, and more characters occur, especially where a foreign article or term is translated, but the genius of the language is against the use of polysyllables. Such combinations in English as *household*, *house-warming*, *housewife*, *house-room*, *houseleeks*, *hot-house*, *wood-house*, *household-stuff*, etc., illustrate these dissyllables in Chinese; but they are not so easily understood. Such terms as *understand*, *courtship*, *withdraw*, *upright*, etc., present better analogies to the Chinese compounds. In some the real meaning is totally unlike either of the terms, as *tungkia* (lit. 'east house'), for master; *tungsí* (lit. 'east west'), for thing; *kungchu* (lit. 'lord ruler'), for princess, etc. The classifiers partake of the nature of adjectives, and serve not only to sort different words, but the same word when used in different senses. They correspond to such words in English as *herd*, *fleet*, *troop*, etc. To say a fleet of cows, a troop of ships, or a herd of soldiers, would be ridiculous only in English, but a similar misapplication would confuse the sense in Chinese.

The other way of avoiding the confusion of homophonous monosyllables, which, notwithstanding the "clam-shell words," and the extensive use of classifiers, are still liable to misapprehension, is by accurately marking its right *shing* or tone, but as



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nothing analogous to them is found in European languages, it is rather difficult to describe them. At Canton there are eight arranged in an upper and lower series of four each; at Peking there are only four, at Nanking five, and at Swatow seven. The Chinese printers sometimes mark the *shing* on certain ambiguous characters, by a semicircle put on one corner; but this is rarely done, as every one who can read is supposed to know how to speak, and consequently to be familiar with the right tone. These four tones are called *ping*, *shang*, *kü*, and *jih*, meaning, respectively, the *even*, *ascending*, *departing*, and *entering* tone. They are applied to every word, and have nothing to do either with accent or emphasis; in asking or answering, entreating or refusing, railing or flattering, soothing or recriminating, they remain ever the same. The unlettered natives, even children and females, who know almost nothing of the distinctions into four, five, seven, or eight *shing*, observe them closely in their speech, and detect a mispronunciation as soon as the learned man. A single illustration of them will suffice. The *even* tone is the natural expression of the voice, and native writers consider it the most important. In the sentence,

“When I asked him, ‘Will you let me see it?’ he said, ‘No, I’ll do no such thing,’”

the different cadence of the question and reply illustrate the upper and lower even tone. The *ascending* tone is heard in exclamatory words as *ah! indeed!* It is a little like the crescendo in music, while the *departing tone* corresponds in the same degree to the diminuendo. The drawling tone of repressed discontent, grumbling and eking out a reply, is not unlike the departing tone. The entering tone is nearly eliminated in the northern provinces, but gives a marked feature to speech in the southern; it is an abrupt ending, in the same modulation that the even tone is, but as if broken off; a man about to say *lock*, and taken with a hiccup in the middle so that he leaves off the last two letters, or the final consonant, pronounces the *juh shing*. A few characters have two tones, which give them different meanings; the *ping shing* often denotes the substantive, and the *kü shing*, the verb, but there is no regularity in this respect.





The tones are observed by natives of all ranks, speaking all patois and dialects, and on all occasions. They present a serious difficulty to the adult foreigner of preaching or speaking acceptably to the natives, for although by a proper use of classifiers, observance of idioms, and multiplication of synonyms, he may be understood, his speech will be rude and his words distasteful, if he does not learn the tones accurately. In Amoy and Fuhchau, he will also run a risk of being misunderstood. If the reader, in perusing the following sentence, will accent the italicized syllables, he will have an imperfect illustration of the confusion a wrong intonation produces: “The *present* of that *object* occasioned such a *transport* as to *abstract* my mind from all around.” In Chinese, however, it is not *accent* upon one of two syllables which must be learned, but the integral tone of a single sound, as much as in the musical octave.

