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WEIGHED IN CHINA'S BALANCE

AN ATTEMPT AT EXPLANATION

BY

PAUL KING

Commissioner of Chinese Customs (*retired*)

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—CONFUCIUS.

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IN MEMORY OF

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AND

WU TING-FANG, REPUBLICAN

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CHAPTER I

The preaching of the Gospel to the millions of China—The danger of underestimating the mentality of the hearers—"You've got to explain your millennium to people, Billy."

WHETHER optimistic or pessimistic by nature nearly all mature human beings must admit that this world is, and always has been, in a bad way. But what a good many of us contrive to ignore is that a very large part of national and international, collective and individual, misery is self-inflicted and avoidable.

"What a piece of work is man!" as Hamlet remarked. In the whole range of zoology there is no more amazing animal, and it sometimes occurs to one whimsically that instead of collecting lions and bears, monkeys and snakes, eagles and peacocks in cages for exhibition, it might be better worth while to fill these cages with choice specimens of the human race—not only murderers, robbers, pirates and savages, but assortments of politicians, surgeons, philosophers, teachers, soldiers and saints.

After all, not visibly but in the pages of history and biography this has been done, and into that vast, discoloured and thaumaturgic mirror we can all peer at will to see "in a glass darkly" the most stupefying kaleidoscope of good and evil, ignorance, knowledge and perversity. In this welter of sensation and confusion two things are striking, namely,

our capacity for believing in what is quite unknowable, also what is demonstrably false, and our even stranger gift for disbelieving or at least disregarding the few facts—such as that two and two make four—which are more or less indisputable.

We should like to look into one small corner of this mystic mirror and note down our vision of it in the following pages. It is the corner where, very darkly and elusively, is reflected the preaching of the Gospel of Christianity to the millions of China. As one catches a glimpse of first one and then another shadow and light in that most perplexing drama, it is necessary to remember the parable of Evarra—Man—and his Gods.

One thing must be clearly stated in the beginning, and we hope it will be understood and borne in mind, namely, that in these following pages we are in no way setting down our own opinions of religion, either Christian or non-Christian, and we are not intending to criticize missionaries on the one hand, or the Chinese on the other. All that this book aims at is very humbly to try and present the views of a great and ancient people when confronted with—to them—a most puzzling, complicated and at times unreasonable and inconsistent doctrine of God and Man, Earth, Heaven and Hell.

It is exceedingly difficult for hereditary Christians of any sect to put themselves intellectually and emotionally into the mood of an entirely different civilization when the latter is endeavouring to see its way through this question. What creeds we have been trained to take for granted, and what they have been accustomed to accept, are as wide

apart as the Poles, and it is well for us to realize that they are keen observers, with subtle brains, and that they are inclined to view us and our message steadily and to view it whole—with results that it is useless for our protagonists to ignore.

If we want to present our case successfully, surely we should study the mentality and the prejudices of the people to whom we present it. Unfortunately, owing to certain laws of psychology, glimmerings of this necessity are apt to dawn on the wrong people, on agnostics, students of sociology, philosophic atheists and others who do not think much of Christianity themselves and are therefore what is called broad-minded on the subject. None of these would trouble to preach the Gospel to anyone, so their admirable detachment of view is sterile, while, most regrettably, the enthusiasts, the believers, who even give their lives, enduring many things, faithful unto death in making known to all the world the Saviour of Mankind, these devoted and often heroic apostles have been in the past, and still are, sadly lacking in an appreciation of the souls they would fain guide to Heaven.

What is worse—they do not want to know. They resist any attempt to enlighten them, as their view is that they are doing the will of their Heavenly Father; indeed, it is hardly too much to say that some of them regard any advice to stop, look and listen, as it were, before assaulting what they are pleased to call "the heathen," as blasphemy and almost the Unpardonable Sin. Probably what we have observed and deduced, after many years in China, will give great offence to these worthy

extremists, and may please their less estimable critics. In spite of that, it seems worth while to make an attempt to present the other side.

Not long ago a member of Parliament raised a laugh by asking if the troubles in China were due to the spread of Christianity. His humour was not entirely misplaced! But the laugh is not against Christianity itself.

Again, that very famous writer, H. G. Wells, in "William Clissold," puts a practical view, perhaps not in the best taste, but still usefully and vividly, when Dickon expounded to Billy, in one of their interminable discussions about everything, the theory of advertisement.

"You've got to *explain* your millennium to people, Billy; you've got to make 'em want it, and you've got to tell 'em how to get it. Then they'll get it. Just as they get Lucas lamps or safety razor blades or any other old thing. The advertisement is different, but the method is the same. Why, Billy! Look at things plainly. With all reverence —what were the twelve Apostles? Drummers, just drummers. Travelling in salvation, introducing a new line. . . . And the miracles they did? Sample bottles. To this day it's advertisement. . . .What is Christianity?—an advertisement campaign."

Coarsely put, perhaps, but containing the germ of an important truth that has been woefully neglected by some of the best and most self-sacrificing of our White Race, who have earned a martyr's crown.

CHAPTER II

Knowledge of China and her people is growing, but perhaps lopsidedly—The origin of the race one of the mysteries of the earth—Confucius the contemporary of Cyrus and Pythagoras—China's great men and rulers, good and bad—The main features of Confucian teaching — The Sage's private opinions.

KNOWLEDGE of China and her people is growing, if perhaps lopsidedly. Still, we are all getting past the stage of the character in Dickens, who wrote about Chinese Metaphysics by reading up China under C, and Metaphysics under M, and combined the information. We have a grip of the elementary facts that China is a large country in Asia, and that she has a vast population, also a tolerably authentic history of at least three thousand years. That takes us, the British, back to a period when we had practically no history at all, and we cannot help wondering, as it were, what China has been after all this time!

That is just the point: What has China been doing all this time? We might with advantage try to understand, putting out of our minds as far as possible what we think she ought to have been doing, or what we might have done if we had happened to be China. This is a difficulty to begin with, and yet it is very necessary to "depolarize" our ideas before looking at the history of a great

and most wonderfully solid people. Solidity, that is the leading Chinese characteristic. Emerson once said that of all men the Englishman stood most firmly on his feet, but if the American philosopher had looked a little further he would probably have given that quality pre-eminently to the Chinese.

As for their origin, it is one of the many mysteries of the earth. All one can say is, if they ever were savages, there does not seem to be any record of it, and their history—with some traditional and mythical stuff—shows them to have been, thousands of years ago, not unlike what they are to-day, racially, socially, intellectually and morally. Dispassionately viewed, they seem to have started as they meant to go on; and all through those amazing years in other parts of the world we can picture China, self-supporting, self-sufficing, with her rulers, soldiers and sages quietly living within her borders. They governed themselves, they conquered surrounding tribes, and when the world had time and means to discover them, they were quite ready to be discovered, though not willing!

Long years ago—"once upon a time"—somehow people became aware of this immense population and its vast enclosed empire. Even before sailing ships, and long before steam was thought of, very adventurous human units grew curious and went out to see the sights. They walked, or got on other animals that walked, or were drawn on wheels, and very slowly began to penetrate into foreign countries. They had stout hearts, those pioneers, for they not only ventured into the

unknown, but believed they were on the track of monsters, portents and horrors, and were prepared to journey away from the sun, moon and stars so that heaven alone knew what kind of "limbo" they might arrive at. For all they could tell this earth they stood on might reach for a million miles through the Universe, or they might soon come to a steep precipice and fall off into depths of fire or darkness.

They were full of "the marvellous," including traditions of prehistoric monsters—once laughed at and now verified by science—also of some terrific volcanic or geological catastrophes, like the end of the vast Lemurian Continent, from which, by the way, the Chinese may have originated.

These intrepid explorers walked off from the familiar to the unfamiliar, and sometimes lived to come back, when the temptation to heighten the effect must have been strong. Still, they told a certain amount of truth, including the startling and unexpected information that wherever they journeyed they saw—as far as they could judge—the same sun, the same moon, and the same stars. Anyhow, there did not seem to be any others, which was apparently disappointing, as behind the eternal hills they had hoped for something new. They had also found men, women and other familiar objects, but here they had more scope, as they could curdle their friends' blood with accounts of strange animals, and the first man who described an elephant no doubt created a sensation.

There are traditions that these wanderers pushed on to China, but the Chinese do not seem to have cherished much curiosity on their side. "East and

West, Home was best," and from the first they disliked human beings, such as the Indians, who had brown or black skins, and after spreading up north and down south and west over to Tibet they drew the line, kept inside it, and warded off intruders, working out their own destiny with self-satisfaction on the whole, and, it must be admitted, with considerable success.

Other races have been military or mechanical, but the Chinese very early in their authentic history became literary. They valued intellect and letters; this flowered in Confucius, and they hit on ideas of getting learned men to rule many æons before we thought of competitive examinations in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Chinese have always been practical, but not over enterprising, and one sees this in their arts. It must continually be borne in mind that they cared more for literature and a certain rational and limited philosophy than for painting, music or natural science. To us their development seems curiously one-sided, but there is a method in it, and for convenience we may as well accept Confucius as a symbol of his race, and look at his teachings to explain the strength and the weakness of his countrymen.

One must remember that Confucius was born in 550 B.C. and roughly speaking was the contemporary of Cyrus and Pythagoras and before Herodotus and the Greek Tragedians. As someone said, he was of Aristotle's temperament, not of Plato's, and certainly he stuck as closely as possible to realities. Wild speculations about matters that

could be neither proved nor disproved seemed to him irrelevant and waste of effort. He preferred ethics and practical morals to metaphysics or religion, and he was not the kind of person who—in the homely Scots proverb—would fall into the dungheap while gazing at the moon. On the contrary, he tried always to see things as they were. He had no idea, like Moses, of going up into the thunders and darkness of Sinai to meet his Creator and bring down tablets with Ten Commandments. He found things going pretty well, and recognized certain rules of what we call psychology, and worked from a tolerably firm foundation, neither idealizing ordinary human nature, nor taking extreme views of man's original sin and depravity. There was nothing intolerant or fanatical about Confucius, his own personal character and record were admirable, and (to borrow the phrase) "he belongs to the Ages," being of the company praised in the Te Deum as "the goodly fellowship of the Prophets."

His sayings, his teachings and his example—all somewhat impassive and untouched with Pentecostal fire—grew out of the genius of his race, and also have consolidated that genius and leavened all intellectual China for more than two thousand years. He found himself in a remarkable environment, considering the period of his career, and could look back to a mythical Emperor Huangti, who was traditionally gifted with some at least of the qualities of the "princely man," and was supposed to have built roads, invented ships and divided his limited empire into administrative

departments, somewhere about 2700 B.C. Chinese historians carry their records a good deal further back than Huangti, but there is nothing strictly authentic much before the reign of the great Yao, 2357 B.C. to 2255. Yao was a character that fulfilled many of Confucius's ideals, and no doubt influenced his presentation of political virtue. With Yao is always ranged his successor, Shun (2255-2205 B.C.), an agriculturist chosen for his virtues, Yao's son being considered unworthy to succeed his father as Emperor. Shun also selected a successor, Yü, for his skill in averting a flood which threatened the whole country.

Yü wanted to follow the example of Yao and Shun and select a worthy successor, but it is recorded that both the officials and the people insisted on Yü's son being the ruler after him, thus bringing in the hereditary principle.

The historical panorama did not continue to be monotonously incorrupt. On the contrary, China was presently cursed with some startling contrasts to Yao and Shun, such as Chieh Kuei, the last king of the Hsia dynasty, who was a fairly complete Chinese version of Ahriman. He seemed to think of everything in the way of personal vice and political wickedness, and wasted the revenues of his people and neglected State affairs, while indulging in assorted orgies of the most revolting kind. With his vile name is coupled that of a woman, a present from the Lord of Shih to buy off a military expedition which the Chinese had threatened. Her name was Mei Hsi, and by all accounts she was, if anything, worse than Chieh,

of the type of Jezebel, Brunhilde and other such female devils whose iniquities have defiled human history.

All these lights and shades in his country's annals enabled Confucius to gauge the importance of "virtue" in China's rulers, and he could trace cause and effect in righteous and infamous governments, the former clearly benefiting the people and the latter as certainly destroying them. He lived himself in troubled and demoralized days, and experienced the results in his own career, and his theories and teachings received much confirmation in the centuries that followed him. In fact, nothing that has since happened in China has falsified the ethics of her greatest philosopher.

It is difficult, out of the wealth of Confucian literature, to choose illustrations of the great man, but from some excellent translations anyone who takes the trouble can get a fair idea of his dialectic. To take his political opinions first, he said: "If a country had none but good rulers for a hundred years, crime might be stamped out and the death penalty abolished," and he laid stress invariably on the necessity for good government, improving the occasion when he had a chance, as this anecdote shows. He and his disciples found a woman wailing over a grave, and the Master inquired the cause of her grief. She told him that her father-in-law, her husband and her son had all been eaten by a tiger.

"Why, then, do you not go elsewhere?" asked the Master.

"The government here is not harsh," said the woman.

"Then," cried the Master, turning to his disciples, "remember that, Bad Government is worse than a tiger."

"Where there is justice," he said another time, "there will be no poverty."

"Esteem the five excellent and banish the four evil things, and you will be fit to govern."

The five excellent things were, first, being benevolent without expending treasure, i.e., following the course which naturally brings benefit to the people. Secondly, laying burdens on the people at the right time and by the right means, so that they do not grumble. Third, having a desire for goodness without being covetous. Fourth, being serene without pride, never negligent whether dealing with many men or with few, with small matters or great. Fifth, for the ruler to be awe-inspiring without ferocity. His robe and cap to be properly adjusted, a noble dignity in his looks, so that his gravity inspired onlookers with respect.

The four evil things were: Cruelty, leaving the people in their ignorance, yet punishing their wrong-doing with death. Oppression, requiring immediate completion of tasks without warning. Ruthlessness—giving vague orders and insisting on punctual fulfilment. Peddling husbandry, or stinginess in conferring adequate rewards on deserving men.

He often discoursed upon the higher type of man, who was fitted to govern. "The nobler sort of man," he said, "pays special attention to nine

points: to see clearly, to hear distinctly, to be kindly in his looks, respectful in his demeanour, conscientious in his speech, earnest in his affairs, when in doubt he is careful to inquire, when in anger he thinks of the consequences, when offered an opportunity for gain, he thinks only of his duty."

He reiterated this teaching in many ways, sometimes at length and often in aphorisms. "The princely man has three great virtues. He is truly benevolent, and is free from care; he is truly wise, and is free from delusions; he is truly brave, and is free from fear." Again, when asked about moral virtue, Confucius replied that it simply consisted "in being able, anywhere and everywhere, to exercise five particular qualities: self-respect, magnanimity, sincerity, earnestness and benevolence."

His disciples recorded some of his private opinions; for instance, when he remarked about a "waster": "Rotten wood cannot be carved, walls made of dirt and mud cannot be plastered—what is the good of reprimanding Yü?"

He could give neat little nips to boasters, as when Tzu Kung, one of his followers, said rather priggishly:

"I am anxious to avoid doing to others what I would not have them do to me."

The Master observed dryly:

"Tzu, you have not got as far as that."

The same Tzu was fond of weighing other men's merits and defects, and the Master's comment was:

"Surely, Tzu must be a very great sage! Personally, I have no time for this."

And when a pedantic official boasted of reflecting three times before acting, the Master suggested that "twice would do."

He said he could make nothing of the man "who is pleased with advice, but will not meditate on it; who assents to admonition, but will not reform." Commenting on one man who was wise when his country was well governed, but was stupid when revolution threatened, he remarked sardonically:

"His wisdom may be equalled by others, but his stupidity is beyond all imitation."

Certain characteristics seemed to please the sage, as when he said approvingly:

"Yen P'ing knows the art of associating with his friends; however old the acquaintance may be, he always treats them with the same respect."

And he admired another disciple, saying:

"Yu, I fancy, is a man who would stand up, dressed in shabby garments, quilted with hemp, among people attired in furs of fox and badger, and not be ashamed."

The disciples have preserved some very human touches recording how Confucius went to see a friend, Po Niu, dying of leprosy, who evidently passed away with the stoical dignity that is not rare in China. Niu would not allow people to risk coming to his room, and clasped the Master's hand through the window.

"He is dying. Such is fate," said Confucius. "Alas! that such a man should have such an illness, that such a man should have such an illness."

Over the death of another friend he wept so convulsively that his disciples remonstrated:

"Master, your sorrow is too passionate."

"Is it too passionate?" he replied. "Whose death should be cause for violent grief, if not this man's?"

Confucius analysed himself, his character and ability quite simply, without affected humility or undue egotism.

"My function is to indicate rather than to originate," he said, and also remarked, "I do not expound my teaching to any who are not eager to learn; I do not help out anyone who is not anxious to explain himself; if, after being shown one corner of a subject, a man cannot go on to discover the other three, I do not repeat the lesson."

He considered his own character to be far from perfect.

"The failure to cultivate virtue, the failure to examine and analyse what I have learnt, the inability to move towards righteousness after being shown the way, the inability to correct my faults, these are the causes of my grief."

"There are men, I dare say, who act rightly without knowing the reason why," he said on another occasion, "but I am not one of them. Having heard much, I retain it in my memory. This is the second order of wisdom."

In literary accomplishments he thought himself perhaps equal to other men. "But I have not yet succeeded in exhibiting the conduct of the princely man in my own person," he added.

Wealth did not appeal to him. "If the pursuit of riches were a commendable pursuit, I would join in it," he said, "even if I had to become a chariot-

driver for the purpose. But seeing that it is not a commendable pursuit, I engage in those which are more to my taste."

Regarding the rising generation, a problem of the fifth century B.C. as of the twentieth century A.D., he observed, with shrewd tolerance:

"We ought to have a wholesome respect for our juniors. Who knows but that by and by they may prove themselves equal to the men of to-day? It is only when they reach the age of forty or fifty without distinguishing themselves that we need no longer be afraid of them."

With even finer insight, he said:

"Where there is education, there is no distinction of class."

He always taught that genuine moral culture must knit together all other qualities, and he recognized the evils of Phariseeism as well as those of moral indifference, saying that "goody-goody people were the thieves of virtue" and explaining the shadows that are cast by virtues without what he called the will to learn, or a development of an inner sense of harmony as a safeguard against extremes. For himself, modestly but firmly, he claimed the "will to learn" in the right way.

"Tzu," he asked his disciple, "do you look upon me as a man who has studied and retained a mass of various knowledge?"

"I do," replied Tzu. "Am I wrong?"

"You are wrong," said the Master. "All my knowledge is strung on one thread."

This "connecting thread" was the moral life,

which consisted in being true to oneself and good to one's neighbour, and the usual word for "learning" throughout the Analects always meant or implied the study of virtue. In his later years the Sage summed himself up, perhaps rather epigrammatically, but no doubt sincerely:

"At fifteen, my mind was bent on learning," he said. "At thirty, I stood firm. At forty, I was free from illusions. At fifty, I understood the laws of Providence. At sixty, my ears were attentive to the truth. At seventy, I could follow the promptings of my heart without overstepping the mean."

As everyone knows who has studied Confucianism, the Master drew the line at this world in his teachings.

"Make righteousness in human affairs your aim, treat all supernatural beings with respect, but keep aloof from them—then you may be called wise;" and again: "Before we are able to do our duty by the living, how can we do it by the spirits of the dead? Before we know what life is, how can we know what death is?"

His disciples record that he would not talk about prodigies, feats of strength, crime or supernatural beings. Their more intimate accounts of him show him in a good light always, even according to modern ideas. He was a sportsman, for one thing, being fond of fishing, but with a line, not a net. He went out shooting with a bow and arrow, but only shot birds on the wing. Some of his personal habits are recorded, such as that he never let meat exceed vegetables in his diet, and he never drank

to excess, neither did he eat much. He took ginger at every meal. When eating, or in bed, he did not speak.

His discourses and private conversations were remarkable for good taste and absence of impurity either direct or implied. Nothing coarse or obscene can be quoted with his authority, even when he rebuked licentiousness and vice. One curious thing may be noted, that while he praised self-control and magnanimity and evidently rated fortitude and moral courage very highly, he did not seem to give much admiration to warlike valour and physical hardihood. This may have been because with the Chinese extreme daring is almost always accompanied by ferocity and a lack of balance. "Without fear" is not "without reproach," in a word.

His disciples evidently loved him much and respected him more, and conversed with him without any fear of rebuke or ridicule. They pushed him into corners and, as it were, demanded the Keys of Life and Death, Hell and Heaven. But he stood his ground quite firmly. What he knew, he held to; when he did not know, he admitted his limitations.

"To divine wisdom and perfect virtue I can lay no claim," he declared. "All that can be said of me is that I never falter in the course which I pursue and am unwearying in my instruction of others—this and nothing more."

In reply to a question about returning good for evil, the Master said:

"What, then, is to be the return for good?

Rather should you return justice for injustice, and good for good."

This is also rendered:

"Good for good, and for evil, justice."

When asked for a maxim to govern the whole life of man, he said:

"Surely the maxim of charity is such: Do not unto others what you would not they should do unto you."

After the death of Confucius his disciples honoured his memory, and when he was disparaged, Tzu Kung replied:

"It is no good, Confucius is proof against detraction. The wisdom of other men is like hills and mountain-peaks, which, however high, can still be scaled. But Confucius is like the sun or the moon, which can never be reached by the foot of man. A man may want to cut himself off from their light, but what harm will that do the sun or the moon? It only shows very plainly that he has no notion of the measurement of capacity."

CHAPTER III

The religion of the Chinese — The *vox populi* not ignored — Reaching back through ancestors to the great powers of Heaven—The clear-cut ethics of Confucius and the wayward mysticism of Lao Tzu—Tao and the "Tao Tê Ching"—Some illustrations of it—"Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish"—Lao Tzu's views on war, and some of his whimsies.

In addition to other mysteries about the Chinese there is that of their religion, about which they are rather reticent even now. Foreigners—some learned and some not—dispute a good deal over the question, and are seldom agreed as to what Chinese religion has been and really is.

So far as can be gathered, the ancient native ideas on the subject were vague. They thought, apparently, that the universe had no beginning, and that the "original beings"—the blue firmament of heaven and the solid matter of earth—had existed eternally. They believed in Fate, as it were, the Inevitable, and also in a nebulous, ill-defined Ruler of Heaven, described as Shangti. For the common people there were, from quite early times, patron spirits, ancestor worship, and some views as to the condition of the human soul after death, but there was nothing dogmatic or clearly stated.

Virtuous persons, especially the good emperors, were supposed to make a part of heaven, and also

to exist somehow on earth in the memories of the living. In a very loosely-constructed theosophy, the heavens and the earth were worshipped, together with the spirits of the stars, the sun, mountains and rivers. Man was accounted important, as a sort of intermediate being in whom primitive force was indwelling, manifesting in his spirit and conscious of itself. Because of this primal force, man was supposed to carry within himself the fountain of all knowledge, all morality and all virtue. He was therefore the highest of created beings, and in his mind the world presents itself in active orderliness and reasonableness. He is accordingly good by nature, as reason, living in him, impels him to a voluntary choice of virtue and piety, causing him also to be guided by the teachings and examples of former times.

Immortality was not distinctly affirmed, but there was held to be a prospect of continuance after death, as a reward for virtuous persons, especially the worthy Emperors, as Sons of Heaven. In this old native religion—if it can be called that—of China there was apparently no mention of hell or the condemnation of the wicked after death.

There seemed to be a belief in the *vox populi* and some close relationship between heaven and the people, and out of all this cosmogony, theology and philosophy came Ancestor Worship, the most characteristic part of Chinese religion. It may be remarked that it is extremely difficult for foreigners, at least for Occidentals, to grasp the inner meaning of this worship, and to understand even approximately what the Chinese really think and believe

and feel about it. From one angle it seems not much more than a cult or a ceremonial, and then one gets a glimpse of something deeper and more essential.

The common people possibly believe that their ancestors were demi-gods, but the educated and thoughtful Chinese do not hold this view, at least not crudely, but with reservations suggested by reason. Yet there seems in their minds, according to some students of this very puzzling subject, an idea of reaching back through their ancestors to the great powers of heaven, as if each generation (counting backwards) were nearer the primal and mysterious Power which had in the beginning placed man upon this mortal scene.

Certainly, this worship is most complex and is welded into the very fibre of Chinese nationalism and pride of race. No other religion can hope to displace it entirely, and it no doubt survives, like a subterranean river, any accretions that seem to have overlaid it. Buddhism from without, and Taoism from within, have not effaced this most vital principle of reverence for ancestors, and the Chinese would fully endorse Plutarch's saying that " it is desirable to be well descended, but the glory belongs to our ancestors."

After this ill-defined and shadowy belief which we have outlined, there comes that extremely paradoxical and difficult religion or system anglicized as Taoism. It is almost misleading to call it either a system or a religion! And incidentally its history seems to refute the idea of progress and evolution, seeing that the beginnings of Taoism have a certain

majestic fatalism and also a detachment from all that is sordid and of the earth, earthy, whereas after many centuries it has degenerated into what Dr. Lionel Giles calls " little more than an inextricable mass of jugglery and fraud, absorbed from various popular beliefs and other sources, including even the rival creed of Buddhism, and conducted by a body of priests recruited from the very dregs of the Empire."

As there is a contrast between the clear-cut ethics of Confucius and the wayward mysticism of Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, so there is in the case of the former philosopher a great deal of reliable information regarding his personal character and intimate private history, while the genuine records of Lao Tzu are very scanty, though he lived only fifty years or so earlier.

To quote Dr. Lionel Giles again : " Apart from the thick crop of legend and myth which soon gathered round his name, very little is known about the life and personality of Lao Tzu, and even the meagre account preserved for us in the history of Ssu-ma Ch'ien must be looked upon with suspicion.

Some students, indeed, are inclined to deny that such an individual ever lived, and regard his alleged writings as a collection of ancient proverbial philosophy. Even his name of Lao Tzu is somewhat uncertain, and is variously explained as (1) Old Boy, because he is said to have been born with a white beard; (2) Son of Lao, this being the surname of the virgin mother who conceived him at the sight of a falling star; or (3) Old Philosopher,

because of the great age at which he wrote his immortal book, the "Tao Tê Ching."