It is unnecessary here to enter into any detailed description or enumeration of the words in the Chinese language. One remarkable feature is the frequency of the termination *ng* preceded by all the vowels, which imparts a peculiar singing character to Chinese speech, as *Kwangtung*, *Yangtsz' kiang*, etc. In a list of sounds in the court dialect, about one-sixth of the syllables have this termination, but a larger proportion of characters are found under those syllables, than the mere list indicates. In Morrison's Dictionary the number of separate words in the court dialect is 411, but if the aspirated syllables be distinguished, there are 533. In the author's *Syllabic Dictionary* the number is 532; Wade reduces the Peking dialect to 397 syllables in one list, and increases it to 420 in another. In the Cantonese there are 707; in the dialect of Swatow, 674; at Amoy, about 900; at Fuhchau, 928; and 660 at Shanghai. All these lists distinguish between aspirated and unaspirated words, as *ting* and *t'ing*, *pa* and *p'a*, which to an English ear are nearly identical. The largest part of the sounds are common to the dialects, but the distinctions are such as to render it easy to detect each when spoken; the court dialect is the most mellifluous of the whole and easiest to acquire. All the consonants in English are found in one or another of the dialects, besides many not occurring in that language, as *bw*, *chw*, *gw*, *jw*, *lw*,



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*mw, nw*, etc. There are also several imperfect vowel sounds not known in any European language, as *hm* or '*m*', *hn* or '*n*',<sup>no</sup> (a high nasal sound), *sz*', '*rh*', *ch*', etc. The phrase '*m'ng tāk*' in the Canton dialect, meaning *cannot be pushed*, or *chain<sup>n</sup> mai<sup>n</sup> lang*, 'a blind man,' in the Amoy, cannot be so accurately expressed by these or any other letters that one can learn the sound from them. If it is difficult for us to express their sounds by Roman letters, it is still stranger for the Chinese to write English words. For instance, *baptize* in the Canton dialect becomes *pa-pi-tai-sz'*; *flannel* becomes *fat-lan-yin*; *stairs* becomes *sz'-ta-sz'*; *impregnable* becomes *im-pi-luk-na-pu-li*; etc. Such words as *Washington*, *midshipman*, *tongue*, etc., can be written nearer their true sound, but the indivisible Chinese monosyllables offer a serious obstacle in the way of introducing foreign words and knowledge into the language.

The preceding observations explain how the numerous local variations from the general language found in all parts of China have arisen. Difficult as the spoken language is for a foreigner to acquire, from the brevity of the words and nicety of their tones, the variety of the local pronunciations given to the same character adds not a little to the labor, especially if he be situated where he is likely to come in contact with persons from different places. Amid such a diversity of pronunciation, and where one sound is really as correct as another, it is not easy to define what should constitute a dialect, a patois, or a corruption. A dialect in other languages is usually described as a local variation in pronunciation, or the use of peculiar words and expressions, not affecting the idiom or grammar of the tongue; but in the Chinese, where the written character unites the mass of people in one language, a dialect has been usually regarded by those who have written on the subject, as extending to variations in the idiom, and not restricted to differences in pronunciation and local expressions. According to this definition, there are only four or five dialects (which would in fact be as many languages if they were not united by the written character), but an endless variety of patois or local pronunciations. The Chinese have published books to illustrate the court, Changechau or Amoy, the Canton and Fuhchau dialects. The differences in the idi-





oms and pronunciation are such as to render persons speaking them mutually unintelligible, but do not affect the style of writing, whose idioms are founded upon the usage of the best writers, and remain unchanged.

The court language, the *kwan hwa*, or mandarin dialect, is rather the proper language of the country—the *Chinese language*—than a dialect. It is studied and spoken by all educated men, and no one can make any pretence to learning or accomplishments who cannot converse in it in whatever part of the Empire he may be born. It is the common language throughout the northeastern provinces, especially Honan, Shantung, and Nganhwui, though presenting more or less variations even in them from the standard of the court and capital. This speech is characterized by its soft and mellifluous tones, the absence of all harsh, consonantal endings, and the prevalence of liquids and labials. In parts of the provinces where it is spoken, as the eastern portions of Chehkiang and Kiangsu, gutturals are common, and the initials softened or changed.

This tongue is the most ancient speech now spoken, for stanzas of poetry written twenty-five centuries ago, in the times previous to Confucius, are now read with the same rhymes as when penned. The expressions of the *kwan hwa*, although resembling the written language more than the other dialects, are still unlike it, being more diffuse, and containing many synonyms and particles not required to make the sense clear when it is addressed to the eye. The difference is such in this respect that two well-educated Chinese speaking in the terse style of books would hardly understand each other, and be obliged to use more words to convey their meaning when speaking than they would consider elegant or necessary in an essay. This is, to be sure, more or less the case in all languages, but from the small variety of sounds and their monosyllabic brevity, it is unavoidable in Chinese, though it must not be inferred that the language cannot be written so as to be understood when read off; it can be written as diffusely as it is spoken, but such a style is not considered very elegant. There are books written in the colloquial, however, from which it is not difficult to learn



the style of conversation, and such books are among the best to put into the hands of a foreigner when beginning the study.

The local patois of a place is called *tu tan*, or *hiang tan*, i.e., local or village brogue, and there is an interpreter of it attached to almost every officer's court for the purpose of translating the peculiar phrases of witnesses and others brought before him. The term *dialect* cannot, strictly, in its previous definition, be applied to the *tu tan*, though it is usually so called; it is a patois or brogue. The Canton dialect is called by its citizens *pak wa*, 'the plain speech,' because it is more intelligible than the court dialect. It is comparatively easy of acquisition, and differs less from the *kwan hwa*, in its pronunciation and idioms, than that of Amoy and its vicinity; but the diversity is still enough to render it unintelligible to people from the north. A very few books have been written in it, but none which can afford assistance in learning it. A native scholar would consider his character for literary attainments almost degraded if he should write books in the provincial dialects, and forsake the style of the immortal classics. The principal feature in the pronunciation of the Canton dialect which distinguishes it from the general language, is the change of the abrupt vowel terminations, as *loh*, *kiah*, *pih*, into the well-defined consonants *k*, *p*, and *t*, as *lok*, *kap*, *pít*, a change that considerably facilitates the discrimination of the syllables. The idioms of the two cannot well be illustrated without the help of the written character, but the differences between the sounds of two or three sentences may be exhibited: The phrase, *I do not understand what he says*, is in the

Court dialect: *Wo mìn puh tung teh ta kiang shim mo.*

Canton dialect: *Ngo 'm hiu kũ kong măt yé.*

*The rice contains sand in it.*

Court dialect: *Na ko mĩ yu sha tsz'.*

Canton dialect: *Ko tik mai yau sha tsoi noi.*

None of the provincial patois differ so much from the *kwan hwa*, and afford so many peculiarities, as those spoken in the province of Fuhkien and eastern portions of Kwangtung. All of them are nasal, and, compared with those spoken elsewhere, harsh and rough. They have a large number of unwritten



sounds, and so supply the lack; the same character often has one sound when read and another when spoken; all of them are in common use. This curious feature obliges the foreigner to learn two parallel languages when studying this dialect, so intimate and yet so distinct are the two. The difference between them will be more apparent by quoting a sentence: "He first performed that which was difficult, and afterward imitated what was easier." The corresponding words of the colloquial are placed underneath the reading sounds.