This title has been rendered in English as the "Treatise of the Way and of Virtue," and scholars both native and foreign are by no means certain that the said treatise can be accepted as the actual work of the old Philosopher. In fact, it appears that the Chinese are much more sceptical than some eminent sinologues, as Dr. Giles calls them, who have clung to the idea that the "Tao Tê Ching" was written by Lao Tzu himself; others, again, less bemused by the glamour of reading ancient Chinese texts, consider the book as probably representing what Lao Tzu taught or wrote, but that these teachings had been collected and preserved by other hands. His Boswell and hero-worshipper, Ssu-ma Ch'ien, already quoted, published a history of Lao Tzu in 91 B.C., several hundred years after his lifetime.

Few can hope to read the "Tao Tê Ching" in the original, but even in an adequate translation it is a most enigmatic and bewildering performance. It may be, as is claimed for it, "the well-defined though rudimentary outline of a great system of transcendental and ethical philosophy," but its conciseness and inconsistency have merged in an obscurity that, as Dr. Giles remarks, the labours of innumerable commentators have done little to clear away. "To the wide scope thus afforded for the imagination," he says, "we owe the startling discoveries, in the body of the work, of the Doctrine of the Trinity and of the Hebrew word for Jehovah, thinly disguised in its Chinese dress. Sad to say,

both of these once famous theories are now totally discredited."

The history of the "Tao Tê Ching," apart from any attempt to interpret it, is interesting. It inspired a great deal of Taoist literature, but these writers "soon forsook the austerity of Lao Tzu's way for the more attractive fields of ritual and magic."

"Lao Tzu was a Socrates," comments Dr. Giles, "who never found a Plato or an Aristotle to reap the goodly harvest he had sown." At the worst, his followers dropped into occultism and sorcery, and at the best into a sort of vague and speculative mysticism. But the "Tao Tê Ching" had vitality and survived, being recognized as a classic in the Han Dynasty under the Emperor Ching, who reigned 156-140 B.C. After that, the study of "Tao" had its ups and downs, sometimes being out of fashion and at other times enjoying court favour to such an extent that one Emperor used to hold forth on the doctrines of Lao Tzu before his ministers, and demanded cheerful, reverent attention from them, degrading anyone who stretched, yawned or spat during his discourse. But whether he punished his ministers for disrespect to the Sage, or to himself, is not quite clear.

By successive edicts the "Tao Tê Ching" was made obligatory at the examination of graduates for the second degree; every scholar had to possess a copy, and it was cut on stone at both capitals. After that, printed copies were distributed to directors of education, and it was translated into the language of the Nüchen Tartars. (The idea

of this book, with its obscurities made more obscure in the Tartar language, is staggering.) Then an amazing thing happened: when Kublai Khan ordered all Taoist books to be burned, he exempted the "Tao Tê Ching," and showed unexpected discrimination between Lao Tzu and the writers who followed him.

Again at this point, we would emphasize that what we foreigners think of Lao Tzu and his transcendental philosophy with all its obscurity, and paradox, is not the question. What is important for us to grasp, is some idea of how the Chinese themselves regard the whole subject, and how they react to it. One must remember Kipling's lines:

> "Oh, the world is wondrous large,
> Seven seas from marge to marge,
> And it holds a vast o' various kinds of man."

It is all right, and most valuable and praiseworthy for sinologues to study the Chinese classics and struggle with the almost heart-breaking problem of rendering these intelligibly and as accurately as possible in English, but it is considerably less useful and wise when they either foist Occidental meanings on these philosophies, or instruct the Chinese how they are to regard their own teachers. This is done unconsciously and with the best intentions, but it cannot fail either to irritate native opinion or to inspire it with contempt for the intruding barbarian and his ignorant presumption.

"Tao" by itself is a hard enough nut for an English mind to crack, and when one tries in addition not only to get some idea of Tao, but to go

further and endeavour to visualize what Tao means to a Chinese mind one feels at a disadvantage, to put it mildly. Let us attempt to present "Tao" as coherently as may be, and after considering it, to track it to its niche in the native mind.

Taking the plunge, and holding on firmly to Lao Tzu, we begin by learning that "the Tao which can be expressed in words is not the eternal Tao; the name which can be uttered is not its eternal name. Without a name, it is the Beginning of Heaven and Earth; with a name, it is the Mother of all Things."

If any enthusiast, rather ambitiously studying the "Tao Tê Ching," should happen to ask his old teacher what "Tao" might be, that dear old man would almost certainly look very wise and, with an air of explaining everything to the bedrock, remark sententiously:

"Tao shih tao." (Tao is Tao.)

And that would be all that his eager pupil could get out of him. On further pressure, if the said pupil were so tactless as to exert it, the worthy "Elder Born" would either quote something relevant or not, or perhaps read out in a high voice: "How unfathomable is Tao! It seems to be the ancestral progenitor of all things. How pure and clear is Tao! It would seem to be everlasting. I know not of whom it is the offspring. It appears to have been anterior to any Sovereign Power."

"The mightiest manifestations of active force flow solely from Tao."

"All-pervading is the Great Tao. All things depend on it for life, and it rejects them not. It

loves and nourishes all things, but does not act as master. It is ever free from desire. We may call it small. All things return to it, yet it does not act as master. We may call it great."

"It is the Way of Heaven to take from those who have too much, and to give to those who have too little. But the way of man is not so. What man is there that can take of his own superabundance and give it to mankind? Only he who possesses Tao."

Leaving the more transcendental aspect, and coming to moral principles of Tao, we may quote a few aphorisms in illustration.

"If Tao perishes, then Virtue will perish; if Virtue perishes, then Charity will perish; if Charity perishes, then Duty to one's neighbour will perish; if Duty to one's neighbour perishes, then Ceremonies will perish."

(Ceremonies might be here taken to mean law and the framework of Society.)

Lao Tzu was not unaware of how men would regard his mystic ideas, for he said that when the superior scholar hears of Tao he will practise it; the average scholar will sometimes retain it and sometimes lose it, while the inferior scholar loudly laughs at it. "Were it not thus ridiculed, it would not be worthy of the name of Tao."

Here and in other places Lao Tzu seems to be sketching and criticizing his contemporaries, as when he remarked with quite a human touch:

"The wearing of gay embroidered robes, the carrying of sharp swords, fastidiousness in food and drink, superabundance of property and wealth:

this I call flaunting robbery; most assuredly it is not Tao."

"In governing men and in serving Heaven, there is nothing like moderation. For only by moderation can there be an early return to man's normal state," was a wise, but less characteristic saying.

Without naming his opponents, he defended his views, as follows:

"All the world says that my Tao is great, but unlike other teaching. It is just because it is great that it appears unlike other teaching. If it had this likeness, long ago would its smallness have been known."

Bound up in Tao was the Doctrine of Inaction.

"Who is there that can make muddy water clear? But if it is allowed to remain still, it will gradually become clear of itself."

"Purity and stillness are the correct principles for mankind," he said. "Without going out of doors one may know the whole world; without looking out of the window, one may see the Way to Heaven. The further one travels, the less one may know."

Even though a mystic, Lao Tzu was concerned with the problems of government. One of his ideas was that the Sage, when ruling, had better empty the people's minds and fill their stomachs, weaken their desires and strengthen their bones. His constant object is to keep the people without knowledge and without desire, or to prevent those who have knowledge from daring to act.

Lao Tzu seemed to have visions of a Golden

Age in the past, with great philosophers and contented masses. He said that, in the highest antiquity, the people did not know they had rulers. In the next age, they loved and praised them. In the next, they feared them, and in the next despised them.

Some of his ideas were not only practical, but are not yet out of date, as, for instance, the following:

"As restrictions and prohibitions are multiplied in the Empire, the people grow poorer and poorer. When the people are subjected to overmuch government, the land is thrown into confusion. When the people are skilled in many cunning arts, strange are the objects of luxury that appear."

"The greater the number of laws and enactments, the more thieves and robbers there will be. . . . If the Government is sluggish and tolerant, the people will be honest and free from guile. If the Government is prying and meddling, there will be constant infraction of the law."

"Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish" [i.e., do not overdo it).

"*The people starve because those in authority over them devour too many taxes; that is why they starve. The people are difficult to govern because those placed over them are meddlesome.*"

His views on war are in advance even of our time.

"He who serves a ruler of men in harmony with Tao will not subdue the Empire by force of arms. Such a course is wont to bring retribution in its train."

"The good man wins a victory and then stops; he will not go on to acts of violence; winning, he boasteth not; he will not triumph; he shows no arrogance."

"There is no greater calamity than lightly engaging in war. Lightly to engage in war is to risk the loss of our treasure" (meaning humanity or gentleness).

Lao Tzu had a less practical mood when he gave way to whimsies, insisting that "the truest sayings are paradoxical," and sometimes using the double-edged weapon of irony.

"When the Great Tao falls into disuse," was one such saying, "benevolence and righteousness come into vogue."

"Extreme straightness is as bad as crookedness. Extreme cleverness is as bad as folly. Extreme fluency is as bad as stammering."

"Abandon learning, and you will be free from trouble and distress."

"Rigidity and strength are the concomitants of death; softness and weakness are the concomitants of life."

"Those who are wise have no wide range of learning; those who range most widely are not wise."

How his own race regard these quips is not certain, but to the western mind he seemed on safer ground with some less freakish precepts, saws and instances.

"By many words wit is exhausted; it is better to preserve a mean."

"Which is nearer to you, fame or life? Which

is more to you, life or wealth? Which is the greater malady, gain or loss?"

"There is no sin greater than ambition; no calamity greater than discontent; no vice more sickening than covetousness. He who is content always has enough."

"The sage has no hard and fast ideas, but he shares the ideas of the people and makes them his own."

These are perhaps examples only of worldly wisdom, but Lao Tzu rose to a diviner light when he said:

"To the good I would be good; to the not-good I would also be good, in order to make them good. With the faithful I would keep faith, with the unfaithful I would also keep faith, in order that they may become faithful. Even if a man is bad, how can it be right to cast him off?"

"Requite injury with kindness."

"This is the Way of Heaven, which benefits and injures not. This is the Way of the Sage, in whose actions there is no element of strife."

That was the flower and fruit of his teaching, the "Way of Heaven," but like all great teachers, the Old Philosopher lamented his own shortcomings and disillusions, and it is recorded that he said: "Alas! the barrenness of the age has not yet reached its limit. All men are radiant with happiness, as if enjoying a great feast, as if mounted on a tower in spring. I alone am still, and give as yet no sign of joy. I am like an infant which has not yet smiled, forlorn as one who has nowhere to lay his head."

"Other men have plenty, while I alone seem to have lost all. I am a man foolish in heart, dull and confused."

"Other men are full of light; I alone seem to be in darkness. Other men are alert; I alone am listless. I am unsettled as the ocean, drifting as though I had no stopping-place. All men have their usefulness; I alone am stupid and clownish; lonely though I am, yet I revere the Foster-Mother, Tao."

"My words are very easy to understand, very easy to put into practice; yet the world can neither understand nor practise them."

"My words have a clue, my actions have an underlying principle. It is because men do not know the clue that they understand me not."

"Those who know me are but few, and on that account my honour is the greater."

"Thus the Sage wears coarse garments, but carries a jewel in his bosom."

CHAPTER IV

More about Tao, as described by Dr. Lionel Giles—Prince Hui's cook—Cutting up a bullock on Taoist lines—Chuang Tzu—Lao Tzu's most gifted follower—His antagonism to Confucius—Some illustrations to give an idea of his mind—"What man knows is not to be compared with what he does not know"—His dream and its moral—His belittlement of Yao and Shun—The parable of the sacred tortoise—Dialogue with a skull.

In an attempt to understand how Chinese regard Taoism, it seems worth while to consider some of the native commentators thereon who were more or less followers, if not actual disciples, of Lao Tzu.

Among these, one of the most important and also most gifted with literary genius, was certainly Chuang Tzu, who lived more than two centuries later. According to the account of him by Ssu-ma Ch'ien he did not occupy a very exalted position in life, as he was only a petty official in a small provincial town, but as Dr. Lionel Giles points out, he "was imbued to the core with the principles of pure Taoism, as handed down by Lao Tzu. He might more fitly be dubbed 'The Tao-saturated Man' than Spinoza 'The God intoxicated.' Tao in its various phases pervaded his inmost being and was reflected in all his thought. He was, therefore, eminently qualified to revive his Master's ring-

ing protest against the materialistic tendencies of the time."

His literary and philosophical talent naturally brought him into notoriety, especially as he was in opposition to the orthodox ethics of Confucius, which had in Chuang Tzu's own lifetime been greatly advanced by Mencius, who is claimed as the second of China's great sages, and worthy to be ranked with, if after, Confucius himself.

As Dr. Giles describes him, Chuang Tzu was a man full of contradictions, melancholy yet full of enthusiasm, "a natural sceptic, yet inspired with boundless belief in his doctrine." There is no record of the early stages of his mental and spiritual development, and he emerged "as a keen adherent of the school of Lao Tzu," with his convictions settled and mature, though not always consistent. Unlike his Master, he wrote in a beautifully clear style, with the elegance of diction that is so highly valued by Chinese scholars, and "his mental grasp of elusive metaphysical problems was hardly, if at all, inferior to that of Lao Tzu himself, and certainly never equalled by any subsequent Chinese thinker," said Dr. Giles, adding that there were sides of Lao Tzu's teaching which he passed over, while in other directions he allowed "his brilliant imagination to carry him far out of sight of his fountain head."

But Tao, as with Lao Tzu, was the centre of Chuang Tzu's system, though his Tao was not always quite the same Tao which the old Philosopher conceived and worshipped as the great primal, pervading, eternal and incomprehensible

Force or Being that existed before Heaven and Earth. With Chuang Tzu, Tao seemed to become a mystic moral principle, but no longer the Absolute or the Unconditioned.

All this is very ambiguous, and liable to misconstruction by the foreign student; for, as Dr. Giles candidly admits, "neither consistency of thought nor exact terminology can be looked for in Chinese philosophy as a whole, and least of all, perhaps, in such an abstract system as that of early Taoism."

Chuang Tzu, however, in spite of some inconsistency and lack of definite thought at times, grasped some great principles. He insisted on the "ultimate relativity of all human perceptions," and considered that space and time were relative, also that knowledge gained by looking at things from one point of view was illusory and untrustworthy. It seemed possible to him that even contraries might be in some sense identical with each other, because of the all-embracing Reality and Unity behind them.

But he did not press this line of reasoning too far, as it would have led him to utter scepticism. Even at the cost of inconsistency, he was at heart an idealist, and could not in the end seriously question the existence of the Absolute, a permanent and eternal Reality, behind the flow of phenomena and the Visible Universe. His mind seems to have acted as a sort of philosophical kaleidoscope, or thaumatrope, where his perceptions led to conclusions that his theories of ultimate relativity finally contradicted, or at least threw doubt on.

He was apparently not able, at least to his own satisfaction, to reconcile what he perceived and experienced with what he suspected to be the inner Reality, so at a certain point he seemed to give up these bewildering abstractions, or leave them in the background while he kept Lao Tzu in sight and began to draw inferences from the fascinating but slightly intractable doctrine of relativity.

Virtue implied vice, according to his inference, and therefore would indirectly be productive of vice, and to aim at being virtuous was only "an ignorant and one-sided way of regarding the principles of the universe." Rather, he thought, let us transcend the artificial distinctions of right and wrong and take Tao itself as our model, "keeping our minds in a state of perfect balance, absolutely passive and quiescent, making no effort in any direction."

The idea apparently was to lose one's own individuality and substitute Tao for it, though Tao is inert, unchanging and also profoundly unconscious. Tao being the great model for mankind, Chuang Tzu would have everyone to attain to a like unconsciousness, yet seeing this to be an impossibility he advocated, not universal suicide as a short cut, but a state of mental abstraction that would involve a total absence of self-consciousness. In a modern phrase, he wanted the Unconscious Mind to replace the Conscious Mind, and in order to make his meaning clearer he resorted to the time-worn expedient of telling a story. All human beings like to hear a story, and one rather suspects that by this means philosophers, prophets and

apostles have attracted listeners who did not give what is vulgarly known as a tinker's damn for their doctrines, but enjoyed the accompanying illustrations! In Chuang's case, there was more than the usual irony, as in order to persuade his fellow-creatures to lose all interest in life he had first to interest them in his anecdotes.

He drove home the contention that the greatest manual dexterity was attained only by those who became automatic and unself-conscious, like Prince Hui's cook, who cut up a bullock in such perfect harmony, "rhythmical like the dance of the Mulberry Grove, simultaneous like the chords of the Ching Shou," that the Prince praised him:

"Well done! Yours is skill indeed."

"Sire," replied the cook, "I have always devoted myself to Tao. It is better than skill. When I first began to cut up bullocks, I saw before me simply *whole* bullocks. After three years' practice, I saw no more whole animals. And now I work with my mind and not with my eye. When my senses bid me stop, but my mind urges me on, I fall back upon eternal principles."

This application of Tao to ordinary work was intended to point the way towards abstract contemplation, where it would find its fullest scope, and the same idea was applied to the question of ethics. Chuang Tzu, as already mentioned, "would have men neither moral nor immoral, but non-moral." "Any attempt to impose fixed standards of morality on the peoples of the earth is to be condemned, because it leaves no room for that spontaneous and

unforced accord with nature which is the very salt of human action."

The mere fact of calling any conduct good implied a lapse into "the uncertain sea of relativity and subsequent deviation from the heavenly pattern." This was supposed to be an adequate explanation of the paradox which Chuang was constantly proclaiming, namely, that wisdom, charity, duty to one's neighbour and the like virtues, were opposed to Tao.

Here we are at no loss to gauge ordinary Chinese opinion, as his contemporaries and those who have come after to the present day have hesitated to adopt a system which is really no system and would lead to moral and political anarchy; because, though Tao itself may be all that is claimed for it, the average human being can scarcely be trusted as yet to pursue this "spontaneous and unforced accord with nature."

Yet Chuang Tzu was not altogether a vague dreamer of unworkable paradoxes. He found that he had to modify his extreme views to meet the exigencies of actual life; so to help out some of his too obvious difficulties in reconciling theory and practice, he formulated a convenient doctrine of what he called "non-angularity and self-adaptation to externals," no doubt to placate the sound commonsense of his countrymen. Dr. Giles calls this doctrine "a corollary to the grand principle of getting outside one's personality—a process which extends the mental horizon and creates sympathy with the minds of others." For, as Lao Tzu said, tempering an extreme attitude:

"What the world reverences cannot be treated with disrespect."

Chuang Tzu saw that the Master was right, so he discountenanced violent propaganda and considered that gentle, moral suasion and personal example were the only methods to use. Even with these he counselled prudence, saying:

"If you are always offending by your superiority, you will probably come to grief."

He deprecated forcing even the best new ideas down the people's throat without regard to time or place, as this was "like pushing a boat on land, great trouble and no result, except certain injury to oneself." The Chinese are by temperament a tolerant people, but there are limits to their forbearance, and it is just as well for us to take note of the fact that their own sages and philosophers were, generally speaking, careful not to push matters to extremes.

Chuang Tzu was, of course, handicapped by his antagonism to Confucius, which has been offensive to the *literati* ever since his era. Most of the writers who mention him animadvert upon his hostile attitude to China's greatest sage, and yet this hostility was by no means consistent or constant, seeing that Confucius was used dramatically as a mouthpiece to expound Chuang Tzu's own views. In one chapter of Chuang Tzu's work "we may even discern a rough attempt at reconciling the two extremes of mystic Taoism and matter-of-fact Confucianism," Dr. Giles tells us. "It seems that all may not aspire to the more intimate communion with Tao, though Tao is the environment

of all. For Confucius here resigns himself to the will of Heaven, which has ordained that he, like the bulk of mankind, shall travel within the ordinary 'rule of life,' with its limited outlook, its prejudices, forms and ceremonies; but he frankly recognizes the superior blessedness of the favoured few who can transcend it."

This petty and unphilosophical spite might gratify Chuang Tzu's ruffled spirit, but it did him more harm than it did Confucius in the estimation of his readers. He went to greater lengths and showed Confucius at much disadvantage in some simulated interviews with Lao Tzu. Confucius was made to behave more like a disciple of the old Philosopher than the head of a rival system, or, as one might put it, of system against anarchy. For example, he was made to deliver what Dr. Giles calls a characteristic harangue in the Taoist vein and to declare:

"There is nothing more fatal than intentional virtue, when the mind looks outwards."

Sayings, the exact opposite of what he really uttered, were put in his mouth and the Confucianists quite justly reprobated such unfair methods of controversy. Yet it seems certain that Chuang Tzu was impressed by the personal character of the philosopher, and most people will agree with Dr. Giles that we are left in a state of uncertainty "with regard to our author's real estimate of Confucius," also that this vagueness calls attention to the ironical quality in Chuang Tzu's mind "which pleasantly tempers his dogmatism."

This pleasant irony, however, did not altogether

appeal to his critics, and both in his lifetime and since they have handled him roughly. An early writer complained that "he hides himself in the clouds and has no knowledge of men," and another accused him of being "reckless, one who submitted to no law," while a third remarked that "in his desire to free himself from the trammels of objective existences, he lost himself in the quicksands of metaphysics." A slightly more favourable estimate was: "In his teachings propriety plays no part, neither are they founded on eternal principles; nevertheless, they were the semblance of wisdom and have their good points."

On the other hand, as Dr. Giles reminds us, rabid Confucianists insisted that "his book was expressly intended to cast a slur on their Master, in order to make people accept his own heterodox teaching; and, consequently, nothing would satisfy them but that his writings should be burnt and his disciples cut off. As to the rights and wrongs of his system, they were not even worth discussing."

What preserved Chuang Tzu's work was mainly its literary form and charm of style, together with his illustrations of his theories conveyed in dialogue and anecdote. He has never lost favour with scholars, and from time to time, when Taoism became fashionable, he has had Court favour and official recognition. His book was said to be studied by several Emperors, and was also made the subject of lectures and examinations. In A.D. 713, nearly a thousand years after his death, it was decreed that members of the public service who understood Chuang Tzu should be singled out for

promotion, and his works in a standard edition were printed in A.D. 1005, the reigning Emperor presenting each of his Ministers with a copy.

As in his native land, so far outside her borders, he has been eclipsed by the greater names of Confucius, Lao Tzu and Mencius, but it seems worth while to study—even briefly—such a brilliant Chinese writer, if perhaps more for his "atmosphere and outlook than his philosophy." From the admirable translation of his works by Professor H. A. Giles, we may try to give some idea of Chuang Tzu's mind.

Though not ambitious of gaining political success, or great wealth, and with all his mysticism and absorption in Tao, he seems to have been a man of the world. He did not advise disciples to live as hermits, or mortify their animal instincts, observing wisely:

"Those who would benefit mankind from deep forests or lofty mountains are simply unequal to the strain upon their higher motives."

"The universe and I came into being together; and I, and everything therein, are One," may be taken as a short statement of his Doctrine of Relativity.

He related an illustrative parable about the Spirit of the River, elated by the autumn floods, laughing for joy and journeying to the Ocean. "There, looking eastwards and seeing no limit to its waves, his countenance changed. And as he gazed over the expanse, he sighed and said to the Spirit of the Ocean, 'A vulgar proverb says that he who has heard but part of the truth thinks no

one equal to himself. And such a one was I. Now that I have looked upon your inexhaustibility—alas for me had I not reached your abode, I should have been for ever a laughing-stock to those of comprehensive enlightenment.' "

To which the Spirit of the Ocean replied: "You cannot speak of ocean to a well-frog—the creature of a narrower sphere. You cannot speak of ice to a summer insect—the creature of a season. You cannot speak of Tao to a pedagogue: his scope is too limited. But now that you have emerged from your narrow sphere and have seen the great ocean, you know your own insignificance, and I can speak to you of great principles."

"The Four Seas—are they not to the universe but like puddles in a marsh? The Middle Kingdom—is it not to the surrounding ocean like a tare-seed in a granary? Of all the myriad created things, man is but one. And of all those who inhabit the land, live on the fruit of the earth, and move about in cart and boat, an individual man is but one. Is not he, as compared with all creation, but as the tip of a hair upon a horse's skin?

"Dimensions are limitless; time is endless. Conditions are not invariable; terms are not final. Thus, the wise man looks into space, and does not regard the small as too little, nor the great as too much; for he knows that there is no limit to dimension. He looks back into the past, and does not grieve over what is far off, nor rejoice over what is near; for he knows that time is without end. He investigates fullness and decay, and does not rejoice if he succeeds, nor lament if he fails; for he

knows that conditions are not invariable. He who clearly apprehends the scheme of existence does not rejoice over life, nor repine at death; for he knows that terms are not final.

"What man knows is not to be compared with what he does not know. The span of his existence is not to be compared with the span of his non-existence. With the small, to strive to exhaust the great necessarily lands him in confusion, and he does not attain his object. How then should one be able to say that the tip of a hair is the *ne plus ultra* of smallness, or that the universe is the *ne plus ultra* of greatness?"

A more whimsical parable to show the identity of all things mentions: "To place oneself in subjective relation with externals, without consciousness of their objectivity—this is Tao," said Tzu Ch'i to Tzu Yu. "But to wear out one's intellect in an obstinate adherence to the individuality of things, not recognizing that all things are One—this is called *Three in the Morning*."

"What is *Three in the Morning*?" asked Tzu Yu.

"A keeper of monkeys," replied Tzu Ch'i, "said with regard to their ration of chestnuts, that each monkey was to have three in the morning and four at night. But at this the monkeys were very angry, so that the keeper said they might have four in the morning and three at night, with which arrangement they were all well pleased. The actual number of the chestnuts remained the same, but there was an adaptation to the likes and dislikes of those concerned. Such is the principle

of putting oneself into subjective relation with externals. Wherefore the true sage, while regarding contraries as identical, adapts himself to the laws of Heaven. This is called following two courses at once."

One of his finest and best known fables ran as follows:

"Once upon a time, I, Chuang Tzu, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly, and was unconscious of my individuality as a man. Suddenly I awaked, and there I lay, myself again.

"Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man."

He was often occupied with the Eternal and the Unseen.

"The universe is very beautiful, yet it says nothing. The four seasons abide by a fixed law, yet they are not heard. All creation is based upon absolute principles, yet nothing speaks. For man's intellect, however keen, face to face with the countless evolutions of things, their death and birth, their squareness and roundness—can never reach the root. There creation is, and there it ever has been. Apparently destroyed, yet really existing; the material gone, the immaterial left—such is the law of creation, which passeth all understanding. This is called the root, whence a glimpse may be obtained of God.

"The ultimate end is God. He is manifested in the laws of nature. He is the hidden spring.

At the beginning He was. This, however, is inexplicable. It is unknowable. But from the unknowable we reach the known.