*Sien k'i su chi sé lan, ji ho k'i hau chi sé tek.*  
*Tai seng chú í é su é sé oh, ji tui au k'w'a í é hau giem é sé tit tióh.*

The changes from one into the other are exceedingly various both in sound and idiom. Thus, *biên chien*, 'before one's face,' becomes *bin chan* when spoken; while in the phrase *cheng jit*, 'a former day,' the same word *chien* becomes *cheng* and not *chan*; *bòé chu*, 'pupil of the eye,' becomes *ang a*; *sit hwan*, 'to eat rice,' becomes *chiah pui*. Their dialect, not less than their trafficking spirit, point out the Amoy people wherever they are met, and as they are usually found along the whole coast and in the Archipelago, and are not understood except by their provincial compatriots, they everywhere clan together and form separate communities. Dr. Medhurst published a dictionary of the Changchau dialect, in which the sounds of the characters are given as they are read. Dr. C. Douglas has gathered a great vocabulary of words and phrases used in the Amoy colloquial, in which he has attempted to reduce everything to the Romanized system of writing, and omitted all the characters.

The dialects of Fuhchau, Swatow, and Canton have been similarly investigated by Protestant missionaries. Messrs. Maclay and Baldwin have taken the former in hand, and their work leaves very little to be desired for the elucidation of that speech. Goddard's vocabulary of the Swatow has no examples; and Williams' *Tonic Dictionary* of the Canton dialect gave no characters with the examples. This deficiency was made up in Lobscheid's rearrangement of it under the radicals.

The extent to which the dialects are used has not been ascertained, nor the degree of modification each undergoes in those



parts where it is spoken ; for villagers within a few miles, although able to understand each other perfectly, still give different sounds to a few characters, and have a few local phrases, enough to distinguish their several inhabitants, while towns one or two hundred miles apart are still more unlike. For instance, the citizen of Canton always says *shui* for water, and *tsz'* for child, but the native of Macao says *sui* and *chi* for these two words ; and if his life depended upon his uttering them as they are spoken in Canton, they would prove a shibboleth which he could not possibly enunciate. Strong peculiarities of speech also exist in the villages between Canton and Macao which are found in neither of those places. Yet whatever sound they give to a character it has the same tone, and a Chinese would be much less surprised to hear water called #*chwui*, than he would to hear it called *hshui* in the lower even tone, instead of its proper ascending tone. The tones really approach vowels in their nature more than mere musical inflections ; and it is by their nice discrimination, that the people are able to understand each other with less difficulty than we might suppose amidst such a jargon of vocables.

This accurate discrimination in the vowel sounds, and comparative indifference to consonants, which characterize the Chinese spoken languages, has arisen, no doubt, from the monosyllabic nature, and the constant though slight variations the names of characters undergo from the traditionary mode in which they must be learned. There being no integral sound in any character, each and all of them are, of course, equally correct, *per se* ; but the various general and local dictionaries have each tended somewhat to fix the pronunciation, just as books and education have fixed the spelling of English words. Nor do the Chinese more than other people learn to pronounce their mother tongue from dictionaries, and the variations are consequently but partially restrained by them. It may truly be said, that no two Chinese speak all words alike, while yet, through means of the universally understood character, the greatest mass of human beings ever collected under one government are enabled to express themselves without difficulty, and carry on all the business and concerns of life.



The grammar of the Chinese language is unique, but those writers who say it has no grammar at all must have overlooked the prime signification of the word. There are in all languages words which denote things, and others which signify qualities; words which express actions done by one or many, already done, doing or to be done; actions absolute, conditional, or ordered. The circumstances of the doer and the subject of the action, make prepositions necessary, as well as other connecting words. Thus the principles of grammar exist in all intelligible speech, though each may require different rules. These rules the Chinese language possesses, and their right application, the proper collocation of words, and use of particles, which supply the place of inflection, constitute a difficult part in its acquisition. It has no etymology, properly speaking, for neither the characters nor their names undergo any change; whether used as verbs or nouns, adjectives or particles, they remain the same. The same word may be a noun, a verb, an adverb, or any part of speech, nor can its character be certainly known till it is placed in a sentence, when its meaning becomes definite. Its grammar, therefore, is confined chiefly to its syntax and prosody. This feature of the Chinese language is paralleled in English by such words as *light*, used as a noun, adjective, and verb; *like*, used as a verb, adjective, and adverb; *sheep* and *deer*, used both in the singular and plural; *read*, used in the past, present, and future tenses; and in all cases without undergoing any change. But what is occasional and the exception in that tongue, becomes the rule in Chinese; nor is there any more confusion in the last than in the first.

A good summary of the principles of Chinese grammar is given by Rémusat, who says that generally,

“In every Chinese sentence, in which nothing is understood, the elements of which it is composed are arranged in the following order: the subject, the verb, the complement direct, and the complement indirect.

“Modifying expressions precede those to which they belong: thus, the adjective is placed before the substantive, subject, or complement; the substantive governed before the verb that governs it; the adverb before the verb, the proposition incidental, circumstantial, or hypothetical, before the principal proposition, to which it attaches itself by a conjunction expressed or understood.

“The relative position of words and phrases thus determined, supplies the



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place often of every other mark intended to denote their mutual dependence, their character whether adjective or adverbial, positive, conditional, or circumstantial.

“If the subject be understood, it is because it is a personal pronoun, or that it is expressed above, and that the same substantive that is omitted is found in the preceding sentence, and in the same quality of subject, and not in any other.

“If the verb be wanting, it is because it is the substantive verb, or some other easily supplied, or one which has already found place in the preceding sentences, with a subject or complement not the same.

“If several substantives follow each other, either they are in construction with each other, or they form an enumeration, or they are synonyms which explain and determine each other.

“If several verbs succeed each other, which are not synonyms and are not employed as auxiliaries, the first ones should be taken as adverbs or verbal nouns, the subjects of those which follow; or these latter as verbal nouns, the complements of those which precede.”

Chinese grammarians divide all words into *shih tsz'* and *hü tsz'*, i.e., essential words and particles. The former are subdivided into *sz' tsz'* and *hwoh tsz'*, i.e., nouns and verbs; the latter into initials or introductory words, conjunctions, exclamations, finals, transitive particles, etc. They furnish examples under each, and assist the student, with model books, in which the principles of the language and all rhetorical terms are explained. The number and variety of grammatical and philological works prove that they have not neglected the elucidation and arrangement of their mother tongue. The rules above cited are applicable to the written language, and these treatises refer entirely to that; the changes in the phraseology of the colloquial do not affect its grammar, however, which is formed upon the same rules.

Although the characters are, when isolated, somewhat indefinite, there are many ways of limiting their meaning in sentences. Nouns are often made by suffixing formative particles, as *nu kí*, ‘angry spirit,’ merely means *anger*; *í kí*, ‘righteous spirit,’ is *rectitude*; *chin 'rh*, ‘needle child,’ is a needle, etc.; the suffix, in these cases, simply materializing the word. Gender is formed by distinctive particles, prefixed or suffixed by appropriate words for each gender, or by denoting one gender always by a dissyllabic compound; as *male-being*, for the masculine; *horse-sire*, or *horse-mother*, for stallion or dam; *hero*, *heroine*, *emperor*,



*empress*, etc. ; and lastly as *wang-hau*, *i.e.*, king-queen, for *queen*, while *wang* alone means *king*. Number is formed by prefixing a numeral, as *Yung*, *Tsin*, *two* men ; by suffixing a formative, *mun*, *tǎng*, and others, as *jin-tǎng*, man-sort, or men ; *ta-mun*, he-s or they ; by repeating the word, as *jin-jin*, man-man or men ; *chu-chu*, place-place, or places, *i.e.*, everywhere ; and lastly, by the scope of the passage. The nominative, accusative, and vocative cases are commonly known by their position ; the genitive, dative, and ablative are formed by appropriate prepositions, expressed or understood. The vocative is common in light reading and historical studies.