"All things spring from germs. Under many diverse forms these things are ever being reproduced. Round and round, like a wheel, no part of which is more the starting-point than any other. This is called heavenly equilibrium. And He Who holds the scales is God.

"Not knowing the hereafter, how can we deny the operation of Destiny? Not knowing what preceded birth, how can we assert the operation of Destiny? When things turn out as they ought, who shall say that the agency is not supernatural? When things turn out otherwise, who shall say that it is?"

He held decided opinions about the innate goodness of primitive man, saying that in the days when natural instincts prevailed "men moved quietly and gazed steadily. All things were produced, each for its own proper sphere. For then man dwelt with birds and beasts, and all creation was one. There were no distinctions of good and bad men. Being all equally without knowledge, their virtue could not go astray. Being all equally without evil desires, they were in a state of natural integrity, the perfection of human existence.

"But when Sages appeared, tripping up people over charity and fettering them with duty to their neighbour, doubt found its way into the world. And then, with their gushing over music and fussing over ceremony, the empire became divided against itself."

This was a scarcely veiled attack on Confucianism which he developed more pointedly in one of his dialogues between that Sage and his own master, Lao Tzu.

"Tell me," said Lao Tzu, "in what consist charity and duty to one's neighbour."

"They consist," answered Confucius, "in a capacity for rejoicing in all things; in universal love, without the element of self. These are the characteristics of charity and duty to one's neighbour."

"What stuff!" cried Lao Tzu. "Does not universal love contradict itself? Is not your elimination of self a positive manifestation of self?" He set forth the example of the universe and its increasing regularity and finished with an eloquent rebuke: "Why then these vain struggles after charity, and duty to one's neighbour, as though beating a drum in search of a fugitive? Alas! Sir, you have brought much confusion into the mind of man."

But sad to relate, the mind of man seemed to prefer the confusion brought into it by Confucius to the advice given by Lao Tzu of "Follow Tao; and you will be perfect." Chuang Tzu explained this by saying that to exhibit superior merit was not the way to win men's hearts. "To exhibit inferior merit is the way."

He was, however, not discouraged in his teachings, or at least in recording his own views.

"To have attained to the human form must be always a source of joy," he said. "And then, to undergo countless transitions, with only the infinite

to look forward to, what incomparable bliss is that! Therefore it is that the truly wise rejoice in that which can never be lost, but endures alway."

Occasionally he gave the Confucians a direct challenge.

"Is Confucius a Sage, or is he not? How is it he has so many disciples? He aims at being a subtle dialectician, not knowing that such a reputation is regarded by real Sages as the fetters of a criminal."

Under the guise of a fable, the following seems to reflect on the rival philosopher.

Tzu Ch'i in travelling saw a large tree which astonished him very much.

"What tree is this?" cried Tzu Ch'i. "Surely it must have unusually fine timber." Then looking up, he saw that its branches were too crooked for rafters; while, as to its trunk, he saw that its irregular grain made it valueless for coffins. He tasted a leaf, but it took the skin off his lips; and its odour was so strong that it would make a man, as it were, drunk for three days together.

"Ah!" said Tzu Ch'i. "This tree is good for nothing, and that is how it has attained this size. A wise man might well follow its example."

The Confucians would have no difficulty in understanding this parable, but it is doubtful if they had a sufficient sense of humour to enjoy it. Other sayings also conveyed Chuang Tzu's contempt, such as: "The men of this world all rejoice in others being like themselves, and object to others not being like themselves." "Spread out your knowledge, and it will be found to be shallow."

It was well known that the Emperors Yao and Shun were favourite heroes of Confucius, so it naturally occurred to Chuang Tzu to ask, rhetorically:

"As to Yao and Shun, what claim have they to praise? Their fine distinctions simply amounted to knocking a hole in a wall in order to stop it up with brambles; to combing each individual hair; to counting the grains for a rice pudding! How in the name of goodness did they profit their generation?"

In one thing Chuang Tzu was quite consistent; he had no vulgar ambition. When the Prince of Ch'u sent two high officials to offer him the administration of the Ch'u State, they found Chuang Tzu fishing. He did not turn his head, but said he had heard there was a sacred tortoise in Ch'u which had been dead three thousand years, and was carefully enclosed by the Prince in a chest on the altar of his ancestral temple.

"Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its remains venerated," asked Chuang Tzu, "or be alive and wagging its tail in the mud?"

"It would rather be alive," replied the two officials, "and wagging its tail in the mud."

"Begone!" cried Chuang Tzu. "I too will wag my tail in the mud."

It seems certain that he was consoled for the troubles and disappointments of this life by intimations of immortality. We have his story of the skull he found, empty and bleached, but intact in shape. He struck it with his riding-whip and exclaimed:

"Wert thou once some ambitious citizen whose inordinate yearnings brought him to this pass?—some statesman who plunged his country into ruin and perished in the fray?—some wretch who left behind him a legacy of shame?—some beggar who died in the pangs of hunger and cold? Or didst thou reach this state by the natural course of old age?"

He took the skull, and placing it under his head as a pillow, went to sleep and dreamt that it appeared to him and said:

"You speak well, sir; but all you say has reference to the life of mortals, and to mortal troubles. In death there are none of these. Would you like to hear about death?"

Chuang Tzu having indicated that he would, the skull began:

"In death there is no sovereign above, and no subject below. The workings of the four seasons are unknown. Our existences are bounded only by eternity. The happiness of a king among men cannot exceed that which we enjoy."

Chuang Tzu was not altogether convinced, and tested the skull by asking:

"Were I to prevail upon God to allow your body to be born again, and your bones and flesh to be renewed, so that you could return to your parents, to your wife and to the friends of your youth—would you be willing?"

The test failed, and the skull replied:

"How should I cast aside happiness greater than that of a king, and mingle once again in the toils and troubles of mortality?"

When his own time came, and his disciples wished to give him a splendid funeral, Chuang Tzu replied nobly and in complete accordance with his lifelong vision:

"With Heaven and Earth for my coffin and shell, with the sun, moon and stars as my burial regalia, and with all creation to escort me to my grave, are not my funeral paraphernalia ready to hand?"

CHAPTER V

The best Confucianism and the purest Taoism shared one praiseworthy characteristic, the contempt for Mammon—Buddhism comes on the scene and takes firm root in China though severely persecuted in early days, but later on loses grip—Muhammadans in the Far East—They took the Koran to China but left the sword behind—The ultimate effect of Islam was to limber Chinese ideas of foreign nations—A short sketch of the influences of native and foreign religion and philosophy in China before the advent of Christianity.

As we have seen, Taoism, expounded by Lao Tzu, its founder, and illustrated by Chuang Tzu, his best disciple, was admittedly paradoxical, and the greatest paradox connected with it was the fact that this code of ethical and metaphysical speculation, "intended as a guide," to quote Mr. Werner's admirable account of it, "through quiescence, contemplation and union with Tao, to the achievement of virtue," should be the forerunner of a very low priestcraft, which kept only the name of Taoism and lost all the inner principles.

At the beginning it had no priesthood, and was a delicate, esoteric mysticism with no system but a reliance on the natural goodness of primitive man. It is not surprising that the firmer teaching of Confucianism should have waxed while the transcendentalism of Tao waned, but it is curious that Lao Tzu's unworldly philosophy should have been

transmuted into a sort of degraded superstition that he would have hated from his very soul.

He valued Tao as the most precious thing in the universe, the inner eternal glory of Being, and both he and his genuine disciples, such as Chuang Tzu, taught the value of abstract contemplation of Tao. Unfortunately, this attempt to get rid of all materialistic grossness and the neglect to institute any ritualism, defeated its own spiritual ends, partly because followers like Chuang Tzu adhered too much to the speculative side of Tao, and, as Dr. Giles points out, passed over and subordinated the virtues of humility, gentleness and forgiveness of injury which the earlier Taoist teachings held in high esteem. "Thus it was that the glowing promise of a singularly exalted moral code died away in later hands to the dust and ashes of a spurious metaphysic."

The best Confucianism and the purest Taoism shared one praiseworthy characteristic, the contempt for Mammon. Neither Confucius nor Lao Tzu ever condescended to value life or death in the terms of money. They knew, they preached, and they practised higher principles. "No man can serve two masters. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

While Confucianism was systematized into something like a religion, Taoism for centuries drifted alongside, structureless, yet alive, until after Buddhism arrived from India. Then about the first century of the Christian era, the Taoist priests emerged from their shadowy creed and "put on the garment of ecclesiasticism," to quote Mr. Werner's

vivid phrase. They set about rearing the framework of a popular religion, and put up temples and monasteries, with images and other paraphernalia to rouse the imagination and inspire the faith of the common people—and incidentally to reach their pockets as well.

Very soon this led to a belief in magic and miracles, called by some Shamanism. The Shamans were priest-magicians, and were held to possess occult powers, so that they could conjure up spirits, and tame the elements at will, also—what was more immediate and practical—producing health and disease, good and evil fortune. They boldly claimed that they could (of course for a consideration!) free mankind from the shackles of natural forces, and counteract the malevolence of wicked spirits. All this recommended Tao to the populace—but what a degraded Tao!

This was far removed from the dignified and reasoned system of Confucianism, and had a greater affinity with Buddhism which, as everyone knows, was introduced from India, a fully mature and developed religion. In fact, to the casual foreigner, the two religions seem very much alike, and even among the natives there does not appear to be a hard and fast line drawn between the Old Philosopher, with a white beard, on his water-buffalo, and the cross-legged image of Buddha.

As usual in China, it is not easy to find out anything quite definitely and certainly, even to the price of a chicken, a catty of rice or a box of tea. The Chinese themselves may be in possession of these facts, but they are distinctly chary of impart-

ing the information to foreigners, so that one remains ignorant of inner meanings, and has to judge, as accurately as may be, from appearances. It is therefore rather difficult to gauge how much religious instruction, and of what sort, Confucianists, Taoists or Buddhists give the masses, and the only thing readily detected is that children are taught ancestor worship with filial piety added. Or at least they were taught these principles up to recent years.

If anyone in former days interested himself in Chinese views of this world and the next, he generally found that the better classes were greatly set on learning and classical scholarship with the ambition to pass the literary examinations that led to office and honour. The masses, poor souls, had to be intent on earning a more or less meagre living, or in their idiom "pulling cash." Both classes and masses seemed to be reluctant to expound their religious ideas, so far as Taoism and Buddhism were concerned. Confucianists alone seemed ready to talk.

But anyone could see that Buddhism has taken firm root, even if it is not quite the original Buddhism of India. As a religion, it had an authentic history, a founder and something like a rule of life and a code of worship to offer the Chinese when the first Buddhist missionaries arrived in the Middle Kingdom nearly three hundred years before the Christian era.

Unlike the Taoists — whose doctrines were supposed to manifest themselves spontaneously in the earnest disciple who sincerely followed the Path

—the Buddhists taught with conviction various dogmas, principles of life and ways of thinking. By what authority? By the clear and unchallenged authority of Gautama, their Founder. Buddhism, of course, is sacerdotal, and built on the rock of a large and disciplined priesthood, recruited both democratically and aristocratically, though more from the lower classes.

These early Buddhists were almost certainly the first outsiders to tackle China on religion, and they were badly received, being persecuted and imprisoned. Still, they left their mark, and later on, in A.D. 67, Mahayana Buddhism was officially introduced into the Middle Kingdom, owing—so the story goes—to a dream of the Emperor Ming Ti, of the Han Dynasty.

Like other ancient races, the Chinese were influenced by their dreams; and the Emperor was sufficiently impressed to send for these Indian priests, to treat them graciously on their arrival, approving and encouraging the propagation of their religion. Naturally, under the protection of imperial favour, the new doctrines spread quickly and won many converts, while Buddhist temples, shrines, pagodas and monasteries were built everywhere. At first, native Chinese were not eligible for the priesthood, but this rule was changed after a time—to be for various reasons periodically re-enacted.

So far as the Occidental can judge, there could have been nothing in this earlier Buddhism that was repellent to the Chinese. The story of Gautama, a prince giving up his royal state, prob-

ably appealed to the common people, and there was not much in his teachings, as set forth in the Dhammapada, to clash with the best thought of either Lao Tzu or Confucius. The Noble Eightfold Path contained little to startle or antagonize the Middle Kingdom, but after a time there was trouble, as the priests did not always live up to the excellent professions of their creed.

The religion, however, got a firm grip of China that it has never wholly lost, and the persecution which it endured from the Confucianists rather strengthened than weakened its position in the end. These persecutions were doubtless more on political than purely religious grounds, as about the fifth century A.D. the Buddhists became so powerful and active in the whole community that the magistrates began to fear disaffection and anti-patriotism. They took the matter up seriously, and wrote memorials to recommend imperial interference.

In his valuable work, " Chinese Buddhism," Dr. Edkins reproduces a very interesting specimen document of this sort which pointed out the dangers of unrestricted Buddhism during four dynasties.

" Pagodas and temples were upwards of a thousand in number. On entering them the visitor's heart was affected, and when he left he felt desirous to invite others to the practice of piety."

On the surface there seemed no harm in this, but what did " the practice of piety " lead to? That was the point, as he explained with mournful indignation:

" Lately, however, these sentiments of rever-

ence had given place to frivolity. Instead of aiming at sincerity and purity of life, gaudy finery and mutual jealousies prevailed."

New and splendid temples were built for display, he averred, while the old temples were forsaken. He thought that official inquiries should be instituted to stop further evils, and that persons who wished to cast bronze statues should first obtain permission.

The event justified these warnings, as a few years later, in A.D. 458, as Dr. Edkins records, "a conspiracy was detected in which the chief party was a Buddhist priest." This led to some unexpected revelations about "the practice of piety," as it came out that many criminals, flying from justice, had taken the monastic vows for safety, and under cover of this spiritual shelter were contriving new ways of doing mischief.

"The fresh troubles thus constantly occurring," said an Imperial Edict, "excite the indignation of gods and men," and the authorities were required "to examine narrowly" into the conduct of the monks. Those who were found guilty of treason should be put to death, and later on, as a precautionary measure, it was enacted that monks who could not—or would not—keep their vows of abstinence and self-denial must return to their families and previous secular occupations.

The Confucianists were roused, and Buddhists, with other unorthodox sects, were severely persecuted, their followers being massacred and the temples destroyed.

It was not a mere passing trial of their religion,

as—with some gaps of relaxed persecution—it lasted for several centuries. In A.D. 845 over four thousand convents were dealt with and about forty thousand "religious" of both sexes were made to return to secular life. Buddhism thus lost its assured position—probably not altogether unjustly—and its priesthood degenerated. But it was saved from extinction by its appeal to the common people with its promise of salvation and its doctrine of love and compassion towards all creation.

Confucianism triumphed in a way, but was certainly wearing its rue with a difference from the spirit of its great Sage.

Other religions do not seem to have affected China in her isolation, until long years after the advent of Buddhism, when the Muhammadans began to reach the Far East. They came less as missionaries than as traders who, incidentally, had brought their own religion with them. They arrived about the ninth century A.D. mainly for purposes of commerce, and they settled down by degrees, building mosques, providing schools, and introducing some Western ideas.

Arabia was farther afield than India, and the tenets of her Prophet, taken as a whole, were more alien to the best Chinese ideals, although the lofty monotheism of the Koran no doubt made its appeal. But much of the theology and eschatology of Muhammad would appear to be fanciful and unproven to the Chinese mind, though interesting as fairy-tales—like those of the "Arabian Nights." The resurrection, spiritual and corporeal, of all created beings, angels, jinns, men and animals, and

the final judgment, went far beyond Buddhism and Taoism in its detail—to say nothing of Confucianism.

The Abode of the Wicked was also more carefully defined and firmly delineated with its Seven Circles, for the finely discriminated lost souls, and Chinese scholars probably smiled a little over the divisions of darkness that gave the first and least painful circle, a sort of Purgatory called Jahannam, to the Muhammadans; the second, Laza, to the Jews; the third, al Hutama, to the Christians; the fourth, al Sair, to the Sabeans; the fifth, Sakar, to the Magians; the sixth, al Jahim, to the idolaters; and the last, Haroujat, to the hypocrites who outwardly professed some religion and yet had no God.

This Muslim Hell, if the Chinese studied it—which is possible—must have enlarged their knowledge of outer barbarians, and probably had some influence when the Jews and Christians, at least, put in appearance after a time.

The Muhammadan Paradise is certainly less spiritual and more material than the Buddhist or Taoist conceptions of Heaven, and its joys would not strike the Chinese as being very moral, with all the eating and drinking, jewels and possessions, the ravishing songs of the Angel Israfil, and (most doubtful of all) the beautiful dark-eyed houris.

However, that was "presently," so to speak, as it concerned the next world, and probably the Muslim discipline and ritual for daily life did not altogether alienate Chinese opinion, as the followers of Muhammad are quite worthy of respect in this

world, if not in their Paradise. Predestination, or Fatalism, gives them courage, and their call to prayer five times a day is impressive, also their fasting during Ramazan, their almsgiving and various sacrifices they make for their Faith.

Some of these are distinctly contrary to the Chinese view, where a certain very real liberty has always been followed and valued. It is scarcely too much to claim for the Chinese that they have less "taboo" than almost any race of equal civilization and political stability. The idea of prohibiting wine, and gambling, swine's flesh, tobacco, and the making of images would not appeal to China. Neither would they sympathize with interdicts on usury and infanticide, and least of all could they approve of the commands in the Koran to extend the Muslim religion by means of the sword.

However, Muhammadans, like followers of other faiths, are not often as good as the best of their creed, or as bad as the worst of it, and their "average" did not offend China, especially as authentic accounts of some of their history evidently had not reached Far Cathay. The circumstance that they ate mutton and not pork, and therefore encouraged the breeding of sheep rather than of pigs, was perhaps the fact most widely appreciated about them by the common people. They took the Koran to China, but prudently without the sword, and refrained from aggressive methods of propaganda.

Owing to this somewhat unusual policy—for Islam—there were no persecutions of Muham-

madan for many centuries, until the religious war of 1781. This resulted in defeat, and the Chinese issued some stringent decrees against the Muslims, and about 1784 the Islamic religious leaders were banished. Coming to more recent times, there have been various Muhammadan rebellions in China between 1856 and 1878 or so, but these were political and not religious, arising out of the occupation of Kashgar by China.

The number of Muhammadans in China is estimated at fifteen to twenty millions, mostly in the western provinces, Yunnan and Kansu. Numerically they are and always have been entirely negligible, but nevertheless they have influenced Chinese thought in some indirect ways, and have helped to break down the isolation so dear to the early statesmen and philosophers. Even the suggestion that there were sinners of other races for whom at death a place of punishment had to be provided suggested ideas and broadened the celestial mind.

Here we may touch on a peculiarity of nearly all religions, including Christianity, that whereas they cannot see their way to admitting any but their own saints to their own heavens, they are ready with the widest hospitality in the Other Place in the spirit of " Let 'em all come," and the more the merrier.

Islam, then, limbered Chinese ideas of foreign nations, and also introduced a note of Judaism and Christianity in the Prophet's borrowings from both these faiths. The name of Moses might not make a very marked impression on a Chinese student,

yet he would have heard in this way of the great Israelitish leader and lawgiver. Again, the Founder of Christianity also figures as one ot Allah's prophets, even although His own followers are "accursed dogs."

Taking everything into consideration, Islamism must have sounded the first note of difference between far Eastern Asiatics with their outlook in India, Burma, Siam, China and Japan, and the Westerners. Like the Persians, Arabians and Jews, these races came into touch with the Greeks and other peoples of Europe, and also across the deserts and on the southern shores of the Mediterranean with the still older beliefs of Egypt, and some of this "atmosphere" probably percolated faintly to China with the religious prejudices of the Muhammadans.

It must not be lost sight of that during these centuries Islam had made tremendous conquests over in the West. Constantinople had fallen, and the Koran and the sword had triumphed in a good many countries, and Islam had ranged itself as one of the great religions of the West, holding Asia Minor, Palestine, and Egypt, also parts of Spain. No doubt this travelled out to China, if only "in a glass darkly," and certain warnings of the fierce Muhammadan spirit must have reached the Middle Kingdom.

Judaism does not seem to have made any efforts to penetrate to China, although Jews, as traders, have arrived in more recent times. The Jewish religion is certainly one of the oldest faiths that is still vital, but it has not much of the missionary

spirit, and never has had. The Chosen People felt themselves to be apart from the Gentiles everywhere, and, logically enough, left it at that.

This is a short and inadequate sketch of the influences of native and foreign religion and philosophy in China, before the advent of Christianity. Anyone who studies the fortunes and misfortunes of imported creeds will surely be impressed by the superior tolerance of the Chinese, especially the common people. It is scarcely too much to say that so long as the intruders were not too aggressive and showed ordinary courtesy and tact, China was, until the modern Red propaganda upset things, quite ready to live and let live.

Just because the native temperament is not vehemently religious, the Chinese are not easily provoked by other creeds. If not extremely impressible, they are generally willing to listen to the barbarian, should he have anything interesting or profitable to say, but whether they have always distinguished between fairy-tales, so to speak, and serious propaganda, is doubtful.

As we have already mentioned, the Chinese are curiously free in many ways, and are democratic by instinct. At their best, they are a most kindly and human people, not at all prejudiced against the rest of the world, and with the saving grace of loving a laugh. They have many sterling qualities, and are, before everything, patient, hard-working and disciplined. As a race and as a nation they have been tried in the fire of overwhelming afflictions in the way of floods, earthquakes, wars, pestilences and famines, and their fortitude and

powers of endurance have been beyond praise, and at times almost superhuman.

The people who know them best, and are therefore the most competent to form an opinion, will always agree that a really good Chinese man or woman, of whatever class in life, is a very admirable example of the human species, and quite corroborates the old revelation that God made man in His own Image!

CHAPTER VI

The daily lives of the Chinese—Solidly and splendidly self-supporting and self-sufficing throughout the ages—The north and south contrasted—To this day Chinese industry and efficiency challenge the whole world—The beauty of their simple lives in agricultural China—Mr. Werner's touching tribute to their ceremonial observances—The God of the Kitchen and the God of the Hearth—The "unmechanical" gaiety of the Chinese—Arts and crafts in the villages.

QUITE aside from the philosophies and religious beliefs of the Chinese, it might be well to get some idea of the circumstances of their daily lives, as these in the not remote past differed greatly from our own environment, and still diverge considerably.

The mere mention of China conjures up a number of what we may call "incidentals," such as tea, silk, lacquer ware, foot-binding, the queue, and the willow-pattern plate, but not many trouble to realize the more important and fundamental characteristics of a great and ancient people. One of the first things about them to fix in the Western consciousness is their age-long policy of isolation. They felt no need of the outer barbarians, and did not care to confuse issues by admitting what Ruskin called "the inconsistently minded."

China has for millenniums been splendidly and solidly self-supporting and self-sufficing, and she

owes this admirable quality, in the main, to her system of patriarchal government. The Chinese ideal is law and order first in the home, then in the village, the city, the district, the province and finally in the central government of the Empire. It is perfectly logical, and what is more to the purpose—it works, at least it has worked up to recent years. With all this authority there was everywhere responsibility, the father (or mother) being expected to rule the family, and the elders to keep the village in order, and so on, until the Emperor was responsible to Heaven.

This form of government, of course, did not lend itself to enterprise or experiments, and as stability and maintenance were its principal objects, it had to be chary of encouraging original ideas in case they proved destructive. There was never much margin in China for testing fancy theories of administration, and after all it must be conceded that their system has held together longer than almost any other recorded in history. This is not only a tribute to the system, but even more to the character of the people who maintained it rather by consent than by force.

It was somewhat like the marriage vows, "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health," and the sterling qualities of the Chinese have pulled them through nearly every kind of trouble—including foreign aggressors conquering them in a way—that a country can expect. For better, for worse, under good Emperors and bad ones; for richer, for poorer, with fat years and lean ones; in sickness and in health, when things

went very wrong or turned out for the best, in all vicissitudes China has held on, and justified their fine old saying that within the four seas all are brothers.

Turning to the conditions under which these overwhelming millions have lived and (more or less) flourished for so many centuries, these vary somewhat according to the province and the climate. The north is bitterly cold and dry in winter, with a short hot summer, and ends (roughly) a little above the line of the Yangtze River. Mid-China has a climate of extremes, with a very cold, raw winter and a summer that is both trying and unhealthy from the burst of heat followed by storms bringing down the temperature. This region extends irregularly from a little above the Yangtze line almost to Fukien. In the south there is a long, but not excessively hot summer season, and a short winter.

These three well-marked differences of climate, of course, affect the minor questions of housing, of clothing and of food, but they do not appreciably change any of the deeper racial characteristics, though the inhabitants of what may be called the Three Zones do not like each other's dialects, or food, or weather. But it is only a family quarrel after all!

The digestive tract of Man is more adaptable than the cereal he eats, and in North China they cultivate wheat, sorghum and maize. Mid-China can raise some of these, but Southern China has to rely on growing rice. Until quite lately, all parts of the Middle Kingdom grew their own foodstuffs,

in the ground or on it, and that was the foundation of their whole social structure.

Added to producing food, they had to win all the other necessaries of life, and if we consider their struggles we can form some impressions of how they lived—and be more ready to admire their industry and endurance than to criticize their so-called backwardness.

They were up against nature, and had to shape their course accordingly. If they wanted anything, they had to make it, working for it directly, and not indirectly for the money to buy it. If they did not spin the raw cotton, or flax, there was no yarn; if they did not weave, there was no cloth; if they did not sew, there were no clothes.

With hand work like this, there can be no great superfluity of commodities, and who shall say—taking wide views—that this is altogether a calamity? Necessity may be in a better sense the mother of industry than of invention, and surely the Chinese illustrated this on a great scale through long periods. Broadly speaking, they were both successful and happy in their own way, and it is difficult to see why outsiders like Europeans and Americans should require them to be unsuccessful and unhappy in our way!

To this day, Chinese industry and efficiency can challenge the whole world as unsurpassed. If all the machinery that gives the White Man his unfair handicap were scrapped, the Yellow Race would beat him in every handicraft. Even now, machinery and all, he cannot compete on equal terms with the Chinese, and he acknowledges his inferiority by

excluding these workers wherever he has the power to be a dog in the manger.

The Chinese were forced to do necessary work first, but they have made time to expend energy in producing art, such as their lacquer ware, their carvings, their wonderful woven silk stuffs, their exquisite embroidery. And anyone who wins their confidence and looks sympathetically will find how they love these beautiful productions, and also how they have little pleasures and customs, especially among the women, that are innocent and charming.