Adjectives precede nouns, by which position they are usually determined. Comparisons are made in many ways. *Hau* is *good*, *kǎng hau* is *better*, and *chí hau* is *best* ; *shih fǎn hau hau* is *very good* ; *hau hau tih* is *pretty good*, etc. The position of an adjective determines its comparison, as *chang yih chih* means *longer by one cubit* ; *yih chih chang* is a *cubit long*. The comparison of ideas is made by placing the two sentences parallel to each other ; for instance, "Entering the hills and seizing a tiger is easy, opening the mouth and getting men to lean to is difficult," is the way of expressing the comparison, "It is easier to seize a tiger in the hills, than to obtain the good offices of men." The proper use of antithesis and parallelism is considered one of the highest attainments in composition. The numerals are thirteen in number, with the addition of the character 零 *ling* to denote a cipher. All amounts are written just as they are to be read, as *yih peh sz' shih san*, 一百四十三 *i.e.*, 'one hundred four tens three.' They are here introduced, with their pronunciation in three dialects.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	100	1,000	10,000
	一	二	三	四	五	六	七	八	九	十	百	千	萬
Court Dialect.	<i>yih</i>	<i>'rh</i>	<i>san</i>	<i>sz'</i>	<i>wu</i>	<i>luh</i>	<i>tsih</i>	<i>pah</i>	<i>kiu</i>	<i>shih</i>	<i>peh</i>	<i>tsien</i>	<i>wan</i> .
Canton Dialect.	<i>yat</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>sam</i>	<i>sz'</i>	<i>'ng</i>	<i>luk</i>	<i>tsat</i>	<i>pat</i>	<i>kau</i>	<i>shap</i>	<i>pak</i>	<i>tsín</i>	<i>man</i> .
Fukhien Dialect.	<i>it</i>	<i>jí</i>	<i>sam</i>	<i>su</i>	<i>ngou</i>	<i>liok</i>	<i>chit</i>	<i>pat</i>	<i>kiu</i>	<i>sip</i>	<i>pek</i>	<i>chien</i>	<i>ban</i> .

The Chinese, like the ancient Greeks, enumerate only up to a myriad, expressing sums higher than that by stating how many



myriads there are ; the notation of 362,447,180 is three myriads, six thousand, two hundred and forty-four myriads, seven thousand, one hundred, and eighty. Pronouns are few in number, and their use is avoided whenever the sense is clear without them. The personal pronouns are three, *wo*, *ní*, and *ta*, but other pronouns can all be readily expressed by adjectives, by collocation, and by participial phrases. The classifiers sometimes partake of the nature of adjective pronouns, but usually are mere distributive or numerical adjectives.

Verbs, or “living characters,” constitute the most important part of speech in the estimation of Chinese grammarians, and the *shun tuh*, or easy flow of expression, in their use, is carefully studied. The dissyllabic compounds, called *clam-shell words*, are usually verbs, and are made in many ways ; by uniting two similar words, as *kwei-kien* (lit. peep-look), ‘to spy ;’ by doubling the verb, as *kien-kien*, meaning to look earnestly ; by prefixing a formative denoting action, as *ta shwui* (lit. strike sleep), ‘to sleep ;’ by suffixing a modifying word, as *grasp-halt*, to grasp firmly ; *think-arise*, to cogitate, etc. No part of the study requires more attention than the right selection of these formatives in both nouns and verbs ; perfection in the *shun tuh* and use of antitheses is the result only of years of study.

The various accidents of voice, mood, tense, number, and person, can all be expressed by corresponding particles, but the genius of the language disfavors their frequent use. The passive voice is formed by prefixing particles indicative of agency before the active verb, as “The villain *received* my sword’s *cutting*,” for “The villain was wounded by my sword.” The imperative, potential, and subjunctive moods are formed by particles or adjuncts, but the indicative and infinitive are not designated, nor are the number and person of verbs usually distinguished. The number of auxiliaries, particles, adjuncts, and suffixes of various kinds, employed to express what in other languages is denoted by inflections, is really very moderate ; and a nice discrimination exhibited in their use indicates the finished scholar.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chinese Repository*, Vol. VIII., p. 347.