First of all, there is—or was—the New Year, with its varied festivities. This dates from the Monarchical Period, and used to be quite a long holiday, lasting over three weeks, the longest the natives permitted themselves, with feast and visiting. In the gaieties and intercourse of the living, the dead were not forgotten; and on the Fifteenth Day of the First Moon there was the most touching and beautiful Feast of Lanterns, the *Jour des Morts.*

Everyone in the family helped to prepare for this by collecting various things to serve as lamps. Often they would take pieces of turnip or carrot, scoop out the inside, fill the hollow with fat and insert a little cotton wick. As is generally known, it is not the custom in China to use large public cemeteries. Each family have their own graves on their own land, and one sees these miniature pyramids everywhere, by the roadside, at the corner of a field, on the plains and on the hill slopes.

They are lying in truly sacred and consecrated ground, consecrated by the ownership of generations, and still more by industry. The fathers

faithfully cultivated the land in life, and a few feet of it were dedicated to them ungrudgingly in death; and to these graves were most carefully carried the tiny fragile lamps to be lighted in remembrance, if not in hope.

The children would eagerly help to light each wick, and even the poorest families managed to observe the festival. Where it used to be most beautifully celebrated was in the amphitheatre of hills at Chefoo. There was usually a thick mantle of snow over everything—appropriately enough, as white is Chinese mourning—and added to this was a frosty, cloudless sky with clear, cold moonlight, so that when all the graves were lighted up and sparkled, the scene was of really unearthly loveliness. How much finer than our ideas of withering, soddened flowers is this giving the dead not darkness, but light! No one could look at those tiny lamps gleaming in many thousands without understanding something of China's soul, and feeling drawn to a people who so faithfully, so humanly, and so beautifully commemorated their Dead, small and great.

As Mr. Werner points out in his admirable book "China of the Chinese": "Under the heading of Ceremonial Observances must be included three public and private acts which have become so habitual with the Nation as to constitute part of its regulative structure." Some of these observances are semi-religious, and of great antiquity. In the very early ages the festivals were few and seem to have been connected with the four seasons in seed time and harvest. The "spring cultivating" was

annually inaugurated, during the Later Feudal Period (1122-221 B.C.), by the King in person, who with his Ministers, feudal princes and great officers "all with their own officers ploughed the field of God."

The great summer festival is that of the Dragon Boat on the Fifth Day of the Fifth Moon. It is observed all over China wherever there is a river, or other suitable water, and is nominally to commemorate a political hero, Ch'u Yüan, of the fourth century B.C. He worked hard for his prince and country, was unjustly treated, impeached and dismissed. He drowned himself, and some fishermen who saw the deed rowed to the spot, but did not see him again. They threw some rice to propitiate his spirit, and on the same date next year the search for his body was repeated, and has been kept up, yearly, ever since.

Where there is no river, the festival is sometimes celebrated by horse, cart and camel races, while the Mongolians have theatrical performances. Though it is many centuries since Ch'u Yüan had his heart broken by unjust treatment, ingratitude of rulers to the "poor wise man who saved the city" is by no means unknown, and the Dragon Boat Festival ought to be a useful symbolic reminder of this fact—and not only in China!

The Autumn Festival, called the Moon Feast, is of later date, but has rather a waggish tradition or two connected with it. One is to the effect that a famous archer, Hao I, about 2150 B.C., had the gift of making cakes that conferred immortality on the eaters thereof. Naturally, he hid these cakes

from his wife, and—also naturally—she found them, and was caught by him in the very act of eating one. He was going to shoot her, and to escape his arrow she fled to the moon.

There are many other minor festivals, or were until recent years. In the Eighth Moon there were feasts and processions for the God of Fire, with tableaux of figures made of wax and clad in silk showing episodes in ancient Chinese history. Taoist priests seemed much concerned in this.

Then there was a God of the Kitchen, who had his altar in every kitchen, where candles and incense were burnt daily. He was on duty from the first day of the First Moon all the year through until the twenty-fourth of the last moon, when he had to return to heaven with his annual report. They gave him a handsome feast, and it was considered wise to include in it some extra sweet and sticky syrup to seal his lips in heaven, so that he could not be too communicative about what he had seen on earth.

In addition to these national festivals, holidays and observances, there are—or were—many private and family anniversaries and ceremonies. Up to recent years, however, no Chinese ever kept his or her birthday on the actual date, as the whole population became a year older at New Year. But this did not preclude quite elaborate observances for the birth of a child, especially for a boy. It was a great day for a young Chinese wife when she brought forth her first-born son.

Marriages and funerals were the occasions of even greater ceremony, to say nothing of expense,

and nearly every observance was more or less connected with filial piety and ancestor worship which are woven into the very fibre of Chinese life. With all but the very wealthy, great sacrifices and much toil were needed to produce the clothes and properties for these events, and the said sacrifices naturally increased their interest and value. Women helped very considerably in sewing, cooking and arranging details, and among the poor quite small children were pressed into service. In this way their lives were brightened and made more significant, as there is nothing like useful work for adding to the day's importance.

Even the amusements of the Chinese, like our own before the era of "mechanical" gaiety, depended on personal effort, however slight. Unthinking foreigners have laughed at the spectacle of a group of men airing song birds in cages, yet the cages represented handicraft, and the birds an industry in breeding them, rearing them and taking care of them. Flying kites, again, has been held up to mild scorn by Westerners, who choose to ignore the designing and construction of quite wonderful kites and also the knack of flying them. "Playing" a large kite at a considerable elevation takes a good deal of skill, and the man who runs and turns to keep it flying may be, and is, every bit as good a sportsman as the average middle-aged devotee of golf!

A number of Chinese amusements and little arts, especially among the women, are not shown to the dense-minded foreigner, but native embroidery has always been admired. Of course, these poor

workers are glad to get a little money for their pretty things, but many Chinese women make charming designs for the artistic pleasure of doing it, and a poor girl will deny herself in various ways to save a few cents for a skein or two of silk.

It used to be a wonderful moment in a native village when a pedlar arrived and spread out a very humble assortment of goods for the inspection of customers whose shrewdness was remarkable. Women had to work hard to keep their families clothed and shod, and they did not care to spend their scanty means and honest labour on rotten materials.

Many designs and patterns were handed down from mother to daughter, but often in a village there would emerge a genius who could invent variations, and she had honour among her friends. One very pretty art in Shantung at least was to cut beautiful lace-like patterns in red paper to decorate walls and windows.

Tigers with whiskers, dragons, flowers, crabs—in fact, all manner of designs were developed. When neighbours begged for copies, these were made by the simple expedient of getting a small board, laying the pattern on it over thick white paper, damping the whole arrangement and then carefully blackening it in the smoke of a candle. If properly and delicately done, the pattern would be stripped off to show a perfect copy in black on white.

Those and similar pastimes amused and occupied the women quite as adequately as playing bridge or listening to a gramophone and "wireless." They developed skill and patience, and had something to

show for it, if it were only a tiger neatly clipped out of red paper with feathery whiskers and wicked claws!

From entire want of imagination, foreigners cannot understand any persons feeling happy or getting on at all without our modern soul-deadening habits, and the idea that a whole district of a thousand square miles could exist without a morning paper, telephones and other arrangements would seem extravagant to the verge of lunacy!

> "Oh, East is East, and West is West,
> And never the twain shall meet!"

sang Mr. Kipling with some truth. But as the West has made the first move to meet, the onus is on us to understand and appreciate the East. We shall not meet comfortably and securely until the West has other ideas besides making money out of the East, and, what is worse, deciding off-hand that Asia knows nothing and has everything to learn from us.

CHAPTER VII

The advent of Christianity—Nestorians at Hsi-an Fu, a city in Shensi province, in A.D. 781—Dr. Alex. Williamson's description of the Nestorian tablet—Father Ricci and the early Catholic Missions — The Protestant arrivals in the beginning of the nineteenth century—English and Scottish missionaries, reinforced by Americans, Germans, Hollanders and other nationalities — The earlier Catholic teachings a foundation for latter day Protestantism—Some Christian doctrines that appeared unseemly to the Chinese —Curious distortions of the Christian Faith in Chinese minds—The danger of preaching a great deal more than the Gospel.

We now come to the question of Christianity, our own religion, which was late in reaching China. And before proceeding to record its somewhat chequered history, I should like to remark once more that what I am setting down is emphatically not my personal opinion of Christianity in any of its aspects, but rather an honest attempt to see its history and practice from the Chinese point of view, as far as possible. It is an effort to divest ourselves of our own inherited prejudices and opinions and to look at the subject from the outside, as it were, and I am aware that even in attempting to do this I may offend against these same inherited sentiments in others.

Not for one moment am I venturing to criticize

Christianity, or its various missionaries, or the Chinese, or—in short—anything or anybody, and with this personal explanation and disclaimer we must leave it and go on to our subject.

It is generally agreed that the Nestorians were the earliest pioneers of Christianity in China; and while the exact period of their arrival is not quite certain there is evidence of their activities in a stone that they erected near Hsi-an Fu, a city of the province Shensi, with the date A.D. 781. This tablet was seen in 1867, by two missionary travellers, the Reverend Jonathan Lees of the London Missionary Society, and the Reverend Alexander Williamson of the National Bible Society of Scotland. The latter gives an interesting account of their visit in his book, "Journeys in North China," part of which we quote.

They heard of the tablet and set out to find it. "Gaining the western suburbs we came on the ruins of a Buddhist monastery; an old priest said: 'This is not your temple, *it is there*,' pointing to a field of devastation on the south-east. And, to our joy, I found the tablet, recognizing it from the facsimile which I have at home, bought from book-hawkers. There it stood perfect, with not a scratch on it, in a brick enclosure facing the south, amid heaps of stones, bricks and rubbish on all sides. The Syriac on the sides of the tablet was not seen, but we found Syriac at the foot: very likely that on the sides was now built in. On the left side of the tablet a small portion of the edge of the stone is exposed, bearing an inscription to the effect that in the ninth year of Hien-fung (viz., 1859), one thou-

sand and sixty-nine years after its erection, a man named Han-tai-wha, from Woo-lin, had come to visit it and had found the characters and ornamentation perfect and that he had rebuilt the brick covering in which it stood. He then exclaims: 'Alas! that my friend Woo-Tze-mi was not with me, that he might also have seen it. On this account I am very sorry.'"

"The inscription on the tablet is too long for insertion here," said Dr. Williamson. We give the concluding words, which are as follows:

"This tablet was erected A.D. 781, in the second year of Kien-chung, the ninth Emperor of the T'ang dynasty, on the seventh day of the first moon, Ning-Shu, priest, being special law-lord and preacher to those of this illustrious religion throughout the regions of the East."

For a full account and vindication of the tablet's authenticity, the reader is referred by Dr. Williamson to an elaborate and scholarly translation that the early missionary and sinologue, Alexander Wylie, published in the *North China Herald.* It is also described in that standard book on China, "The Middle Kingdom," by Dr. Wells Williams. As is generally known, the tablet shows a cross, Maltese in its outlines and with curious allegorical forms at the top of the stone.

This is probably all that remains of the Nestorian mission, and it is recorded that these first exponents of Christianity were banished from China by the Emperor Wu Tsung, of the T'ang dynasty, some eighty-four years later, or about A.D. 865.

An interval of four hundred years seems to have

passed before any more Christians appeared, and it was not until the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that the Catholics invaded the Middle Kingdom, the first missions being established about 1293, and much extended and reinforced in 1581 by Father Ricci. It was almost a miracle for the intrepid priests to get so far in 1293 alive, and they must have had great powers of endurance, and faith to match. They found China under the Mongols, who ruled from 1280 to 1368.

By the end of the sixteenth century things, though rough and arduous, were less difficult; travellers could get about Asia, and the Ming dynasty was reigning (1368-1644). Always a great missionary Church, the Catholics pushed inland, to the west, to the south, and even up to Mongolia, a very strenuous undertaking in those days!

The Protestant Churches necessarily lagged behind, as they were not in existence before about the middle of the sixteenth century, and were not free from persecution nor organized even for maintaining themselves in Europe for a hundred years longer. But to do them justice, as soon as they broke out of the prisons and got off the racks provided by their fellow-Christians, sometimes their fellow-Protestants, they bestirred themselves, and about the beginning of the nineteenth century arrived on the scene.

The Orthodox Church from Russia was perhaps the last of the Christian divisions to put in an appearance. Their priests came overland from Russia and Siberia, and established missions in Mongolia, according to Dr. Williamson's account,

He said the Greek priests were carrying on these missions "with zeal and intelligence; and, what is most satisfactory, the views of divine truth held by the present heads (1869) of that church in Asia are clear and evangelical. Mr. Edkins, of Peking, had lately the pleasure of perusing a recent charge issued by the Bishop of Trans-Baikal, and he assured me that it was worthy of being set beside many of the charges of modern missionary bishops."

Dr. Williamson mentioned that the Russian priests used the translation of the Scriptures in the Mongolian language which was made by Messrs. Swan and Stallybrass of the London Missionary Society. Some other ultra-Protestants have said that the Russian Church did nothing in Mongolia!

The pioneer of the Protestant missionaries in China was Robert Morrison, to whose remarkable career we shall return later on. English and Scottish missionaries were joined by Americans, Germans, Hollanders and other nationalities, and by the middle of the nineteenth century these devoted men and women had occupied all the treaty ports and many inland places besides.

With their advent perhaps the real problem of missions began. The Catholics had taught a cut-and-dried creed, with tolerable unanimity, although there were differences of policy, notably between the Jesuits and some other Orders. The former grasped the importance of conciliating the Chinese over Ancestor Worship, and they did not despair of arranging a sort of Christianization of this worship that would smooth matters over. But, as we know, they were over-ruled by Rome, and a great

opportunity lost—whether for good or evil, it is really hard to say. The decision that ancestor worship must be renounced by converts of course checked the propagation of the Catholic Faith, and it is quite a moot point as to whether this rigour improved the quality while it certainly diminished the quantity of native Christians. Probably the Chinese who clove to their forebears were, as a rule, more estimable than the "Faithful" who gave them up. Still, as the latter had to endure a great deal of obloquy on this account they must have been sincere in adopting the foreign religion.

Catholicism in any case got a good start as this strange White Man's Creed from so far away, and in many ways its ritual and organization suited the Chinese temperament. The Mass, with its vestments and ritual, no doubt appeals to their sense of reverence, and a certain resemblance to Buddhism does not come amiss. Again the corporal works of mercy conform to their ideas of virtue, and the wonderful goodness of many priests and nuns is recognized, though at times the evilly-disposed have spread ugly rumours regarding convents.

Probably the common people have from the first accepted Catholicism without understanding the subtleties of Catholic theology, and in many ways it is easier for a native to take hold of definite sacramentalism, as one may call it, than to grasp a more intellectual and intangible creed. The rosary, holy water, images of Saints, the High Altar, are all illustrative to the Eastern mind and probably seem to be variants of Buddhism and Taoism. Anyhow

they are easily accepted, and are, at the lowest estimate, a sort of routine not unconnected with magic, fitting in with ideas that could not be exactly avowed to the priests, while at the best, sacramentals are a real support to these converts in a new faith.

So far as can be gathered, the first Catholic missionaries hastened slowly and presented the tenets of Christianity tactfully. It has often been a Protestant reproach that "the Bible was held back by Rome from the perishing heathen," or words to that effect, but here was manifested the wisdom of serpents. To have flung the Bible, Old and New Testaments, abruptly into China in the twelfth century would have had strange results, and might have been like throwing a spanner into machinery.

Quite consistently, the Catholics taught the Faith with authority, and as much of the Scriptures as was expedient. It must be remembered that in those far distant days not one of China's millions knew a syllable of any European language, and the priests had to equip themselves with a knowledge of Chinese before attempting any teaching, however simple. There were great difficulties to be overcome before they assimilated enough of this strange tongue to venture on giving religious instruction, and they could not afford to confuse the issues and overburden themselves with translations of the many books of the Bible. The Catholic view is that while the Scriptures *contain* the Word of God, the valid authority for teaching this is vested first of all in the Church, and they claim with good

reason that the record is of less moment than the events and doctrines it records.

Hence it came about that the Catholics presented a more coherent and ordered version of Christianity to the Chinese, with reservations and limitations, but in no sense hiding or altering the inner essence of the Faith. Although Protestants always gird against this method, it probably made a good foundation for their own instruction, centuries later. By degrees the Catholics have presented, especially the New Testament, to their Chinese Church, and it can never be justly urged against them that they taught anything contrary to the Word of God, although it might occasionally be contrary to the word of certain Protestant Divines, whose assumed infallibility was considerably less limited than that claimed by the Pope himself!

On this side of instruction and example the Catholic Church would have encountered few obstacles, and almost no intolerance—if they had been content to remember the saying: "My Kingdom is not of this world." But unfortunately it seems to be an inherent weakness of Catholicism that it is inseparable from the propagation of the Faith to acquire Church property and to seek for political influence, no doubt from high motives.

This might have passed unnoticed by the ordinary people, but it could not fail to attract the attention and excite the prejudices of the *literati* and governing classes, and also to set them on to examine the religion behind these manœuvres, and to examine it more critically than sympathetically. Whether we like to admit it or not, there are things

about our religion—Catholic or Protestant—which are none the worse for being seen "in a glass darkly," and there are "mysteries" which to the spiritually uninitiated seem revolting when too rashly unveiled. One would desire to indicate it with reserve and all reverence; but certain expressions about the Real Presence and the material side of receiving Communion are quite enough to account for a great deal of Chinese misapprehension of, and hostility to, the Faith. These doctrines were firmly taught for centuries before the Protestants arrived to throw a different light on the subject, and it is no use blaming the more intelligent Chinese for taking "a wrong view" of things which they could not account for in reason or in (to them) decency.

Chinese of the better class were singularly reticent (until recent years) regarding some of these aspects of Catholicism, but it is quite certain that among themselves they reprobated such teaching and considered it worse than anything in Taoism, Buddhism or Islamism. But what is puzzling and disheartening is that when these *literati* and philosophic Chinese found that Protestants practically agreed with them, they were still further prejudiced against Christianity! So far as one could follow the argument, it was something like this: "The priests of the T'ien-chu Chiao (Catholicism) are often very good men, yet they teach some doctrines that are unseemly, and also wish to rule us. Now we learn that other priests and believers in apparently the same religion condemn the T'ien-chu Chiao. What are we to think at last of this religion? Who

is right? Who is wrong? Can they tell us and guide us to a sure opinion, or are we to judge for ourselves?"

The Catholic reply, tacitly, is that of Authority. From this position, something like the old game of "Russian scandal," grow most of the wild rumours against the Catholics. Accusations of taking children's eyes out, eating their hearts and drinking their blood are almost certainly hasty translations by the mob of various Christian mysteries. The mob may have been maliciously inflamed on occasion by evil-minded opponents of foreigners, but, allowing for Chinese prejudices, it may also have been done in good faith.

Europeans have indubitably forced themselves on China, knowing for certain they were not wanted. And the Voice in the Wilderness, crying before them, and announcing their approach, was to the Chinese an oracle of dubious interpretation, hinting of amazing beliefs, and also at times insinuating that the whole world would come under the domination of their Deity. After this had been promised for centuries by advanced pickets, as one may call them, at last the main body of the invasion arrived with an iron determination to "open up China"! Is it entirely surprising that the Chinese were exasperated, and antagonized, at first in their ignorance of us, and then, still more so, in their knowledge, slowly acquired?

Although Christianity, in its first aspect as Catholicism, never really got hold of China, yet the leaven worked, and curious distortions of the Faith got round among both the ignorant and the learned,

with the result of a most heterogeneous seed time to bring forth an almost bewildering harvest for all concerned.

It is not only worth while and interesting to try and understand this, but it is vitally important for us to do so. Let us make an effort to get the matter clearly before us, as it would appear to the Chinese, and let us honestly gather up all the threads—or as many as we can—of a most intricate and confusing problem that our prejudices will scarcely permit us to set down in plain terms. Not only is it confusing, but it is in a way painful and humiliating to reflect on the gap between our intentions and our performance.

We can take it for granted that the early Catholic missionaries had the very best intentions, and that nearly all their descendants and successors of every shade of the Christian faith have been actuated by lofty motives in obeying the command: "Preach the Gospel to every creature." Perhaps some of the sad consequences of their doing this come from their also preaching a great deal more than the Gospel!

CHAPTER VIII

Protestantism in China—Its lack of any Central Authority, i.e., no Pope!—Professor William James and "Varieties of Religious Experience"—The three classes of missionaries: the scholarly, the enthusiastic but untactful, and those whose good intentions are handicapped by want of discipline and training—Robert Morrison and the early pioneers—A sketch of his life and influence in China—His noble struggles—Faithful unto death—Some account of the Lin-tin incident (1822-1823)—The Chinese Governor, Captain Richardson, R.N., and Morrison argue it out.

THE Catholic position in the mission fields of China we have tried to explain, and it may be said to have altered very little in modern times. Now we come to the Protestants, of whom it is far more difficult to get or give an accurate impression.

They had from the first (and have now) no Central Authority, like that of the Papacy, to regulate their doctrines or control their behaviour, and to try and describe in detail their sects and activities, theology and morals, would remind our readers of Professor William James's wonderful study, "Varieties of Religious Experience." Again, we must look at the question from the point of view of the effect on the Chinese, how they regarded what its friends call "religious freedom" and its enemies condemn as schism, heresy and anarchy.

Perhaps for the convenience of description these multiform divisions of Protestantism might be reduced to a few leading types, and first we may take that of the pioneers, like Robert Morrison, scholarly men convinced of their duty to preach the Gospel to all the world, and spread Western ideas at the same time. Then there is the same quality of missionary, but touched with enthusiasm for his faith, narrower in mind and outlook, and somewhat more impervious to those considerations of tact and compromise—"all things to all men"—so necessary in an Apostle, together with the spirit that animated Abraham Lincoln's immortal address:

"In things essential, unity; in things doubtful, liberty; in all things, charity."

In the third class, so to speak, may be placed men and women of high character, fervent piety and good intentions, but rather deficient in discipline, untrained in psychology and religious history and, therefore, handicapped in many ways. While they often suffered much and endured nobly, they did not achieve such results as, on the whole, they deserved to, and the records of their life and work win sympathy and admiration rather than unqualified approval. The adage that the end justifies the means may open the door to questionable practice, but the other idea that the end alone counts and the means need little study will generally work out in unnecessary failure.

Perhaps this third type has supplied the majority of Protestant missionaries from all countries, especially from Britain and the United States of America. Behind these excellent people are to be

found a very unequal group of much more dubious value, sometimes yielding individuals of quite remarkable qualities, but consisting too often of others who are unstable, erratic, lacking in suitable education, manners and insight.

This species of missionary is numerous enough, and reveals the weakness rather than the strength of Protestantism. At the best they are incalculable and unreliable, and at the worst they are intolerant, domineering, wrong-headed and insensible to a degree, recalling the old saying that fools are the only beings whom Experience cannot teach.

There are, besides, a very few "undesirables" who crawl into the evangelical fold and are really out for money or self-gratification, but these are in a negligible minority. Yet occasionally they do crop up in varying degrees of moral turpitude, to the pain and scandal of their worthier confrères, as when frisky widows or light-minded young women flout the saints and skirmish for husbands among the sinners, or when masculine backsliders develop financial instincts and seek to lay up treasure on earth.

It may be interesting and even illuminative to consider the lives and adventures of some typical missionaries, premising that there are difficulties in the way of presenting their characters and acts in a more or less accurate perspective. Most of their biographies and autobiographies are written from a professional standpoint, to put it politely, in other words, all light and no shade. Their secular delineator, therefore, has first to translate their records from a pious to a more mundane phrase-

ology, and then view them as far as possible from the Chinese angle of view.

This last performance of course involves a certain amount of guess-work, but in the first transcription one often finds the missionary more human and estimable than he appears in the over-wrought and pietistical memoirs put about by writers who know very little of their hero and merely use him as a peg on which to hang their own glozing and stereotyped religiosity. When filtered, as it were, and decanted into ordinary language the results are not seldom more just and accurate than the jargon of a clique can afford.

One thing is certain, that the early missionaries must have been men of great faith and zeal, in some cases with a touch of fanaticism. The conditions of a missionary career were very hard, beginning with a severe trial of patience and health in the long, ill-found voyages "outward bound" in sailing vessels of small tonnage. The devoted men and women who underwent this ordeal suffered heavily; some died on the journey, and an appreciable number were landed in impaired health and never entirely recovered from the strain. It was accepted as inevitable then, but to-day it would be difficult to find many persons who would face such a trial.

When at last they landed on Chinese shores their troubles were by no means over. As their admirable discipline supported the Catholics, so a certain enthusiasm and what Methodists call "grace" sustained the Protestants. They found the fields white unto the harvest, as they thought,

and according to their traditions, training and temperaments, the labourers went in to reap.

As mentioned before, Robert Morrison was the pioneer of Protestant missionaries, a very remarkable man, and "the father of English sinology," according to Alexander Michie.

At the age of twenty-five he volunteered and was accepted for mission work in China, and quite simply it is stated (in his Life by Ernest H. Hayes) that it was a formidable undertaking as "all attempts to force an entry into China by people of the West had proved ineffective." The idea that the Chinese had perhaps a right to run their Empire in their own way did not seem to dawn on anyone in 1807, unless it may be that the East India Company had a slight glimmering of it. Anyhow they were determined that missionaries should not go to either India or China, in case these worthy apostles complicated matters for the traders. To circumvent this prejudice, Missionary Societies in Britain had been sending out their men under other flags without consulting the Company, and Morrison had to proceed by way of America, with which Power just then (1807) we were not at war.

After a long and circuitous journey Morrison landed at Macao only to hear gloomy tidings from the officials of the East India Company to the effect that Chinese subjects were prohibited under penalty of death from teaching their language to foreigners. However, Sir George Staunton, President of the Company's Committee in China, promised to help the young missionary so far as he could.

Here we may consider the curious "psychology"

of Morrison and others like him vis-à-vis with the tremendous obstacles Fate or Providence threw in his way against the career on which he had set his heart. He could see in these no indication that Divine Providence disapproved of his project, but persevered in the full persuasion that the Lord was on his side! Probably the Chinese might have read a different significance into his misadventures and considered that their Heavenly Guardian was trying to protect them from the intrusion of a hated barbarian! An onlooker cannot venture to say which view represented the Will of God, but can only record the circumstances.

The East India Company were personally very friendly, but they could not recognize Morrison officially, therefore he had to remain in Canton as an American. Even so, he had to hide from the public and conceal every trace of his studies, as though "engaged in some nefarious business that would not bear the light of day upon it." It was a disagreeable position for him, but he did what he would probably have reprobated in a Jesuit priest and looked to the end to justify the means.

As an ordinary missionary he would probably have been ejected from Canton by the Chinese and from Macao by the Catholics, but as a compiler of a Dictionary that had commercial possibilities he came under the unofficial and powerful patronage of the East India Company.

He worked very hard and under such trying conditions at Canton that even his firm health showed signs of breaking, and in eight months he had to give up and return to Macao for a respite.

After three months he ventured back to Canton, and then there was a complete catastrophe. We were at war with France in 1808, and it was believed that the French might seize Macao, so the Governor-General of India sent a powerful squadron and an expeditionary force to defend Macao against the French.

This possibly indiscreet move roused the Emperor of China, who withdrew from us the right of trading at Canton, and sent the following rescript to the English:

"Knowing as you ought to know that the Portuguese inhabit a territory belonging to the Celestial Empire, how could you suppose that the French would ever venture to molest them? If they dared, our warlike tribes would attack, defeat and chase them from the face of the country. Conscious of this truth, why did you bring your soldiers hither? Repent and withdraw immediately. The permission to trade shall then be restored: but should you persist in remaining, the hatches of your ships shall not be unlocked."

This was not idle language, for the native authorities at Canton acted at once, cutting off food supplies so that all the English residents had to withdraw to Macao until the Emperor of China and the British Raj had settled their little difference. Morrison had, of course, to leave with the others, and it was a dark and bitter hour, but soon afterwards something happened "that changed the whole course of his life, renewed his faith and brought his final success within the bounds of possibility," to quote his biographer. Quite suddenly the East

India Company offered him an official appointment as Chinese Secretary and Translator to the English Factory in China, at a salary of five hundred pounds a year.

Morrison considered it very carefully, and then accepted, subject to the consent of the London Missionary Society. An official status, as he saw, would give him an assured position. He would no longer be liable to sudden deportation, he would get into touch with Chinese commercial magnates and Government officials in Canton, and his work could be done openly, instead of being hidden in a cellar. Another consideration that weighed with him was that the salary would ease his anxiety about the cost of living at Canton, and relieve the Society at home from a heavy financial burden.

He admitted that his official duties would take up much time and delay the completion of his Dictionary and the Chinese Bible, but he reflected that, on the other hand, without official support it might be impossible ever to complete either work.

His duties as Translator were very heavy, and in addition to fulfilling these he toiled—when he should have been resting—at the labours nearest his heart, and in time completed and produced a translation of the Acts of the Apostles. By a happy coincidence the first printed copies reached him on his thirtieth birthday, January 5th, 1812.

He sent three of these books home to England, where they created an immense sensation, and also obtained £500 from the British and Foreign Bible Society towards the cost of printing the Scriptures in Chinese. Morrison needed all the encourage-

ment he could get, as trouble was again brewing, and the Chinese authorities, who had been alarmed by rumours regarding his work, had decided to take action against him.

He found this out one afternoon while walking in the suburbs, where he saw an excited crowd pointing to a large poster. This was a new Edict by the Emperor, which began with a sweeping condemnation of Europeans who were spreading the worship of the "foreigners' God" in the Empire. The proclamation continued:

"From this time forward such Europeans as shall print books and establish preachers, and the Tartars and Chinese who, deputed by Europeans, shall propagate their religion—the chief or principal ones shall be executed. Whoever shall spread their religion shall be imprisoned, waiting the time of execution: and those who shall content themselves with following such religion shall be exiled."

Morrison was badly upset, and (perhaps naturally enough) saw only his own side of the question. Neither he nor any of his Missionary Directors could stop to think of the Chinese views. In fact, the Emperor's Edict appeared to them all as the work of the Devil and a piece of heart-breaking wickedness! Morrison sent a translation of it to London, declaring:

"I must, however, go forward, trusting in the Lord. We will scrupulously obey Governments as far as their decrees do not oppose what is required by the Almighty."

He arranged to carry on his work with greater

secrecy than ever in direct opposition to the Emperor's decree.

Here we are face to face with a painful clash of ideals. Each side believed itself to be right: the Chinese in excluding a religion which seemed to them subversive, and Morrison in forcing this religion on them at the risk of his own life and the lives of his native helpers.

By that time the first volume of the Dictionary was finished, and the Company's Committee in China applied to London for a printing press and two workmen to be sent out with it immediately. They could not openly acknowledge their translator's work on the Chinese Bible, and turned a blind eye on it, while publicly rejoicing in the progress of the Dictionary as a priceless boon to the Company's trade enterprise.

Again, at the end of the season, Morrison retreated to Macao, and found himself in fresh difficulties, as the Chinese suddenly put into operation an old law against foreigners landing there—a law that had been in abeyance for a hundred years and was apparently revived against the London missionaries. The Portuguese authorities, being controlled by China, were helpless, and had no choice but to exclude all foreigners except those connected with the European factories.

In his capacity as Translator and Chinese Secretary to the East India Company, Morrison himself was protected, but he expected a colleague from home, and this seriously complicated matters even with the Portuguese Governor of Macao. This official was very friendly, and explained that

he had no option, as he was not allowed to harbour any Europeans in Macao unless they were connected with the East India Company, also that the Company themselves had asked him not to allow Englishmen there. Besides this, the Catholic Bishop required him to send the new missionary away.

To add to all this worry, in the middle of the struggle Morrison was suddenly dismissed by the East India Company, a great humiliation and financial disaster, which carried with it his exclusion from his field of labour in Canton.

The reason for this abrupt action was an amazing one, all things considered. A copy of the Chinese New Testament had come into the hands of the London Directors, in spite of Morrison's precautions. When he sent some copies home, he had carefully warned the Bible Society of the danger, but the mischief was done, and the Company, in their opposition to missionary enterprise, decided on an instant dismissal.

"These translations have been effected in defiance of an edict of the Emperor of China," they said in their letter, "rendering the publisher of such works liable to capital punishment. We are apprehensive that serious mischief may possibly arise to the British trade in China from these translations."

On the surface, this was an extraordinary thing for a nominally Christian company to do, but as it never took effect, it was probably only a diplomatic gesture to appease the Chinese.

However, Fate or Providence intervened, and

Morrison became necessary to the Amherst Mission as interpreter, and so was sent with Lord Amherst to Peking. As is well known, the Mission ended in a fiasco; but Morrison was not involved, except as interpreter, and discharged his duties admirably, doing his best for all concerned. His health was benefited by the change of climate and trip North, but he bitterly grudged the waste of time. He returned to his work in Canton, and early in 1817 the first volume of the Dictionary was printed at the expense of the East India Company.

It was, when finished, a wonderful work, more like an encyclopedia, as his biographer points out, since, in addition to an ordinary dictionary, it included notes on Chinese history, customs, education, religion and other aspects of Chinese life. Morrison achieved this tremendous task unaided except by some Chinese helpers, and the final triumph of its completion is an immortal monument to his industry, endurance and scholarship. Even under the best auspices it would have been a remarkable performance, but remembering the truly appalling conditions in which Morrison worked, and the wear and tear of uncertainty and danger, it ranks in its own line as one of the greatest undertakings ever accomplished by individual effort.

The actual printing was done at Macao, and even so the Chinese heard that foreigners were translating their books. The Viceroy at once issued an Edict forbidding Chinese subjects to take any part in the work on pain of death, with the result that the native employees all had to leave the printing office, and the work was held up until

the printer found and trained some Portuguese workmen in type-cutting and other technical processes of printing. In a remarkably short time, all things considered, the work began again and went on independent of Chinese labour for a spell.

There was still a great deal of opposition, and about a year later, as no favourable change appeared in the temper of the Chinese authorities, Morrison was moved to sum them up—not very justly—as "a sceptical, cunning, lying, worldly race"; but he added with a touch of unusual "detachment," "Yet they cannot be worse than the Greeks and Romans, nor worse than our forefathers."

This pronouncement is interesting as throwing a light on Morrison's state of mind. He evidently judged the Chinese by his own principles instead of by theirs, and they in turn estimated the foreigner according to Chinese standards, so that their mutual prejudices rather blinded them to each other's good points. In spite of this attack of pessimism, and the pressure of his literary work, Morrison found time to start a small dispensary in a Canton suburb, helped by Dr. Livingstone of the East India Company. The experiment was a success, and—although it had to be given up later—was the germ of medical missions, to the honour of Morrison's memory.

His position as interpreter gave him many curious experiences, and he had often to mediate between the Chinese authorities and the British. One such case is known to history as "The Lin-tin affair," and is sufficiently characteristic of both

races to deserve a passing notice. It smouldered for months owing to the following circumstances.

On an unlucky day the frigate, *Topaz*, had landed some sailors on Lin-tin islet to get water, and foolishly enough, with some idea of preventing trouble, the men were unarmed. This naturally encouraged the natives to set upon them, and the whole population rushed out, using clubs and spears.

Captain Richardson saw his men in danger and fired one of the ship's guns to protect them, also hastily landing marines to the rescue. Then there was, of course, a nice little affray in which fourteen British sailors were wounded, six of them severely, while several Chinese were hurt and one was killed. The chief of the island said the sailors had provoked the row by digging up some potatoes and stealing two jars of spirits the day before, but Captain Richardson declared that whatever the Chinese had suffered was their own fault, "the consequence of their own misconduct."

There was an inquiry at Lin-tin, and the Chinese demanded that the wounded British sailors should be sent ashore and examined. The Captain refused; neither would he allow Chinese merchants to accompany Chinese officers to the *Topaz* "and conduct a Chinese court," as he put it, "on the King of England's quarter-deck."

This enraged the Governor, and he described Captain Richardson's opposition to sending his men ashore as "the prancing parade of an outside foreigner," accused him of lying, and threatened to humble the pride of "the gain-scheming

foreigners." In a fine puff, he told the East India Company that he held them responsible, and ordered them "to deliver up the foreign murderers, to have judgment passed on them and to forfeit their lives." He threatened he would "long stop their trade" if this was not done.

The Company explained that the King of England's warships were not under their control, and his Excellency was therefore demanding an impossibility. They made the sensible suggestion that the Governor should settle the matter with Captain Richardson, and not implicate traders who had nothing at all to do with it.

Like nearly every sensible suggestion, it did not seem to please anyone, but through Morrison as interpreter the Chinese merchants tried to find a way for their angry Governor to "save his face," as they knew he was in the wrong to attack the East India Company. They broached the ingenious idea that a report might be circulated about two of the crew falling overboard from the *Topaz* and being drowned. This would give the Governor a chance to say: "Those were the murderers."

The subterfuge was rejected, and another was proposed: that Captain Richardson should announce he could not discover the murderers, but would take all his men to England and have them punished there! Again their suggestion was put aside, and they modified it. Would the East India Company kindly state that they had asked their London Directors to report the affair to the King of England, "in order to get the offenders

punished"? At the same time, would they beg the Governor to allow trade to be reopened, for which "gracious act" they would be infinitely obliged.

That was the moment for the English suddenly to stiffen their backs and get an entirely unproductive fit of obstinacy, which they promptly did, utterly refusing to play even a harmless comedy to ease the situation. However, the Chinese merchants with practical sense persevered in trying to compose matters, and in the end persuaded the Company to give out that they would at least report the affair to London. No one could be sure how this little concession was represented to the Chinese authorities, and it might have been disastrous to inquire! But the happy conclusion was that the Hong merchants succeeded in appeasing their angry Governor and in getting him to reopen trade with the British.

As usual, the brunt of the interpreter's task fell on Morrison, and, also as usual, he acquitted himself with great credit. It was perhaps an invidious position for a missionary, and yet it undoubtedly gave him opportunities of impressing himself favourably on the Chinese.

Some time after this he left for his long-delayed furlough in England. He had been more than sixteen years out in the Far East. His leave was very successful, and it was about two years before he returned to China.

He went back to a sadly-changed Canton; so many friends, native and foreign, were gone—some for ever. He was also distressed by the great

influx of agents for opium, "that disreputable, smuggling commerce," as he called it. The sale of the drug had increased, so had crime.

For some years after his return Morrison's life was arduous and yet less troubled than usual, and among other experiences he had a dramatic adventure in 1829, when he saved the life of a Fukien man named Tsae, accused of piracy against the French. After several days' pleading, and by arousing public opinion, Morrison secured Tsae's acquittal, and this humane act pleased the Cantonese and made the missionary a hero of the hour. He rounded off his work of mercy by collecting some money, as the man was destitute.

A few weeks later Tsae appeared, all smiles, at Morrison's house in Macao, and made the "kow-tow." He would have done it three times —as an act of worship—but was stopped. This was the first time a Chinese kow-towed to a foreigner, in gratitude for saving his life.

Time went on, and soon Morrison celebrated his silver jubilee, when again he reviewed his work. He recorded gradual, but great, changes, and added: "I have served my generation and must—the Lord knows when—fall asleep. I feel old age creeping upon me."

He was only fifty years of age, but had never spared himself in body or mind, and was not, while he wrote, confident as to his future. The East India Company's charter was about to expire, and he could not hope for compensation or a pension.

There was no faltering or self-pity about

Robert Morrison, and he held on in spite of physical and mental suffering.

"Is the road uphill all the way?"

"Yes, to the very end!"

And the end was approaching.

By the middle of 1834 Lord Napier's mission arrived to arrange for a continuation of British trade, and among those who waited to receive him when he landed at Macao was Morrison. He stepped forward to help one of Lord Napier's daughters to land, and gave her his own sedan chair. Then he introduced himself, and was most kindly received, also by Lady Napier.

At noon the next day, when Lord Napier called a meeting in the English factory to read the King's Commission and announce the appointments for carrying out the new trade policy, Morrison heard that he was to be styled Chinese Secretary and Interpreter, on a salary of £1,300 a year. His duties began at once, as the Governor had to go up to Canton to complete the trading arrangements, and Morrison was instructed to accompany him.

"I am sorry I have to travel to Canton in this hot weather," he entered in his diary, "for I am by no means strong."

He proceeded in the frigate *Andromache* to the Bogue, and the party went on to Canton by boat. It was very hot, and there was a heavy storm of rain, and when they reached Canton Morrison was in a state of collapse. He was so worn out that he nearly fell in the street as he walked to his own residence. His son John received him and was terribly shocked by his

condition, sharing the burden of his work as far as possible.

The rest of the day was spent in nerve-racking negotiations with the offended Chinese authorities, who objected to the British Governor appearing at Canton without asking permission of the Imperial Government.

The next day, Saturday, Morrison seemed stronger, and on Sunday he conducted Chinese worship once more, rejoicing that the congregation was larger that usual.

Monday was spent in more negotiations, and at its close with his weary hand Morrison made the last stoical entry in the diary he had kept for nearly thirty years.

"28th. 8 p.m. We have spent another tiresome day with political squabbles, and no nearer agreement yet. My health is much the same."

His strong constitution and firm will had sustained him until then, but a high fever set in, and though he rallied once or twice, his work was ended, and, falling into a quiet sleep on the night of 31st July, 1834, he passed away peacefully at the last.

Others have followed him, have laboured, suffered and died, but Robert Morrison, the first of Protestant missionaries, is also the greatest name on a Roll of more than earthly Honour.

CHAPTER IX

The opening of the five Treaty Ports: Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai—The cession of Hong-Kong after the war of 1840-1843—The progress of Protestant missions, 1834-1861—Apostles with red whiskers and blue eyes liable to be misunderstood as "foreign devils"—British Consuls often embarrassed by the "dauntless" behaviour of over-zealous missionaries on "up-country" excursions—Medical missions, their strength and weakness—The missionary schools for girls: some unexpected results in Chinese homes—The instructive tale of Peggy and Fiona—Poultney Bigelow on the efforts of the U.S.A. to evangelize China—The inherited hatred of the Puritan for Popery poured out on the bewildered Chinese.

WITH the East India Company there passed away private and what may be called unofficial commercial relations between Britain and China, and not long afterwards came the first war with the Celestial Empire, generally but erroneously called the Opium War by our "unco guid" anti-patriots and our enemies.

It is a fact that a good many chests of British-owned opium were destroyed at Canton, but the real causes of the war were considerably more complicated. China refused to treat on equal terms or to grant liberty of trade, besides claiming entire control of all foreign residents within her borders, a demand which at that date could not safely have been agreed to.

As the outcome of this war (1840-1843) China was forced to open five ports to foreign trade—namely, Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai. Hong-Kong was ceded to England, and an indemnity was paid. The effect on the propagation of Christianity was perhaps a little mixed, as its missionaries now had a share in treaty rights and also were associated in the native mind with "a forcible entry" into a country that knew its own mind and did not want any of the barbarians, official, commercial or religious.

Non-observance of the treaty rights that were granted after the first war, and also continual outrages on British subjects, led to the second war (1856-1860) in which France joined us. This gained Europe a progressive and firmer hold on the reluctant Chinese—perhaps for their good, if they could have been persuaded to view it in that light.

The Convention of Peking in 1860 provided for envoys residing on diplomatic terms in the capital, opened Tientsin, Chefoo and other ports to foreign trade, and expressly secured rights for French missionaries. Incidents on both sides in this war left bitter memories, and there was decidedly more force than persuasion in the settlement arrived at.

In this troubled quarter of a century or more from 1834 to 1861, Protestant missions had not changed much in method or character, though their number had increased. Neither had conditions altered noticeably for the better, and the journey out was still by sailing ship as an ordinary thing. In these circumstances, the personal quality of the

missionaries did not deteriorate, and to this period belong some remarkable scholars, travellers and physicians, also women helpers.

Medical missions were started with gratifying success in the fifties, and here again the London Missionary Society may claim a pioneer in Dr. William Lockhart, whose hospital in Shanghai was the first to be opened in Central China. Some missionary expeditions were undertaken round and near Shanghai by the waterways, which had at least the effect of accustoming the natives to the sight of strangers whom, quite simply and in good faith, they took to be foreign devils, especially if they happened to be of fair complexion with red whiskers and blue eyes.

This got to be known in the mission field, and in some cases experienced workers petitioned the home authorities to select—if there could be a choice—missionaries with dark hair and eyes as being less liable to upset "the heathen" to whom they were coming as "apostles." Any kind of "foreign devil" was a fine free show, but he was apt to be altogether too entertaining to the laughter-loving Chinese if his colouring was carroty, and it was practically impossible to secure a decorous hearing for any religion when the crowd were convulsed with hilarity at the mere sight of the freak, as they considered him.

It must be remembered that the Chinese are not a hirsute race, so that even black "face-fittings"[1] were very conspicuous, but when it came (in the early days) to gold, flaxen or flaming red Shagpats —the effect on the natives can be imagined. Some

of the more timid or superstitious, such as the women and children, were frightened, but mostly the crowd yelled itself into hysterics with pure joy.

Whether these well-meant experiments of visiting towns and cities did any good may be a matter of opinion, but it is certain that not seldom they irritated the populace, and embarrassed the Chinese magistrates, who could not prevent attacks—playful or otherwise—on missionaries, and yet were held responsible. An early and typical example is given by William Muirhead, afterwards for long years a venerable figure in Shanghai. He and a friend went to Soochow, and landed from a houseboat to distribute books and to preach. For purposes of disguise and conciliation they had "assumed Chinese dress, with the long tail in addition," according to their account.

"We were returning to the boat when one of us was laid hold of," wrote Dr. Muirhead. "We were seized by our tails and driven back to the city. The crowd increased until a vast array of human heads was seen in all directions. Many were now laying hold of our caudal appendages, and they tugged mine so furiously I thought it would come off altogether—but in spite of the numbers that were dragging at it the tail remained."

"On the way a man came out of a coffin shop and gave me a heavy blow on the head with a lump of wood."

They were taken to the equivalent of a police station and questioned. "Our replies were explicit enough, that we were foreigners from Shanghai and were religious teachers, exhorting people to be

good." The delicate innuendo that the people were "bad" was, perhaps, not tactful in the circumstances, but the "apostles" meant no real discourtesy.

Their explanation was not accepted. They were said to be rebels (the Taiping Rebellion was very lively at the time) and a body of officers came from the magistrate and took them to him through an immense crowd. In the end, he and his colleagues agreed that the foreigners were what they claimed to be, and he let them go, saying: "We believe you to be foreigners, and very good men indeed, but you know you have no right to come into this city. Remember, you are never to be seen in Soochow again."

Forcing their way into a hostile city was considered a "dauntless" proceeding. Perhaps it might have been, but the "reaction" was not always to be described as helpful to their cause. The Chinese point of view was seldom, if ever, looked at, for these worthy evangelists, "very good men indeed," as the poor moithered magistrate called them, had one idea only in front of them—that the Chinese were benighted heathen, with souls to be saved, and the missionary's higher duty was to disregard treaty rights, the British Consul's protests, the Chinese magistrate's embarrassment, and just "go in," like Mark Twain's man, and do their level best.

> "He'd yank a sinner out o' Hades,
> And land him with the blest,
> And snatch a prayer, and waltz in again,
> And do his level best."

Some missionaries, with more sense or weaker zeal, did at times question these performances, but the majority, it must be admitted, saw no reason why they should not go to a perfectly pacific town and set it in an uproar, trying to save "the heathen," even if the heathen strongly objected and "said" it with brickbats.

British Consuls sometimes tried to moderate this inconvenient zeal, but only got themselves prayed for as graceless worldlings, and occasionally even complained of. Apparently the idea was to enter hostile regions "dauntlessly" outside Treaty Ports, inflame the Chinese as much as possible by informing them that their ancestors were in hell or thereabouts, and then get them punished for "handling" the over-dauntless missionary, who imagined himself to be preaching the Gospel of Peace.

Medical missions were much extended and developed during the transitional period after the second war, and a kindly, capable doctor could get on with even the most anti-foreign Chinese. They were not anxious about their souls, but were grateful if he could patch up their poor bodies. Pitiful cases came along in numbers where a comparatively small injury had wrecked a man's or woman's life, and could be put right without much difficulty. This seemed like a miracle to the simple-minded country people, and their faith in the powers of the foreign doctor became almost embarrassing, as they believed he could do anything and were unwilling to set a limit to his skill.

Every medical missionary can tell touching

stories of his Chinese patients, of their sufferings and their amazing endurance. But in spite of very sincere thankfulness, it has often been a case of: "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?" And, generally speaking, it must be admitted that the Chinese drew a distinction between gratitude for medical aid and any obligation to repay these services by adopting the foreigners' religion.

In some cases, too great an insistence on religious instruction, to the in-patients especially, rather defeated its own end. It looked like a conspiracy to snare a sick or wounded man, roused vague suspicions and resentment, and thus heavily discounted the seeming goodness of the foreigners' intentions. When it was explained that all these acts of charity were done for the love of God, the Chinese were not always satisfied that there was besides no hidden and unavowed motive. The idea of accumulating merit was, of course, well within their comprehension and approval; at the same time it did not appeal to them as a perfectly disinterested motive for the benefactions of the foreigners, or possibly the only one.

This was not the view of the unsophisticated natives, but it certainly obtained at times among the educated classes, and added to their exasperation, especially as some medical missionaries were not over discreet, and sandwiched religious instruction too insistently between intervals of treatment.

After all, even amongst ourselves and in Christendom, one sect is not invariably very anxious to be beholden to another; and if our hospitals were "denominational," and that rather in

a bigoted sense, followers of other denominations would probably object.

Together with medical missions, Protestant schools were widely established as soon as it was feasible. Catholics were hundreds of years ahead in this respect, but their experience was not studied by the bulk of the Protestants, and probably—owing to difference of outlook and discipline—would not have been very helpful. Boys' schools of native origin were, of course, common enough all over China, but setting up girls' schools was another matter. Oriental views about women are (or at least were) quite unlike our own, and this should have been taken thoroughly into account before starting schemes to educate Chinese girls.

In some cases reasonable care was exercised to conciliate native prejudices, but often enough, quite innocently, the girls' school was by no means a good advertisement for the foreign religion. Teaching the Ten Commandments went down very well, all except the fourth, "Remember the Sabbath day." That started trouble on the threshold of the enterprise, as it clashed with native custom and tradition.

Monotheism—Thou shalt have no other gods—could pass, and admonitions against stealing, committing adultery, bearing false witness and coveting the neighbour's property were entirely in keeping with Chinese ideas. Then came a curious little kink about honouring one's parents. In the land of filial piety "the commandment with promise" was obviously in the right place, and would almost have vouched by itself for the

foreigner's rectitude and indicated his or her fitness to be a teacher and guardian of the young. But all too soon it dawned on the Chinese that this wholesome and normal commandment had to be interpreted to mean "obey your parents if the missionary approves of them." There was quite an idea, in connection especially with girls' schools, that the pupils would go home at intervals and spread the light of the Gospel in their dark heathen environment. This was making considerable demands on little Chinese maidens, and the plan did not always work out according to the missionaries' hopes, as there was apt to be some confusion between what they meant to teach the children and what the children actually learnt, thanks to the foreign lady's partial ignorance of the language, misuse of tones and other deficiencies. Then, after the little girls had absorbed impressions, which would have horrified their kind instructress had she realized what was happening (everyone is aware how children unconsciously distort things; witness the "howlers" so common among the answers of English youngsters to ordinary questions), let us try, with a sort of rueful amusement, to guess at the kind of gospel the little Chinese maids probably disseminated in their home circles.

When asked questions by the eager missionary lady as to what they had reported to their fathers and mothers, grandparents and neighbours, they naturally returned the answers she expected. In some cases a very gratifying result—from the missionary point of view—was the sequel of the children's visit home, when an "anxious inquirer"

came hot foot to beg or buy a New Testament and also to hear something about this foreign religion. He would probably be a "small" scholar from the village and wore a troubled look, which the gratified missionary loved to think betokened some awakening about his sins. It was much more likely that, in company with others of the villagers, he had been positively scandalized by the little girls' revelations, and wanted to see for himself if the foreign "Tao-li" could possibly be as vile and wicked as appeared from these tit-bits loosed in their homes by the pupils.

For a long time missionaries had no glimmering of these happenings, and they did not know how hard some of their early converts worked to remove fantastic and even horrible perversions of Scripture. Those converts, men and women, were an amazing testimony to the regenerating power of true Christianity, but they were almost ashamed to let the foreign teachers know about certain travesties, and did their best to smooth things over, explaining matters to their own people and encouraging the hard-working missionary on the other hand.

By degrees, the more watchful and open-minded of the foreigners began to realize how some manners and practices must strike the Chinese, and to set about remedying the matter. This brought them into collision with their own profession. One typical instance will illustrate these difficulties. An experienced minister who had worked for over twenty years in Northern China had two young women sent out to "develop" the feminine side of the mission. They were good-

looking, healthy damsels about twenty-eight years of age, and had volunteered for the Chinese mission field after a revival in their native city, being both of emotional temperaments, though in different directions. One, whom we may call Miss Peggy, was of the militant suffragette type, and the other, Miss Fiona, was rather Victorian in her quieter hysterics.

They did not cotton to the "dear Chinese" very warmly, though Peggy undertook district visiting and Fiona ran the girls' school. They learnt the written language very slowly, but soon picked up a smattering of the speech and went ahead—slapdash, not too well aware of what they were saying. They were both given to immoderate fits of laughing at first, and insisted on seeing "a great joke" in everything.

Their reverend director was patient with these ebullitions, and hoped they would settle down into "valuable labourers in the Lord's vineyard." He was disappointed to find that presently they caught on to a sort of revivalist work among young foreigners, and had tea-prayer-meetings with the prettiest of revival hymns, which Peggy played and sang charmingly. Before long Fiona attracted an admirer, and began "keeping company" with him, while Peggy played "gooseberry" very sketchily. Then a young missionary had a severe attack of dysentery, and they took him into their bungalow to nurse him, all living very closely together in adjoining bedrooms.

Members of other missions began to talk, the Chinese were scandalized, and the director had to

intervene. He did so quite mildly, and raised a fearful shindy, during which Peggy had a sort of "militant" seizure and screamed at him: "You had better teach the Chinese to be less dirty-minded!" However, Fiona was quieter and more sensible, and they consented to give up the dysentery patient, especially after hearing that his *fiancée* was coming out to marry him.

But Fiona's courtship went on warmly, until one day their reverend chief got a note from her, saying: "Last night matters came to a crisis, and I have promised to become Mr. B.'s wife." Peggy came along for one of her raging interviews, and shrieked that it was "the Lord's work," meaning her friend's engagement, and also announced that she herself was going to marry an up-country missionary of a different sect. There were two weddings, and that mission gave up the struggle to maintain girl labourers, trusting to the wife of the senior missionary to carry on as best she could with the girls' school and other work.

This was, perhaps, a somewhat extreme case, but other missions had similar experiences. One very celebrated organization rather encouraged marriages among its members—not wholly to the edification of "the heathen," who were looking on.

Here Catholic discipline and practice distinctly scored, as the priests and nuns were separated in every way, and did not hold hysterical revival meetings or go to "jolly picnics" together, as a preliminary to getting married.

Strange to say, many of these good Protestant people quite agreed with Peggy's idea of teaching

the Chinese "to be less dirty-minded," apparently by displaying Occidental methods of courtship in the intervals of preaching the Gospel and saving souls. It is now well known that strong religious emotion has a tendency to excite young men and maidens in other ways, and "revivalism" is not so much liked as in earlier times. In fact, it is now discouraged in many quarters at home, seeing that the good results were fleeting, while the bad ones sometimes persisted. If this sort of undisciplined and emotional religion was demoralizing in England, it was infinitely more so in a country like China.

It must not be supposed that British missionaries were the only ones to conduct themselves in this too Western style, but as it is always invidious to criticize other nationalities, let us read the opinion of an American, Poultney Bigelow, on the efforts of his country to evangelize China.

Speaking of the Chinese attempts to ward off foreigners, he says: "In 1840, however, this peril was once more at their gates—not merely the peril of papal propaganda, but now a much greater one in the shape of young men and young women, some educated, some grossly provincial, some unmarried, all ignorant of Chinese habits and traditions, and all fiercely thirsting for speedy triumphs in what saintly slang calls 'The Vineyard of the Lord.'

"It was bad enough for China to have Jesuit and Franciscan celibates attacking her political Constitution by declaring a Roman Bonze to be superior to a Peking Emperor, but now came thousands of nondescript sectarians, each denounc-

ing the other, each scandalizing local ideas of decency, and circulating tracts of a revolutionary nature.

"China has for untold centuries practised the religion of duty towards the parents, towards the authorities, finally towards the head of the state. In rushes the horde of modern democratic reformers, telling these people that all men are equal so soon as a missionary baptizes them."

"Unkind people," he continues farther on, "blame England for having forced opium upon China; but that is a very trifling charge as against that of having forced our missionaries upon them at the point of the bayonet—or shall I say under the guns of our warships?"

He draws an unusual moral, probably offensive to the godly, when he recalls that a Chinese Embassy went humbly to Paris to apologize for the Tientsin massacre, and found France "anyhow," in the throes of conflict.

"The whole of this Christian people," he reminds us, "appeared to be busily employed in a war—not against the invading barbarian, but one half against the other. In Paris armed mobs had massacred more Catholic priests than had the Chinese mob in Tientsin!"

Perhaps one can guess at some of the thoughts which this spectacle provoked in the minds of the apologizing Embassy! They must have discerned that there existed one code for Chinese and another—quite different—for Europeans.

During this period of transition, before the

Chinese pulled themselves together, and were receptive merely—sometimes willingly and sometimes not—there were other unfortunate features of Protestant instruction and discipline. People may object to what Mr. Bigelow calls "papal propaganda," but at least it is definite and, for all practical purposes, uniform. Not so the Protestant equivalent, which was and may still be extremely varied. Some of these sects were rigid in a kind of Judaism, and, inspired by bigotry and fanaticism, also at times a love of domineering, they laid very heavy burdens on their converts.

Sabbatarianism was a favourite weapon, and the attempt to impose the worst kind of Puritan Sunday prejudiced the Chinese against the foreign Deity. In other cases, what someone called "the magnifying of non-essentials" had bad results, as when a certain American Baptist Mission insisted upon immersion as an absolutely necessary condition of salvation. Unless a person, male or female, white or yellow, had been ducked over the head in their baptistry, he or she was anathema. They refused to consider inter-communion, and deeply perplexed all the natives who heard of their views. What the text "Thou art Peter" is to the Catholic Church, "Buried with Christ in baptism" was to them.

There were other discrepancies between the teachings of the Protestants of different missions, but, generally speaking, they all united to proclaim the utter falseness of the Roman Catholic Church, pouring out on the bewildered Chinese the inherited hatred of the Puritan for Popery.

The Catholics, of course, repaid these accusations with interest, and the curious drama slowly unfolded itself, scene after scene, and act after act, until this first dispensation, as it may be called, was consummated, and another era opened.

CHAPTER X

The eighteen seventies—The Chinese begin to study Western languages, especially English—The fruits of the Tree of Knowledge analysed and examined — The West stands revealed to the Chinese and "loses face" in the process—The awakening of keen minds to the slowly disintegrating forces of Christendom—St. Paul on Mars' Hill nearer to them than the street preaching of the modern missionary—Friday fasts for Catholics, and no hot dishes on Sunday for Protestants, equally incomprehensible to the Chinese as religious tests—The clash of New Testament teaching and missionary propaganda in China—A Sabbatarian tragedy.

CHANGES are sometimes found to be more apparent than real, but the opposite of this has been the case in the China mission field. Here the changes were more real than apparent.

Up to the eighteen sixties, or perhaps the early seventies, the main idea was for missionaries to learn Chinese and influence the natives through the medium of their own language, both orally and by books. As someone said, we broke into their citadel by this means, and it was a long time before they began to repel us and to break out of their isolation by studying English and other European tongues.

For many years it was accepted as a sad, but irrefutable, axiom that the Chinese could not be expected to master Western languages, for the curious reason that it was so difficult for us to learn Chinese! Therefore, most illogically, it was

deemed impossible for them to acquire English. This utterly absurd argument was rather like the chalk line which conventionally holds a fowl down, yet it was laboriously acted upon until the Chinese themselves quietly began to study our languages for official and business purposes. They soon revealed themselves to be quite remarkable linguists, beating even the Russians, and leaving far behind most Asiatics like the various Indian races, the Malays and the Japanese. The Chinese not only learn to read and write Western languages, but it is a curious fact that they acquire a better accent than Europeans do in tackling each other's tongues, so that we have a kind of paradox in hearing a Chinese in an international group speak English with an almost faultless intonation, contrasting with the marked "foreign accent" of a Frenchman, a German, or even (at times) a Scot! There may be a slight difference in the Oriental voice, but the pronunciation is excellent.

The effect of this discovery that English could so easily be learnt was slow and sure. At first it was scarcely perceptible, as the movement was purely utilitarian, with practical aims in view. Then by degrees another element crept in to correct a certain tendency. So long as the natives were absorbing Western science, philosophy and religion, through the medium of their own language, not always too perfectly understood or used by the foreigner, the teacher and not the learners selected what they might know. They were necessarily at the mercy of his personal tastes, prejudices and limitations, religious, scientific or philosophical.

Consciously or not, he generally presented any case as he wanted " the heathen " to view it, and he " censored " anything that he considered harmful. This was, indeed, regarded as part of a shepherd's duty in safeguarding his sheep, and sometimes it was performed with more zeal than impartiality or intellectual honesty. When English was first taught, some missionaries even disapproved of the innovation, fearing it would " demoralize " the Chinese.

However, the stone had been set rolling and it was impossible to guide it, and the missionaries were faced by a dilemma. If they refused to teach English they stood to lose much influence over the more intelligent and ambitious Chinese youth, who would learn all they wanted elsewhere. If they agreed to teach English, they could no longer hope to control the cultivation of the Tree of Knowledge, or the distribution of its varied fruit.

It was rather a difficult choice, but the more scholarly and broad-minded of the missionary brethren were driven to try and regulate matters by imitating the Serpent in Eden and offering some of the milder products of the fatal Tree, which, as Byron remarked, " is not that of Life." They hoped with tact to stave off a premature demand for the dangerous apples on the upper branches.

This " urge " to learn foreign languages came partly from the more enlightened officials, and at first the departure was resented by the men of the Old Régime. Manchu " Die-hards " and others like them hated the idea of permitting " devil talk "

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in their yamens, but they were persuaded to see that, as they could not kick the foreigner out, it was only commonsense to match him with his own filthy weapons. Surely, pleaded the younger men, it was safer and more dignified to have a Chinese interpreter of French or English, than to leave the conduct of affairs to a Western interpreter of Chinese.

The same argument with a little difference was more readily accepted in business, and English-speaking clerks soon began to arrive, to be followed after a time by the vanguard of the *literati*. Over these last, it was feasible in the beginning, and on the spot in China, to maintain some sort of guidance, but very soon this partial supervision vanished, and presently the West stood revealed to the Far East. It was a pitiful case of:

"What a fall was there! There you and I and all of us fell down."

We had assumed great superiority to the Chinese, and had, as it were, forced their jaws open and made them gulp it down. This—not only in science and machinery—but almost more in morals and religion! And now their keenest brains were in a position to examine our pretensions.

To begin with, the Bible had been confidently thrust upon the Chinese by the Protestants (without any reservations) as the Word of God, and "inspired" from the first chapter of Genesis to the last verse of the Revelation of St. John. This had been done in good faith, of course, and with the best intentions, but all the same some important considerations had been lost sight of, or ignored.

As is well known, the Protestant missionaries, and, it may be added, the laity of Protestant countries, have inherited and been brought up to hold a certain inculcated view of the Old Testament, which undoubtedly colours their estimate of it, and casts a spell on their judgment and perceptions to such an extent that they passively accept—"because it is in the Bible"—much that they would reprobate if it were found elsewhere.

Such is the effect of early training that they not only accept those anomalies, but would think it impious to criticize them. This is all very well, but these partisans do not stop to reflect that they could not attach this atmosphere to the Old Testament when they "released" the book to educated Chinese who had been saturated in the lofty mysticism of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, and reared on the ethics of Confucius. Yet it is surely advisable to remember that the Chinese would read this ancient Hebrew literature not exactly with an unprejudiced mind, but with the prejudices of another point of view. Afterwards they would naturally judge it in the light of their own systems.

In this connection we cannot, of course, work through the whole of the Old Testament, but may thoughtfully recall its general scope. The story of creation makes some demands on Chinese credulity, yet would probably go well enough, serpent and all, but there are other high lights of the sacred narrative which to Confucians would seem puzzling and repellent, such as the expedient of Lot's daughters and similar incidents.

Following the bloodstained and (in parts) awful

code of Mosaic Law, and quietly travelling through the historical books, then lighting on the Psalms, the story of Job, the worldly commonsense of the Proverbs, the deadly pessimism of Ecclesiastes, the erotics of Solomon's Song, the denunciations and lamentations of major and minor Prophets—after assimilating all this, what could be the general effect left on the minds of the Chinese who really matter? One can but dimly guess.

For, looked at dispassionately, the Old Testament must certainly be a case of "human, all too human" for any Oriental who comes to it with no inherited interpretation, and has had it impressed on him gravely that foreigners take as a revelation from Heaven, for their salvation, this amazing mixture of supernaturalism, history, crime, wisdom, wickedness and poetry.

As literature, much of the Old Testament is doubtless interesting to the Chinese, but not very much would be edifying, while many things would seem unpleasant and evil. Therefore, even if our hypothetical students were favourably disposed towards foreigners they would find the Old Testament "difficult," while any Chinese who had a bias against Occidentals would be apt to think this sacred volume was a plain confirmation of his worst opinion of them.

In trying to gauge their estimate of us and our pretensions to superiority, also our teaching, we should bear in mind the fact that the Chinese have never wanted us in their country, do not want us now, and quite possibly never will want us.[1] From

[1] Foreign goods are, of course, in a different category.

their point of view they would be in the right to exclude us if they had the power to do so, and from our point of view we consider that in forcing ourselves on them we are doing the best thing for the whole world. Perhaps we are!

The New Testament, of course, makes a totally different appeal, which again we can only guess at. But the wonderful story of the Word made Flesh can never fail to reach the hearts of the elect of every people and nation, and there is evidence that it has not failed in China. Yet here again we must keep separate two things that are distinct. The first is, the message to mankind of the New Testament, especially as given in the Gospels. The second is that same message as distorted by fanaticism, encumbered and veiled by various priestly claims, Judaized, bound with Puritanical chains, "modernized" by Agnostics, and generally altered and perverted out of all affinity to the spirit of the World's Redeemer.

His own words—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," are falsified and defeated by His professed followers. They render difficult the easy yoke, and make the light burden most painfully heavy. We of the Western races have grown accustomed to the strange discrepancies between the original teaching of the Gospel and the expanded and altered versions—mostly differing—of the divided Church Militant. But to thoughtful Chinese of the better class these inconsistencies, additions and contradictions are only too visible.

It is sometimes admitted and lamented by

equally thoughtful and scholarly missionaries that the Christian religion has apparently made little progress among the *literati* and higher officials, from whose ranks not many converts have come. In an attempt to remedy this failure there have been redoubled efforts to diffuse Western science and other knowledge, hoping probably to convince the Chinese of our superiority in this world and thus induce them to accept our views of the Hereafter.

Doing this sort of thing is a doubtful service to Christianity, which surely does not rest on the sand of modern so-called progress of the machine-made type, but in the end on the rock of eternal truth. It does not improve matters in this connection to ignore some factors such as the traditions and prejudices, history and ethics of China on the one hand, and on the other their intellectual capacity. It is, or ought to be, easy to do the sum that when presenting to them ideas that conflict with their above-mentioned history and prejudices we must expect these ideas to be relentlessly examined, and not at all from our point of view.

In the case of the Christian Faith, the first examination naturally starts with its own credentials in the New Testament, and from this ordeal it can be expected to emerge practically unscathed. The Acts of the Apostles is a record that shows nothing to discredit the religion. There are a few side-lights on the squabbles and backslidings among the early Christians, but these are small matters, and the courage of the Apostles—especially of St. Paul—the uniformity of their confession and

teaching, the faith unto death of the martyrs—all this is a golden testimony to Christianity.

After the immediate Gospel story closed, the ordinary historical account began of the amazing survival of the Christian faith in spite of the tremendous forces arrayed against it, temporal and spiritual. There is no doubt that, humanly speaking, it ought to have succumbed to the fierce persecution of Rome and disappeared, but with vitality that seemed superhuman it held on, and in the end triumphed.

This was the purest and greatest period of Christianity, and here again there was everything to exalt the religion and little to degrade it. That Kingdom was not of this world, that Church was undivided. Yet sad to say the mystic splendour of those days of early faith has never been whole-heartedly proclaimed by the slowly-disintegrating forces of Christendom. And for good reasons. What a reproach those first martyrs are to their often unworthy successors in the Faith to-day!

In addition to their own impressions the Chinese have been taught our religion through the medium of all divisions of the Church, and it is a curious thing that, Catholic and Protestant alike, every sect seems to concentrate on proving its own case and consolidating its own position, divorcing theology from history for quite obvious reasons. Therefore, not much instruction has been given on the conflict between the ideals of the Gospel and those of Pagan Rome.

Educated Chinese consider Christianity to be one of the more modern of the world's religions.

Its beginnings are almost of yesterday, historically considered, being long after Lao Tzu and Confucius, not to mention Yao and Shun. Yet its development, impartially explained, could be made interesting, and an analogy might be suggested between its mystic conquest of Roman power and paganism and its present assault on the Eastern religions.

Here in the widest sense they might apply the words of Christ: "I come not to destroy, but to fulfil." And again there could usefully be recalled the campaign of St. Paul at Athens, which might seem almost applicable in China to-day.

"His spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry." He disputed with Jews and encountered "certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks." Then he stood in Mars' Hill, declaring to his audience the Unknown God whom they ignorantly worshipped, preaching a great doctrine (not yet fully accepted in the twentieth century) that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far away from every one of us."

More than the Athenians, so far as we can judge, the Chinese worship the Creator, but the modern missionary seldom talks in the accents of his great predecessor, the Apostle of the Gentiles, thus making it possible for the Chinese to measure him out of the pages of the book he is selling in their streets. But in justice to them, we must keep before us that they also realize some other circum-

stances—namely, that the foreigners' "tao-li" is divided against itself, is not consistently acted upon by its professors, and yet is thrust upon the whole of China.

In some circles there is always the opium question in the background—how wickedly Britain forced the drug on the reluctant Celestials. These worthy people conveniently forget that more force has had to be used to support Christianity than the poppy. A good many natives want opium and are glad to smuggle it into their country, but it is idle to pretend they are equally eager for missionaries. It is, therefore, rather quaint for the aforesaid worthy persons vigorously to denounce what they are pleased (in spite of facts) to call the Opium War, while they entirely disregard all the trouble excited by missions.

What must puzzle the Chinese and seem like "moonbeams of the larger lunacy" is that, as often as not, the officials who protect the missionary—no matter how provocative and indiscreet he or she may be—are people who "don't care two pins' heads," to put it colloquially, for the propaganda which they insist upon China tolerating. They say in effect: "Never you mind whether we believe in Christianity or not. That is none of your business, and has nothing to do with the matter. What you must understand is that missionaries are to be protected, whether you like them or whether you don't!"

In some cases the Chinese like the missionaries very well, but when they dislike them there is no remedy, and they have to put up with him. Many missionaries are an influence for great good among

the natives, but others fail in temper, prudence and manners. This is a well-known stumbling-block, and there is another like unto it in the relations between missionaries and their co-nationals of the foreign communities. These last are nominally Christian, but seem in Chinese estimation to sit very loose not only to some of the Ten Commandments, but to most of the thousand and one additions made by the missionaries.

And just here a curious difficulty crops up, when at times the Chinese detect, with surprise, that the "unbelieving" layman is quite as respect-worthy as his pious fellow-countryman! The Chinese are excellent judges of class, character and breeding, and it is sometimes almost uncanny to find a coolie, who looks like an aged monkey, pronouncing unerringly on the "quality" of some caller, man or woman. The word "bounder" may not be in that coolie's vocabulary, but he can spot the species at sight! And if a mere coolie can do this, how much more will the Chinese higher in the social scale form correct opinions?

The so-called wickedness of the foreign communities, their racing, drinking, gambling and Sabbath-breaking, does distress missionaries, who are also upset when a bright and promising youth from their schools is lured into commerce or the Customs to slough off most of his godliness. It is even worse when a demure little maid enters upon a career of shame as the unofficial wife of a "foreign gentleman." But very few missionaries have the insight to understand a more subtle danger in what we may call the polite and virtuous atheist, who

can do more damage to the fabric of religion than many sinners will accomplish.

At the same time, this phenomenon adds to the bewilderment of intelligent Chinese that a great power like Britain thinks it a duty to protect—besides her worldly commerce—the other—worldly traders who are trafficking not in the safe commodities of straw-braid, yarn, silk and tea, but in doctrines which condemn China's sacred traditions and ideas which are subversive of her greatness. This, when many British even in high places do not believe in the faith which they defend!

The only explanations that cover all the facts, for a Chinese, are that foreigners are crazy, or, alternatively, that they have an ulterior motive. He inclines to the second explanation, because, like Polonius, he thinks: "If this is madness, there's method in't." If he went back to the New Testament for more light on the problem, having been told that the Lord of Heaven therein commanded these foreigners' activities, he would find several more things to puzzle him. The order is written in its pages: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." But in what way? With gunboats in the offing, and a Consul in uniform tapping a treaty? No, not exactly.

He will read of a different method adopted when seventy apostles were sent out by the Lord Himself. They were told to go their way in much simplicity, to carry no purse, nor scrip, nor shoes. "Into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same and say, 'Even the very dust of your city

which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

But apparently all Scripture to the modern Protestant is "of private interpretation," and these most explicit instructions have never been obeyed, in China at least. Neither do the Catholics regard the matter differently, or so it would appear to a Chinese reader of these passages in the three Gospels. The missionary seems to imagine that he knows better than his Lord how to spread the faith, so he quietly negatives these commands, and in China at least, pushes into hostile cities to stay, unless killed, removed by force, or (more rarely) induced to leave by the mingled blandishments and threats of his own Consul.

It is doubtful if these passages of Scripture are ever read at a "send-off" for young missionaries as their charter. Probably not, as there may be an underlying feeling that such procedure was all very well in ancient Judea, but would hardly answer in "heathendom" to-day—meaning China. Yet possibly their Lord knew best, and the very strangeness and unworldliness of these apostles helped to spread their message, and would help now.

To see men on fire with faith approaching a city, carrying neither purse nor scrip, and inquiring for those who were worthy within its gates—this in the East might have a great effect, coupled with the announcement: "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." True, these first apostles could give proofs of the reality of their vocation and confirm their teaching by casting out devils and

healing the sick, thus arresting attention until few cities would be likely to reject them.

This was the Christianity of its Founder, showing some essential divergences from the outlook of His Church to-day which cannot but be visible to the observers in China. There is not only intrusiveness, but often an insistence on details of ritual, on the letter that killeth, rather than the spirit that maketh alive. In one direction, for example, the Chinese learn that it is a terrible thing to eat meat on Friday, and (in the opposite camp) that it is a sin against High Heaven to prepare hot food on the "blessed Sabbath day."

It may be of interest to record that this latter principle was vindicated, not very many years ago, in a mission school for boys near Chefoo, at the cost of the lives of about a dozen scholars. In the circumstances perhaps it may be considered "providential" that they were Europeans, mostly British, and not natives. The school was run by very conscientious people, not as a commercial enterprise, and they held certain rather extreme views, which led to a serious catastrophe.

They were fully persuaded that our Creator strongly objected to Sunday cooking, so it was their practice to keep the Sabbath holy by giving the boys cold meals. In ordinary weather, with reasonable care, this did not matter, but on one unfortunate occasion in the summer season there were cold chicken pies that somehow had become tainted. Twelve or thirteen little fellows were fatally poisoned, and died at intervals between Sunday night and Tuesday.

This produced a painful impression on the "ungodly," and there was an inquiry by H.B.M.'s Consul. To the surprise of most reasonable people, the school authorities took up an attitude of injured innocence. Everyone knew that they acted from the highest motives, so why pursue them? Of course they were very sorry, but they were in no sense to blame for the tragedy. The Consul did rebuke them a little, but they were not punished in any way, and apparently public opinion was satisfied that good Protestants (*not* Anglicans!) could do no wrong, even if they prematurely assisted twelve little boys out of the world, and sent them to Heaven, full of rotten chicken pie.

Again the Chinese looked on, and must indeed have been mystified.

How truly extraordinary the foreigners' "Shangti" must have seemed to them! Especially as other Christians held different views as to His commands, and ate hot dinners on Sunday with apparently a good conscience.

This was, of course, an extreme case of Sabbatarian bigotry, but it leaves an uneasy feeling in one's mind. If such a thing could happen in an English school protected by the public opinion of the community, could not equally disastrous freaks of fanaticism take place out of sight? It seems quite beyond doubt that very strange variations of Christian doctrine have been promulgated amongst the Chinese by irresponsible individuals, sowing tares that choke the wheat and must be reaped with the harvest.

CHAPTER XI

The religious history of Europe, between the Council of Nicea and the beginning of this century—What must the Chinese think of it all?—Further Christian " tangles "—Can we expect the Chinese to discriminate?—The effect of foreign criticism—Mr. R. F. Johnston's " Letters to a Missionary " —A stout-hearted Rationalist in the lists—The Christian God a " hideous monster."

We have tried to describe the general aspects of Christianity as presented to the Chinese, showing how at first they had to take hold of the foreign religion by the various handles offered to them. Whether they accepted or rejected it, their means of judging were limited in the beginning to the operations of the Church in China, but in course of time they became aware of the world-wide history of the faith down the ages.

There was revealed to them its grand and spectacular triumph after a period of terrible persecution, and then they arrived at some modern developments. Most of us Westerners read this history either as Catholics, Protestants or Agnostics, while a few are, and always have been, violently opposed to the whole edifice of the Church. But the intelligent Chinese, we must repeat, approach the subject in a different spirit,

"denaturing" it as they study the facts. They have no inherited Catholic bias of "authority," and no Protestant reprisal of "liberty," while their Agnosticism is essentially unlike that of a European.

If the secular history of the West is difficult for an Oriental to follow, it must surely be our old friend "confusion worse confounded" when it comes to his tackling our religious record between the Council of Nicea and the beginning of this century. We ourselves read it in a sort of maze, doped by our prejudices, but how does it strike the more or less open mind and keen intelligence of the Chinese?

Christianity has fulfilled one prophecy of its Founder: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed . . . which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Of slow growth in the beginning, it rose by degrees, and became for centuries one of the most powerful and dominating religions that the world has ever seen. Kings and Emperors bowed down before it, and its general ascendancy during this period was sufficiently startling to impress an Asiatic.

The Great Schism was not politically important, and would probably pass almost unnoticed, so that the first landmark to catch his attention would be the Crusades, that amazing picture of chivalry, religious zeal and ill-guided intentions which brought about intercourse between Europe and

Asia Minor. It is a worn-out truism that the effect of the Crusades was not exactly what the original Crusaders hoped for, but one aspect of the long-drawn-out enterprise could not fail to interest the Chinese, namely that at no time between the first and last crusade did the Christians become popular with their opponents. The resistance to them never ceased, and in the end they were expelled—perhaps suggesting happy auguries for China!

Even before the end of the Crusades a change was darkening over the Church in Europe that could not escape any reader of its history—the shadow of corruption. It came on slowly, almost imperceptibly at first, brought about by the great increase of temporal power. This gave the wrong impetus to sacerdotalism, and led to the substitution of physical coercion for moral and spiritual example and persuasion, especially in dealing with so-called heresies.

Since the beginning, there had always been schism, dissent and heterodoxy in the Church, but in the earlier days these troubles were met and overcome in a different spirit. The Church, wrung with persecution herself, had no power, and all she could do was to excommunicate and expel these wandering sons. She did not exceed her rights in doing this, and the verdict of history has never condemned such reasonable and necessary discipline. But with the power to persecute, most unhappily came the will to do so.

It is quite useless to try and confuse the issues, as some Catholic apologists do, by imputing to Protestants and others theories which are not

generally held. Recently, in dealing with the Inquisition and its unspeakable cruelties, a well-known priest had the dishonesty of mind to set down as a proposition that non-Catholics think:

"It is wrong for a Church to have any fixed body of doctrine, departure from which is branded as heresy, and becomes a ground for exclusion from its membership."

One may venture to say that at no time in ecclesiastical history has any such proposition been accepted by reasonable people. On the contrary, it has always been recognized as a fundamental right of every church, society, club or other institution to have "a fixed body of doctrine" (or principles), and to exclude, or expel from membership, any individuals who dissent seriously from the doctrines or principles of the church or institution.

But it is an entirely different proposition that a church may compel every human being within reach to accept these "fixed doctrines" on pain of ghastly consequences if he or she refused to conform. It is idle to deny that this claim was made in the Middle Ages by the Catholic Church, side by side with another evil, namely, moral degradation within. Both conditions are tacitly admitted by the most convinced Ultramontanes—for the excellent reason that they are far too well attested to be denied.

The corruption of the Church, so lamentably conspicuous at Rome, was, and is, a grievous scandal to devout Catholics. Protestants may at times over-stress this unhappy development, so it

is more satisfactory to gather evidence within the Roman Communion itself of the widespread, deep-seated and long-continued wickedness that afflicted the Church in mediæval times.

We may take, for example, the witness of Pope Adrian VI in a written instruction to a Papal Nuncio who was being sent to Germany. The Holy Father openly confessed that the sins of the people had their roots in the sins of the priests, and said, "There were deplorable things in the times of Alexander VI." Lainez, the second General of the Jesuits, mentioned the bad example of the Supreme Head, and "bad use of the power he has from God," as the principal cause of disorders in the Church.

According to Lainez, Popes did not expect "to do anything in the Papacy except to make great their relatives according to the flesh." The bishops and clergy were equally blameworthy, and openly broke their vows of chastity. They kept concubines, and even the brother of Ignatius Loyola himself, priest in Aspeitia, "made no concealment of the fact that he had illegitimate children, and the case was so common as to excite no remark."[1]

The Church in Spain was presumed to be less corrupt than in other parts of Europe, but it was quite bad enough. To quote again from "Ignatius Loyola," by Paul Van Dyke: "The scandals among the clergy began at the top, as for instance an Archbishop of Toledo, Primate of Spain, had three illegitimate sons from two mothers. The famous Bishop of Zamorra rode at the head of three hundred armed clergymen of his diocese in

the civil wars, assassinated prisoners, and after many adventures" (crimes?) "was hanged in the year of Loyola's conversion."

Ten years after the death of Ignatius Loyola an ambassador wrote from Spain to the effect that the prelates lived in great pomp and luxury, and that very few were without illegitimate children, "whom they publicly own without any pretext." When Cæsar Borgia held the bishopric of Pamplona, it was said he lived in such a way that "the best thing he could do for his diocese was to keep away from it."

"It was not considered infamous for a pope to have bastard sons and to try by every means to make them rich and powerful," one chronicler wrote, and even Paul III, though a reforming pope, made two of his grandsons (in their teens) cardinals "within a week of his election to the Papacy."

All this was deplorable enough, and what made it even more lamentable was that during this decadent period the Inquisition acted with great vigour against any suspicion of heresy. If anything could render more revolting these stories of priestly vice and corruption, it is the account of the truly horrible cruelties practised by the inquisitors. Now, some Chinese punishments are sufficiently barbarous, and always have been, but it must be remembered that the severities of their code were generally inflicted on criminals and for serious crimes. But the abominations of the Inquisition were nearly always visited upon blameless victims, whose only fault was to be suspected of heresy.

These horrors nowadays protect themselves from ordinary examination, and rank with things considered unfit for general publication. Their ruthless inhumanity makes it almost impossible for modern readers to study them in detail, but the revolting facts are accessible to those interested in the subject, whose nerves are strong enough to investigate them. The system was used against heresy all over Christendom, perhaps more drastically at one time and place than in another, but quite vigorously at the best, and with fiendish relentlessness at the worst.

What must the Far Eastern student think of even a tempered account of such proceedings? The thumbscrew, the rack, also chains, dungeons and the stake—for no crime at all! Early in the thirteenth century these so-called "merciful chastisements" began, and they continued until public opinion and the secular arm of the Reformation broke up the system in the sixteenth century.

Merciful chastisements! The water torture, the rack and the strappado, for instance. A revolting variation of the first was used in Spain, that "most Christian country." A damp cloth was placed on the tongue of the victim and a small trickle of running water was allowed to play on it. Then by the natural actions of breathing and swallowing, the cloth was drawn down into the throat, producing an agonizing sensation of suffocation; when it was drawn out again it was often found to be saturated with blood.

The "strappado" was another of these gentle persuasives, and was one very generally used.

The heretic's hands were tied behind his, or her, back, then he, or she, was jerked up high off the ground by a rope and pulley and abruptly dropped many feet. This inflicted gruesome injuries and dislocated the shoulder joints.

These descriptions are not taken from Protestant sources, which might be suspected of bias, but they come from a recent Catholic work on the Inquisition by A. L. Maycock, whose sponsor is Father Knox. The author quietly says the Inquisition is one of "the most interesting phenomena in history," and that he has "attempted to make it not only interesting, but intelligible." One of his conclusions is that "the Inquisition recognized their difficulties better than we can recognize them to-day; and that, in deciding that their task was beyond their powers, unless they were allowed to employ torture in obstinate cases, they probably decided rightly."

Father Knox does not shirk the problem, but handles it in a light-hearted, almost jocose vein, even in the end when he discusses the not unimportant question as to whether—given the power and opportunity—the Catholic Church would still persecute. After saying cheerfully there is little more danger of this than of Mr. Baldwin torturing Communists, the reverend Father just hints that persecution and exile at least, if not the death penalty, would be permissible under Catholic ascendancy. "I can only say," he avers, "that it seems to me a quite reasonable attitude for a Catholic country to take up."

The idea underlying this permissible persecu-

tion and reasonable Catholic attitude is that "loss of belief is not normally possible without some fault of obstinacy or pride; that such loss is therefore on the human side morally culpable, and is accordingly a possible matter for legislation; that it is a kind of spiritual suicide against which, no less than against attempted self-murder, the law should provide deterrents." This is a recent view. Shall we call it both interesting and intelligible? We can add that it is a remarkably powerful argument against ever again risking Catholic or any religious ascendancy!

In another account of these Christian "tangles," there is a curious sidelight on both Catholics and Protestants after the Reformation had gained ground. During October, 1534, Paris was decorated one night with placards attacking the Mass, "the Pope and all his vermin of cardinals, bishops, priests and monks and all others who say Mass and consent to it" as "false prophets, damnable deceivers, apostates, wolves, false shepherds, idolaters, seducers, liars and execrable blasphemers, murderers of souls, renouncers of Jesus Christ, false witnesses, traitors, thieves, insulters of God's honour and more detestable than devils."

Up to that time François I, King of France, had been half-tolerant of the Reformation, partly because he liked the New Learning and partly for political reasons, but these posters stirred him to action. There was arranged a great "expiatory ceremony," and four royal princes carried the canopy over the Host, which was borne in proces-

sion by the Bishop of Paris from the Church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois to the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Behind the Host the King walked alone, with his head bare and a candle in his hand.

After the Mass all the dignitaries dined with the bishops, and when the dinner was over the King called into the great hall the Bishop, the clergy, the Rector and leading professors of the University, the city magistrates and the chief merchants. Surrounded by princes, cardinals, counsellors and all the ambassadors, His Majesty made a solemn speech against heresy, and as a fitting climax to these solemnities they burnt six heretics, impressively and artistically, "three near the beginning and three near the end of the line of the march of the procession." The end of a perfect day!

"Many other heretics," the record stated, "were burnt in great numbers on different days following, so that in Paris one saw nothing but stakes set up in different places; which frightened the people of Paris very much."

At this point our hypothetical Confucian might pause in his researches, unless he were attracted by the massacre of St. Bartholomew a few years later, to round matters off dramatically. After that display of Catholic savagery and Huguenot resistance, he might possibly be interested to look a little farther and see how Protestantism shaped. It would perhaps surprise him—if he took a hopeful view of Western human nature—to find that as soon as they could manage it the Reformers erected stakes and heaped faggots to burn the Catholics.

They did more than this—they turned on each other. The Church of England, for example, after enduring martyrdom, inflicted it upon the Puritans of Scotland; Black Prelacy, as it was indignantly called, tried to put down Blue Presbyterianism, though they both reprobated Bloody Popery. The Covenanters held firm in their day of trial, and there are some sad stories of torture and death. Even women were not spared, as in the case of two "obdurates" who were roped to stakes in the rising tide and drowned.

Such was Christianity as late as the end of the seventeenth century, almost within hail of our own times! If we throw in witch-hunting, it was a state of matters calculated to bewilder a Confucian philosopher, especially when he has it impressed on his mind by earnest missionaries that this is their "holy religion" which came down from Heaven to save the souls of all mankind.

Perhaps Christendom collectively relies on the comfortable argument that "things are better now." The Catholics have forgotten Cæsar Borgia and persons like him, up and down the ranks of ecclesiastics, while the Protestants regard their own past history as containing nothing that need be forgotten. They are equally keen on the conversion of China, and are generally aware that to hasten this it is almost necessary to persuade the governing classes as to the desirability of adopting Christianity for the State religion.

It goes without saying that the conversion of China, or of Europe, for that matter, to genuine Christianity would be the kind of miracle to bring

in the millennium, the Cycle of the Golden Year. But are we quite sure that the spectacle of so-called Christian nations will encourage the Chinese to follow in our train? The Chinese mind is, on the whole, practical and even inclined to materialism. That is to say, they hold fast to the things that are seen. These may be only temporal, but who knows anything for certain about the things that are unseen? The Chinese might be excused if they considered that the foreigners' religion has had, and still has, some peculiar "reactions," and that, broadly speaking, these were at times incalculable.

To begin with, there would be the difficulty of deciding between one division of the Church and another, which to follow and favour. A Protestant solution of this problem has been tentatively suggested, namely, that the Chinese should study all aspects of our kaleidoscopic faith—however conflicting—and arrive at a sort of "composite" or Chinese Christianity that would satisfy native ideas, with due reservations, one being to rule out ancestor worship.

The Catholics, of course, would not approve of this idea, neither would they like to contemplate the possibility of four hundred millions of the human race being even nominally added to the triumphs of heresy. Yet it is nearly certain that China—even if Christianized—would fight shy of Catholic ascendancy, although the ceremonial attracts the Chinese, and the attitude of authority always impresses the East. "Marry! This is somewhat," they think—a happy union of pageantry

and consistency. Rome seems to offer, as it were, a watertight roof overhead and a good firm pavement under foot. But there is a lingering suspicion of political ambition in the hierarchy, and perhaps not without grounds.

On the other hand, the Protestant missions would almost certainly raise much opposition to the official recognition of Catholicism, and what with their attacks on each other, and the Protestants fighting among themselves, the question of China adopting Christianity seems to bristle with practical difficulties.

Add to these perpetual dissensions a spirit of criticism among foreigners, as evidenced in a book like "Letters to a Missionary," written by R. F. Johnston, sometime tutor to the Manchu ex-Emperor. This was published as a contribution to contemporary disputation, and on the "jacket" is described as containing "startling revelations concerning the doctrines propagated by certain Christian missions in China." It proves that the old-fashioned belief in the everlasting damnation of "the heathen," of which the great majority of Christians are now thoroughly ashamed, still occupies a most prominent place among the doctrines actively insisted upon by the largest and most influential proselytizing (Protestant) mission now working among the Chinese people. The author shows how urgently necessary it is, in the spiritual and moral interests of mankind, that the Churches should cease to export grotesque and nauseating superstitions to non-Christian countries under the deceptive label of "true

religion," and he hopes that "if the people of the West value the souls of 'the heathen' as highly as they profess to do, they will prohibit a traffic which is just as morally indefensible as the trade in opium or cocaine."

I am not concerned to agree or disagree with Mr. Johnston, but would merely try to gauge the effect of his "startling revelations" on some of the people involved, namely the educated and intelligent ruling classes of China. In the introduction Mr. Johnston explains "the circumstances under which the following letters came to be written," and the whole "explication" is not altogether without humour. Let us summarize it briefly. Early in 1917 the Reverend Stanley P. Smith, stationed in Shansi, sent a circular letter all round, and one copy to Mr. Johnston, as Consular Official, setting out some theological grievances.

In 1885 Mr. Smith became the leader of a small party of young men, known as the "Cambridge Seven," who went to China as missionaries, and for seventeen years he worked in connection with the China Inland Mission. Then about 1902 he was asked to retire from the Mission, owing to his "views on eschatology." Put bluntly, Mr. Smith did not believe in an everlasting hell, and "it was necessary, therefore," says Mr. Johnston, "that he should cease to co-operate with that Mission in bringing the 'glad tidings' of Christianity to the people of China."

Though dismissed in this way, Mr. Smith continued to be friendly with the C.I.M., as it is generally called, and even hoped that his milder

views were beginning to prevail. But in 1914, after twelve years, the Director for North America of the C.I.M. published authoritatively a statement of doctrine, reaffirming a pious belief in the eternal damnation of nearly everyone on earth, as the damned were to include not only "'unsaved' Christians," comments Mr. Johnston, "but also all the untold millions of 'heathen' who had 'never heard of Christ'; the sufferings of the damned, moreover, were to be *conscious* sufferings and were to last literally *for ever*."

These views were declared to be "fundamental," "necessary" and "essential" to the Christian faith, so Mr. Smith recoiled in horror, and sent out this circular letter "to enlist the support of people who sympathized with the attitude he had taken up." Now Mr. Smith's own view is, that though the majority of the human race is not damned for ever, a fair number will have a bad time after death. It does not appear exactly what support and sympathy he received generally, but he certainly stirred up a formidable critic in Mr. Johnston, who wrote three stinging letters in reply to the circular, and five more dealing with "certain moral and other problems" arising out of his (Mr. Smith's) controversy with the C.I.M. on the subject of the Christian doctrine of future punishment.

Some resounding thwacks were delivered to the C.I.M., which incidentally caught Mr. Smith himself one or two on the jaw, as it were. He took these manfully, and wrote a short letter to his rationalistic opponent, sending some pamphlets

and remarking: "At present, with what evidence I have before me, I cannot look upon you as a Christian, or as a friend of Christianity; but here I may be mistaken, for I mostly know your destructive sentiments and not your constructive ones."

Mr. Johnston readily spared the time to examine the pamphlets carefully, and discusses them in these very candid and logical letters. He begins in the introduction with "a little aversion" to the C.I.M., and mentions that most of the other more important Protestant missions look askance at Hudson Taylor's institution, also that individual missionaries attack it in private conversation. Its "revivalism" they describe as "nauseating," and yet in public they maintain a "more or less fictitious appearance of harmony," which seems of "more pressing importance than the defence of the honour of their God."

Mr. Johnston sums up the creed of the C.I.M. thus: "They are held fast in the grip of religious beliefs which to a large extent are shockingly barbarous and degrading, and they are incapable of the mental effort necessary to set themselves free. Their grotesque and misshapen creed is like a wicked stepmother in a fairy-tale, who has fed them from the days of their docile and impressionable childhood with the poisonous and debilitating products of her own nauseous cookery, and, in order to debar them from access to more wholesome nourishment, has locked the door of their minds and thrown away the key."

In addition to this detailed criticism of Christian

doctrine, impartially distributed to Catholic and Protestant alike, the writer of these eight letters obliges the Chinese with a slight sketch of his own ideas on religion. His views are fairly representative of the stout-hearted Rationalism which considers itself competent to weigh and measure everything in Heaven and earth, and to pronounce authoritatively on all phases of morals, theology and eschatology, so it is worth while speculating as to their effect on the native mind.

Having "biffed" Christianity and the Bible with great energy and some reiteration, and thrown off clouds of disbelief, our writer pauses to describe some brother rationalists as "a nefarious gang of professional soul-extinguishers," and to repel with scorn the suggestion that he himself is a Materialist.

"By saying that I am not a Materialist, I mean that the world of sense, as we know it, is an abstract thing, unintelligible and self-contradictory, and that we are therefore compelled to believe it to be controlled by a world of reason which is also immanent in it. Mechanical determinism as a theory of the universe seems to me, on philosophical (that is to say metaphysical) grounds, to be inadmissible, however true it may be for the limits which circumscribe the activities of science. There is, I think, no real antithesis between the spiritual and the phenomenal, but I believe that the material world, if contemplated *sub specie æternitatis*, would be found to be spirit, and that a spiritual interpretation of the universe is the only possible one. In other words, I regard spirit as the ultimate basis of reality. . . . I cannot accept

the naturalistic hypothesis that mind is (to use James Ward's phrases) 'secondary and episodic,' or a mere collateral product that arises 'as often as matter falls into the appropriate organic condition.' I cannot persuade myself that the human spirit is the product of, or solely dependent on, physical causes, or that it is the mere creature of the material things that it employs and shapes to its own uses or through which it energizes."

The question for this school of thinkers or metaphysicians is, as stated by the Abbé Loisy and agreed to by Mr. Johnston, not whether the Pope is infallible, or whether there are errors in the Bible, and so on, "but whether the universe is inert matter, empty, deaf, soulless, pitiless, whether men's conscience finds in it no echo truer and more real than itself." Yet in repelling this crass Materialism, Mr. Johnston is careful to say that it often turns out to be nothing worse "than a sturdy belief in the reality of scientific progress—a persuasion that man's moral and spiritual progress depends more upon the amelioration of social and industrial conditions than on the dissemination of ecclesiastic dogmas, and a firm conviction that a Churchless truth is infinitely better than a truthless Church."

In no way do I judge these views, except to note certain confusions of mind and considerable injustice to, and almost wilful misunderstanding of, the Christianity outlined in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and illustrated by St. Paul's immortal hymn to Goodwill in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. "Whether

there be prophecies, they shall fail: whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

"For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. And now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Even Mr. Johnston admits the good works of the Church in China, the medical missions and educational efforts. And probably it would occur to the Chinese to apply the principal of "by their fruits ye shall know them," and to reflect that the rationalists concentrate on gnashing their teeth about Hell, while neglecting to do much for the poor and suffering on earth. After all, is that not a fairly good test? And would not a humble coolie, with a damaged eye or a broken bone, find himself healed and comforted by the religion (and its hospital) stigmatized by Mr. Johnston as "loathsome," "ghastly," and other slightly hysterical implications? That unlucky coolie would have to wait a long time for relief if he depended on the ministrations of people who are too civilized to preach "everlasting damnation." So it seems to resolve itself into the crux of pragmatism: would these pathetic sufferers be better off without a threat of hell and no hospital, or would they prefer the present help in time of trouble at the hands of a missionary doctor who adores what Mr. Johnston calls a "hideous monster"—meaning God the Father of us all—and teaches (or does not teach) a doctrine that for obdurate and eternal evil there

is discipline. Meantime he mends the poor coolie's broken body; so here is another confusion for the Chinese to adjust, the abuse of these "vile Christians" by the elect, steeped in pure rationalism, who are too ethereal to spend money or personal effort in directly alleviating human misery.

One must believe that faith, hope and charity abide—"and the greatest of these is charity!"

CHAPTER XII

The Protestant indirect arguments in favour of Christianity fail to convince the Chinese—European politics, speculative science and the worship of "progress" leave their best intellects cold—A British Consul-General's timely plea for more circumspection by foreign teachers—The Chinese not impressed by increased knowledge of Western cities "with the lid off"—The white woman as depicted in the "Movies" and in the bathing scenes of the illustrated papers—As the old amah said: "No got trousers, no got shame"—The danger of connecting Christianity with political propaganda—The astonishing outcome of the National Christian Council.

PERHAPS it is time to turn, for a few pages, to what one may call the indirect arguments in favour of Christianity, and to consider how these may effect the Chinese mind. This is a favourite weapon of the Protestants rather than the Catholics, and of the scholarly and broadminded rather than the emotional and revivalistic. The idea is to drop religion for a moment, as it were, and to call attention to railways, representative government, medical and other sciences, social reform, Western knowledge and literature, and then—when the Eastern mind has been sufficiently impressed and even dazzled by the display—to point the moral that here you have the inevitable "by-products" of Christianity. In a word, if you are a "heathen" you put up with outdoor sanitation and travel on foot

or in a cart; while if you are a Christian you enjoy modern "conveniences" and can whirl along at forty miles an hour in a Rolls Royce. "There," as the Butterman said in *Our Boys*, "you 'ave it in a nutshell."

This argument certainly induces a train of thought in the Chinese mind, should they accept the kind invitation to admire the West. They are probably willing enough to let our theologians rest, and to turn to the scientists, writers, traders and politicians, not in Britain alone, but everywhere in what is vaguely but agreeably described as Christendom.

Then would be revealed the fact that, even in matter of sanitation and facilities for locomotion, the West was not impressively far ahead of China until towards the end of the eighteenth century when man in Europe suddenly became a cleaner animal and more restless. He recovered some of the Greek and Roman ideas about baths and physical culture, and added unto them a strong desire for machinery in peace and war.

Religious and Social "taboos" began to weaken, and the French Revolution shook the Western world to its very centre, and damaged its fabric down to its deepest foundations. No one in Europe or America has yet succeeded in understanding the whole "inwardness" of this strange upheaval, but later writers—like Lord Acton and Mrs. Nesta Webster, to mention two prominent students—do not follow the views of Carlyle and his school. They cannot agree with the explanation that an oppressed people, mostly peasants, arose in

their just anger to throw off intolerable burdens, and Mrs. Webster, especially, makes out an unanswerable case for the theory that hidden influences used the people for a deep and most evil purpose.

In the end of the eighteenth century this purpose did not directly concern China, but it held a lesson in its Reign of Terror for a later day. Still, as a demonstration of the superiority of the White Race, the French Revolution might seem to lack convincingness, dispassionately viewed. But not too long afterwards we had steam and railways and gas, so perhaps we felt we could bluff on these symptoms of progress, and tactfully shunt the Reign of Terror and the Guillotine.

Upheavals with a great deal of bloodshed are unhappily common enough in China, longer drawn out and more widespread than the French Revolution, such as the appalling Taiping Rebellion, for example, which lasted from 1850 to 1864, involved the immense area of twelve provinces, ruined over five hundred cities, and cost, it is said, twenty million lives. This was devastation on a grand scale, though as far as can be judged it had no plan or guiding intelligence, but, having started against the Manchu dynasty, just went on and on, like a fire that could not burn itself out.

Here it differed from the French Revolution, which, viewed in some aspects, certainly looked like an organized and malicious attack on civilization, whereas the Taiping Rebellion was a blinder phenomenon. And in any case there are awkward implications about the French experiment. If it is

represented to the Chinese as an outbreak of democracy, trying to establish the noble principles of Liberty and Equality, they might wonder if its violence and wickedness were necessary, and also what practical results the Reign of Terror had achieved.

Looking a little more closely into the details of this subversive convulsion they could scarcely avoid noticing that one of its main objects seemed to be to exterminate Christianity. On the one hand they could therefore argue that, according to these heroes of the revolt, true Democracy and true Progress were impossible so long as the Church was tolerated; or, on the other hand, that the Christian religion was in the end a firm bulwark against the horrors of anarchy.

Considering the great divergence of opinion on the subject even in the West, the Chinese might well be excused for suspending their judgment. The issues between these contending forces are, of course, seldom put with this crude and brutal plainness, but are carefully disguised and wrapped up in many beautiful sentiments. Every excess of anarchy, that worst of tyrannies, is represented under the symbol of "birth pangs of a new era," or some such suggestion—an imperfect analogy, seeing that this sort of "birth" is all pangs and no child, i.e. all convulsion and no new era. Generally the old era re-emerges after the storm—much the worse for wear.

However, if politics rather fail us in our campaign to impress and catch the Chinese, there is always science to fall back on, such as Darwin's

cheery discovery that man has descended from monkey ancestors, which can be expounded to the derisive Oriental, accompanied by the shrieks of dissenting orthodoxy.

Sufficient time has elapsed since Western science was first taught in China for many so-called facts to have been disapproved, or at least revised. Hypotheses once considered indisputable have had to be jettisoned quietly with that delightful scientific optimism which is always, in Browning's words, "baffled to fight better." Having adopted a theory of some sort, scientists hope for the best and strain every fact to support it—until the bottom falls out of it.

There was once, for example, great and joyful excitement among the atheists, with corresponding "dismal dumps" for the Christians, when an English scientist thought he had discovered that life generated spontaneously. No cause, no creator, "nossing." But alas! a confrère in France, Pasteur—if memory serves one—obligingly checked the experiments, and proved that, after complete sterilization, life did not generate in the famous "ooze," and that so far as the range of accurate human observation extends (which is not very far!) life comes from life, and from nothing else.

Practical science, with mechanical results, may impress the Chinese, but speculative science leaves their best intellects cold for very excellent reasons—it is so often disproved, after being delivered authoritatively with what Americans humorously call a "Thus saith the Lord" emphasis. Some of these catastrophes of entire certainty, followed by a refuta-

tion every bit as certain, make the ribald smile. One is reminded of the old *impasse* where it was asked what happened when an "irresistible force" met an "immovable obstacle," or words to that effect. So it is often a question of what a poor scientist can do when a categorical, incontrovertible scientific certainty is confronted by an equally iron-clad and invulnerable repudiation. The best idea is to pick himself up, as it were, dust his coat—and change the subject.

That is called scientific progress, but it cuts no ice with the Chinese! The utter hollowness of many scientific pretensions dawned on them some time ago, and even before a few of our more open-minded scientists noticed their own fallibility, the Chinese had quietly come to the conclusion that we knew less than we thought we did.

Perhaps we have been rather over-ready to impart the "little learning" that is dangerous, and one or two clear-sighted persons have uttered warnings. The late Byron Brenan, for example, sometime His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General at Shanghai and a very able man, once startled a meeting of the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge, commonly known as the Diffusion Society.

He spoke out plainly, and said "they should show in future more circumspection in disseminating among the Chinese knowledge of a very advanced character, subversive of their most cherished beliefs and venerable institutions, and in face of the terrible fate which had overtaken many of the Reformers, they should realize their responsibility in the matter

when they were unable to extend any protection to the victims." What gave point to this speech was the fact that Mr. Brenan himself was the only person present—official or unofficial—who had tried to save the life of a persecuted Reformer and had succeeded in doing so.

His warning, and a few others like it, should not be disregarded in a position full of snares for both East and West. For nearly half a century now, Chinese have been able to study our boasted civilization not only in an academic fashion at a distance, but have sent their sons to Europe and America for the advantages of personal experience. In this practice, there have sometimes been disadvantages!

Yet up to 1914, Europe had perhaps some justification for a claim that our civilization was progressing. Amongst a number of things that must have repelled Chinese sentiment and offended their sense of right and human dignity, there were no doubt many other facts that impressed them. They took kindly to our domestic comforts, and probably thought that these almost balanced our rough manners and unceremonious social usages.

I think one is justified in saying that (until the present upset) there was more civic virtue in China in some directions than with us in Europe, or in America. The proof is that the Chinese, generally speaking, got along with far less civil government—as one may call it—than is required over here. An ordinary Chinese city had practically no police, and the populace as a rule did not need the restraint of

any force. There were Yamên runners, lictors, and hangers-on of the Magistrates' Court, but of ordinary policing there was none, and it was not necessary.

There were several reasons for this discipline. It had its root partly in filial piety and a habit of deference to seniors, shown in the title of honour given to teachers—Elder Born. Then the Chinese were not generally addicted to drunkenness, and marriage being universal there was not much scope for disturbances involving what may be delicately called "romance" and more coarsely described as "sex."

Serious crimes were, of course, dealt with by the Magistrates, and pretty severely, but the common people were not prone to law-breaking, and also were able to settle minor offences without troubling the law. One sometimes looked on at this home-made justice, as it could be called, and rather admired it.

For an example of this, I remember when a thief once got into our servants' quarters and was taken in the act of plundering them. There was a fearful shindy, rather like a riot, with shouts and bangings, interspersed with the yells of the robber. They set upon him, tore his clothes off, hammered him energetically for a considerable time, and then threw him out at the gate. It was the custom of the country, so there seemed no reason to interfere, and one could only look on, and agree when the head boy remarked grimly that the "tsei" (thief) would not be likely to come back!

The innate good conduct of the ordinary decent

Chinese was well exemplified in Shanghai at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897, when an overwhelming crowd was admitted to the International Settlements to view the celebrations, decorations and fireworks. No one who saw that vast crowd can ever forget its admirable orderliness, and really beautiful behaviour. It was all the more remarkable, seeing that they were not restrained by any national or religious sentiment, but were merely out for a day's pleasuring. Some of them knew vaguely that the show was in honour of the aged Queen of England, which was scarcely enough to keep a Chinese crowd in order, apart from their own volition. So they gave us a lesson that one would gladly pass on to the holiday mobs of one's native land, showing that it is possible for human beings *en masse* to enjoy themselves without foolish excesses and rowdiness.

Reviewing things dispassionately, one cannot be sure that Chinese youths, cherishing their own ideals, are necessarily impressed by Western "superiority" when they see our cities with "the lid off." We have sufficiently hectored and lectured their country-men about the wickedness of opium smoking, and then we have to show them a sorry spectacle of what alcohol can do to degrade a people. It is to be hoped they do not often see an orgy like that recently reported from Glasgow, where a tram-car hit a lorry, and after the collision five barrels of whisky were thrown into the road, and burst. "Men and women," said the reporter, "rushed up from all directions with receptacles and collected the liquor, while others, going on all fours, lapped

it up from the floor. Some soaked their caps in the spirit and sucked them."

Another thing would always strike an Eastern student in our midst, and that is what may be slumped as the woman question. Here the ideals, and also the realities, of the East and West clash. The Chinese are often told that they take "a low view" of women, and one of the avowed objects of much missionary activity is to remedy this sad state of things and to give Chinese women, and especially Chinese young girls, their true and exalted position in the social and political spheres. These poor victims must be rescued from their degradation and placed on an equality with their Western sisters.

What this means exactly in the minds of emotional missionaries cannot be fathomed, but there seems to be some confusion of thought, seeing that these same people are generally quite ready to condemn the modern young woman of Europe and the United States of America, even not very extreme specimens. They seldom trouble to think clearly, or to look at any subject in a rational and detached manner, so they are shocked to contemplate the marriage customs of China, through which a girl is betrothed in infancy and is married to a young man of whom she knows nothing. Still worse, she comes under the discipline of his mother, and perhaps has to get on with his brothers' wives.

This inflames the chaste imagination of feminine workers amongst "the heathen," until they cannot bear the idea of a little Chinese maid not being given a chance of falling in love and marrying "the

man of her choice." They contend that she should be "free" to develop into "a noble-minded woman," or something like that, so they proceed, as it were, to throw a spanner into the domestic machinery of China, and to emphasize the fact that Chinese women are slaves, contrasting their terrible lot with the glorious emancipation of the Western women, especially British and Americans.

It is only fair to say that there are missionaries with more sense, but still one finds a general tendency to tell the Chinese that their little girls are not as free as they ought to be. This emancipation leaven worked slowly at the start, but now, thanks to the moving picture in the first place, and to education abroad in the second place, the Chinese have been thoroughly introduced to the extreme liberty given to Western womanhood and girlhood.

Now, for three thousand years and more, Chinese women have been models of propriety, as the system of infant betrothal saves respectable damsels from any need to exploit their sex or go husband-hunting, while the honour paid to motherhood gives the natural high reward that all women are entitled to. Thus Chinese women, except of the roughest class, have, as a rule, quiet and dignified manners, and their dress (up to recent times) was graceful in a quaint way, and entirely modest, like the wearers.

After being told that these country-women of his are very inferior to the Western female, a Chinese may in return be permitted to survey and criticize our manners and customs. As remarked

above, the moving picture began the process of enlightening him.

Considering that many of these pictures disgust even hardened Europeans, what must their effect be on an Oriental? He has been brought up in an atmosphere of respect for maternity, and on viewing foreign behaviour and " atmosphere " as portrayed by " movies " he finds this sacred maternal function of womanhood neglected for what he looks upon as gross immorality, the mother displaced and the harlot, like the " Goddess of Reason," set up on the altar for worship! To his surprise he learns that this is the ideal which the West seeks to thrust on the East. Or at least that is the view he takes of it.

If he turns from moving pictures as perhaps not a wholly conclusive presentment of Western femininity, and glances at the illustrated papers there is a good deal to excite his contempt. Chinese women look upon exposure of their bodies as absolutely shameful, but apparently as he notes there is no such prejudice among the superior (?) dames of the most highly civilized countries. These snapshots of nearly naked figures in bathing scenes are real photographs of real girls and women, and he reads that they are not low class strumpets, but are all "respectable," many of them gentlewomen, and some of them titled. Not very long ago there was an amazing display of the grown up daughter of an Earl and a Cabinet Minister in a most abbreviated bathing dress, showing her large bare legs almost to the groin, and standing in a crowd of equally naked men and girls.

It is difficult to convey to a Briton what impres-

sion this parade of nudity would make on the Oriental mind, and only by impossible coarseness could one bring this home to our people. That is to say it would go quite beyond anything that is permissible if one tried to indicate what would shock us as much as the above-mentioned photograph must have repelled all right-minded Chinese.

A great deal on our stage appears corrupt to them, and the modern development of cabaret shows must amaze and disgust them in about equal degrees. This all reacts on our claims to superiority founded at least partly on the Christian religion, and the growing contempt of the East, that has a dangerous side to it, is largely incurred by this "unveiling" with the suggestion that gentlemen who prefer blondes like them best as nearly without fig leaves as a demoralized public will permit.

These remarks apply to China and India rather than to Japan, where custom has always sanctioned mixed bathing, and where the women have been, and are, less shy of "divestments" than their Chinese sisters. It is, of course, a matter of national custom, and it is rather amusing to remember that Chinese ladies used to despise the Japanese dress, thinking, as an old amah once put it concisely: "No got trousers, no got shame."

Further contact with Europe and the United States of America may, and unhappily too often does, weaken the bonds of native discipline, but it seldom inspires the Chinese student with sufficient respect for our ideals to make him adopt them in any practical form. He certainly learns to hate the hypocrisy or blindness which condemns the virtues

and excellencies of the East, but quite often he profits by Western liberty to abandon his own inherited principles, and in no way replaces these with the obligations of a different standard. Thus he is left "open to his enemies," visible and invisible, a renegade to his own ancestry and a reproach to the Western culture that has undermined his ethics and philosophy without being able to give him any immutable alternatives.

It may be argued whether, for him, social life is built on political foundations, or the other way round, but a course of Occidental politics will scarcely correct the harm done by our unsuitable and unsettling culture, as here again the tendency is to rob him of his own civic framework and safeguards and substitute nothing but a shadowy idealism that is often enough a cloak for evil. Mr. Brenan's warning, already quoted, was wise and timely, and it is a grave matter to promulgate all kinds of untried and impracticable theories that are, in the nature of them, subversive of, and deranging to, the national fabric of China.

To connect these wild ideas with Christianity is, to the last degree, undesirable, but—most unfortunately—well-meaning missionaries of all nationalities have committed this imprudence, not to call it by too harsh a name, and foremost among these apostles of modern progress (as they conceive it to be) are the Americans, with our own people a good second. They hold the view that "there is no darkness but ignorance," and then proceed to scatter broadcast the most pernicious form of ignorance, half-truths and false knowledge in the shape of unproved

theories. These, after being imperfectly explained, and then inculcated in unprepared minds, are disguised as valuable systems that are destined to benefit the human race. Taught in good faith, they are sometimes received in the same spirit, but in the case of quick-minded students, not deflected by any hereditary bias, they can see implications and consequences that are hidden from their worthy instructors, who unconsciously say one thing and mean another. Very soon their pupils detect this, and amuse themselves by meaning one thing when they say another.

Let it not be supposed there is any intention here of condemning attempts to get Western views in front of Chinese minds. Not at all, for assuredly we have something to teach the East as well as a great deal to learn from it. But what seems distinctly reprehensible is to give them theories as facts and mere speculations as proved verities, therefore, all who wish China well should exercise the greatest care in making suggestions the logical and ultimate consequences of which are not altogether calculable, as it is quite certain that many demure-looking neophytes are capable of surprising chains of reasoning. The Germans have an old proverb to the effect that who says A, must also say B, and so on to the end of the alphabet. It is just as well to think of this while instructing Asiatics, for an innocent-looking proposition may lead to far from desirable conclusions.

By the time these conclusions have been reached it is almost too late to combat them, as we may see from a present example. During 1922 there was

formed a co-operative organization in China by a conference of Protestant missions and Churches from all parts of the country. "Its membership," said an account in *The Times*, "consisted of representatives elected by the principal Christian groups—Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, Baptist, Lutheran and others—and the officers of the Council were responsible to the Council as a whole for the carrying out of its policy."

This policy was apparently to unite all Protestant bodies for the furtherance of mission work in China, and included the help of native Christians for this worthy object. On the surface it was very promising, but lately, about five years or less after starting the National Christian Council, as it was called, some of the leading missionaries in China have had to issue a manifesto strongly condemning "the political activities" of the Council. They know from past experience how undesirable it is to connect the Christian religion with any political propaganda that might easily pass out of the control of the National Christian Council, and yet would seem to be endorsed by it.

Even legitimate propaganda may be liable to misconstruction, as in the case of a recent poster, which representatives of the Religious Tract Society severely criticized. This poster is issued in connection with an evangelistic campaign, and displayed symbolical pictures of cruelty, covetousness, lust and superstition, which were being attacked by unarmed Chinese Christians, carrying Bibles and waving banners inscribed: "Christlike life, enlightenment, truth, love." This was said to have

not the slightest anti-foreign significance, yet presumably the allegorical figures were foreign and not Chinese, while the attacking party was Chinese. It is not difficult to see how a poster like this could easily be warped into an exposure of foreign—probably British—wickedness, and it should always be remembered that it is not what missionaries teach but what the Chinese *learn* that is of the last importance.

Like Hamlet's "To be or not to be" that is the question. What do the Chinese think of it all? How do they judge the West? We have aspired to educate them, to guide them to better things, to "civilize" them. That being the case, Heaven help us, are we not responsible for the impressions they receive from our teachings and examples, both over in China and in the many lands from which we have descended upon them? Evil, alas, has been wrought, as well as good, and in the dreadful Day of Reckoning, it is for us to pay, and not for China!

CHAPTER XIII

The disillusionment of the Great War—The Chinese see the Christian nations slaughtering one another in the name of their common God—The aftermath of the war—Britain's breach of honour with Japan to please the U.S.A.—Its consequences throughout the Far East — The Russian Revolution and its Illuminist sympathizers in Europe add to the confusion worse confounded.

SLOWLY, surely and terribly the Day of Reckoning came. Up to 1914 the White Man could perhaps survey his Yellow, Black and Brown brothers with conscious superiority, and feel he had some justification for admonishing them at large.

He could address them somewhat as follows: he might have his faults, perhaps his institutions were not quite perfect, and his civilization possibly had some defects, but on the whole he was pulling this poor old planet together, and, in the words of the song, there was a good time coming—

"Wait a little longer!"

The rest of human kind, looking on at the visible achievements of the White Race, were almost persuaded to accept its supremacy as proved. The owner of the little kraal or hut gazed at the sky-scraper, the driver of a lumbering cart with its tired oxen felt far behind the railway and the automobile, the primitive boat with a sail and

only God's wind to move it along could scarcely be mentioned beside a great Atlantic liner.

The White Man had so much, and his humble brothers of other tints so little. The world seemed to belong to him; to all appearance he was making a goodly place of it, and was even in the mood to share some of his overflowing prosperity with less fortunate races. In fact, never since the dawn of the mournful history of humanity had things evolved to such a height of advancement as in the end of last century up to the summer of 1914. There was a world-wide feeling that everything seemed at last to be working together towards a magnificent consummation, when—well, do we not all know only too bitterly what happened? Ordinary language cannot begin to deal with the catastrophe, and one must borrow the imagery of the Apocalypse.

The Great War has been written about from the European and American standpoint until the subject has become almost threadbare. But other aspects and reactions have been less in evidence, and it seems somehow to have escaped us that, as Kipling puts it:

> "The world is wondrous large, seven seas from marge to marge,
> And it holds a vast o' various kinds of man."

In all our poetry and fiction, not to mention "serious" books, have we of the White Race not tacitly assumed every kind of superiority over the others and obligingly pointed out their many shortcomings as human beings? It seems likely that

they have resented our attitude, especially some of the Asiatics. Even while they may have envied our material prosperity and comfort, one cannot fathom their exact feelings when we openly thanked God, in our cheerful way, for creating us White instead of Black or Yellow. Apparently we also expected them to join in thanking Heaven for us and the beautiful spectacle we presented to their view!

Europe of the short memory boasted to Africa and Asia, whose great and ancient civilizations had flourished when we did not exist, and had occupied the stage of the world for thousands of years before the modern curtain rose a very few centuries ago on us and our performances. We complacently explained that something very like the Golden Age —the Millennium—had arrived, and in the best way, that is to say, scientifically. It had, therefore, not only come, but had come to stay, and to advance from one triumph to another.

This was a dear and beautiful mirage of a better era, and it looked wonderfully real and proximate until the Seven Angels "stood before God and to them were given seven trumpets." We did not notice this, we were so busy with our illusions. Then the first Angel sounded, and nearly the whole of Christendom went up in a flare of "hail and fire mingled with blood," and heathendom presently looked on at destruction, carnage and general wickedness that would be hard to match in the darkest of the Dark Ages.

The most staggering thought in this welter of horror was that the war must have been "implicit"

in our Christian and scientific civilization, because (as George Eliot once remarked) "the germs of our most exceptional actions lie within us." If the consequences and suffering had not been so awful, it might have seemed to us like an experiment in the hands of an absent-minded professor of chemistry, who essayed to make a great display, and in a moment of oblivion included a fatal component among his ingredients, so that, instead of the vaunted experiment turning out as he predicted, at the critical moment the destructive element exploded, blowing up himself and his audience.

We Christians have not yet decided what the fatal component was, and it is probably an equal mystery to the non-Christian onlookers, but the methods of the war—so damning to all our pretensions of civilization—were assuredly visible to them, and open to their judgment. Here we are thinking of the higher Asiatics and Africans, whose opinion is of value.

The first thing they saw was the monstrous collapse of honour and righteousness in Germany—a collapse that is one of the greatest calamities in history. She had stood for such advanced and splendid ideals, and they all crumbled away and vanished in a week when she struck the first blow at the regeneration of mankind, an insane and unnecessary blow that, alas! had to be returned.

Outside Christendom they saw it all, and did not miss any of the significance. With Europe like a shambles, and the very Churches dripping with blood, a few lines from a well-known missionary hymn might have seemed quite exquisite irony to

the so-called heathen. Let us revive its tender strain:

> "Can we, whose souls are lighted
> With wisdom from on high,
> Can we to men benighted,
> The lamp of life deny?"

Even a savage could grasp the idea, and how much more must the best brains of Asia have done so, scanning the above words to an accompaniment of bombs falling on women and children, poisoned gas burning out the lungs of men, great ships like the *Lusitania* sinking, and every conceivable devilment triumphing?

Surely we owed some explanation of, and apology for, this strange failure of our boasted civilization, especially to those whom we had admonished and reproved and described as "the heathen in his blindness" who bowed down to wood and stone. In view of the magnitude of the evil, we absolutely had to say something and find some excuse, or be put to everlasting shame. It should not be forgotten, in this connection, that the world outside Christendom actually made discriminations between the mad onslaught of the Central Empires and the tragic necessity of the Allies to conquer them. In so far as they were called upon for an opinion, the non-Christians gave it against the greater evil of insane aggression, which might suggest to us that their natural instincts were sound, seeing that, if anything, self-interest pointed the other way, as almost up to the end the issue of the struggle was doubtful. Yet the idea of the Mailed Fist did not appeal to these

onlookers, and they had the will and the courage to say the Everlasting Nay.

It is perhaps the most encouraging thing about the hideous upheaval that the instinctive and unargued verdict of the world should have been in favour of those who were desperately defending mankind against the apparently conquering forces on the attacking side. But at the same time, the war overthrew more than our enemies, seeing that it left modern civilization with its claims disproved before God and man. The boasts of Democracy, of Evolution, of Education—how do they look now? A great deal was promised in the name of liberty, equality and fraternity, so let us now reflect very humbly on what has come of this promise, and the painful object lesson it has afforded to Asiatics and others who were half inclined to believe in our protestations.

As for the Far East, from the very beginning the greatest of the Asiatic powers, Japan, joined in and performed a splendid service for the Allies in taking the German territory in Shantung, with the port of Tsingtao. From this point of vantage the German Navy could easily—with a few men-of-war like the *Emden*—have done incalculable damage in the China Seas, and even have dominated the Pacific. With German energy, their submarines and cruisers might have reached Tsingtao via Cape Horn, and linking up with Samoa and New Guinea, could possibly have created havoc.

Japan saved us and our Pacific dependencies, also our Dominions, from this menace. And what form did our gratitude take, for China to mark?

As soon as possible, after the war, we denounced the Anglo-Japanese Agreement, and we did so to please the United States of America, a power that not only had stayed out of the conflict as long as possible, but had been a most unfriendly neutral in the earlier stages. While Japan was gallantly safeguarding us and our Allies on the other side of the world, that remarkable idealist—the American President—was demanding that all kinds of "contraband" from the United States should be permitted to reach the enemy. He was sending our Government insistent Notes that they did not dare publish at the time, and would not care to publish now. These Notes would, indeed, make pretty reading as contrasted with the attitude of Japan!

America's greed and hostility embarrassed us when things were very dark and the issue most doubtful. This is well known and admitted by our Government. The Americans almost boasted of it, and Mr. Hendrick in his life of Walter Hines Page remarked calmly; "How long could Germany have survived without American food, American copper, American cotton, and the other indispensable supplies which, despite the British Navy, she was drawing in such vast quantities from the United States?"

Mr. Atherley Jones, K.C., in his book "Looking Back," quite confirms this American estimate. Writing of what he called "the ill-omened and ill-fated Declaration of London," he said:

"It was not ratified; but despite that, the

Government, when the Great War commenced, acted in pursuance of some of its most important provisions : it abstained from treating as contraband of war materials imported into Germany solely for military and naval purposes. Distinguished Admirals, including Sir Hedworth Meux and the late Admiral Montague, wrote to me that to this folly of our Government was largely due the prolongation of the war."

This inexplicable action of our Government cost us and our Allies millions of money, and (what is far more terrible to think of) many thousands of dear and splendid lives. The whole story is now open to the scrutiny of Japan and China, and is calculated to impress them with contempt for perfidious Albion. They can scarcely avoid the inference that our friendship is not to be relied on and not worth having, when we can so grovel to an enemy and sacrifice a faithful supporter.

In these and other ways the Great War and the peace that has followed have seriously diminished British prestige and tarnished our good name. We must add the spectacle of the immense empty territories owned by the White Man, mainly American and British, from which Asiatics are excluded. We cannot people or use these wildernesses ourselves, but we firmly bar out the rest of the world. It may, or may not, be the right policy, but it is certainly one which must breed anger against us, perhaps impotent now, yet, with the rapid shifting of all human values, possibly not powerless for ever.

Meantime, it is a curious commentary on our

idealism and the very lovely sentiments which we shed so freely—across the bars—to the excluded. It shows our faculty for self-deception that we fatuously expect these highly-intelligent races not to put two and two together, and it rather reminds one of the clumsy amateur conjurer who asked his wife pathetically " if she thought people would see through " one of his bungling tricks. " Not if they are nice people, dear! " she answered soothingly. This seems to be our hope *vis-à-vis* of these empty territories with their bars up: namely, that the Brown Brother and other excluded items will be " nice people " and pretend they cannot see through our evasions.

A vain hope, indeed! Why should they make excuses for us, or even accept our untenable indications? What shall it profit them? And just to round things off, as it were, and complete the ruin of our idealistic pretensions, there has been unfolded to " heathendom " the amazing panorama of the Russian Revolution and its aftermath—not forgetting our own attitude towards the authors and promoters of its barbarism. Most assuredly our eyes are holden, and it is a case of " ears have we, and we hear not," but unhappily though we contrive to be deaf and blind, the Chinese both see and hear.

When the Tsarist régime crashed in March, 1917, there was almost hysterical rejoicing in England, and the idea seemed to be that if the war had done nothing else, it had served humanity by setting Russia free. The loyal help that Nicholas II had given the Allies, and his staunch

adherence to our cause, were all forgotten and blotted out in a moment, and—with few exceptions—publicly and privately his downfall was hailed as "a great liberation." Since it is not agreeable now to remember this misplaced enthusiasm, "nice people" do not recall it, and talk of something else. But as a Russian sufferer said: "Though the living may be dumb, it is not so with the dead. For never will the dead be put to silence!"

These are things it is not well to forget or ignore, and the happenings in Russia since 1917 cannot be obliterated by refusing to admit them. Let us remind ourselves of some of these appalling occurrences which took place, be it noted, not hundreds of years ago, but yesterday, as it were. The record of them is open to everyone to examine, but their horror is so great that ordinary persons cannot bear even to read about them. People go farther, unfortunately, and from sheer revulsion against such diabolical wickedness, try to assume that it never happened. And yet it did!

At first the Revolution progressed in the usual way of joy and peace, but very soon, also as usual, this phase passed, and after some months of moderate disturbance and suspense the counter-Revolution of October, 1917, took place. That event blew all joy, peace, moderation and liberty to tatters, and ushered in an era of atrocities so revolting as to be almost incredible. There was organized the Extraordinary Commission or Chrezvychainaya Komissia, generally shortened to the Che-Ka. This was lauded by the notorious Zinoviev, who said: "The Che-Ka is the pride

and joy of the Communist Party." It was also called "at least the best that Soviet institutions can evolve."

Any account of its activities taken from Tsarist sources might seem prejudiced, and open to suspicions of over-statement, so it is more satisfactory to rely upon the description given by a Socialist like Sergey Petrovich Melgounov, a chief organizer of the party known as the "People's Socialists." This movement based itself "upon the common interests of individuals as individual personalities rather than upon class warfare; upon attainment of realities, as occasion should serve, rather than upon Utopian ideas; upon evolution rather than upon political upheavals." It was untiring in defence of the interests of State and People, with a truly democratic outlook, and had "drawn to itself all that was best in the Russian intelligentsia." Mr. Melgounov was Vice-President of the party's central committee, and cannot be suspected of any reactionary sympathies, but quite the reverse, so that his testimony is not biased against democracy and reform.

What a terrible story he has to tell! He was in Russia during the first five years of the Bolshevist régime, from 1917 to October, 1922, when he managed to escape. He begins his book, "The Red Terror," with an account of how certain hostages fared under the Che-Ka of Petrograd, when one of its leading members, Uritsky, was assassinated in August, 1918, by a Socialist ex-student. This student asserted that he killed Uritsky solely of his own will; in no case in obedience

to orders from any political party. About the same time Madame Kaplan tried to assassinate Lenin, and the Che-Ka's *Weekly* of October 20th reported that as reprisals for these isolated crimes five hundred hostages were shot! Three hundred were shot in Moscow, and in many cases the condemned were lashed together with barbed wire before being executed. Petrograd and Moscow were not the only places where revenge was taken for the attack on Lenin, and hundreds of victims right across Soviet Russia were shot in reprisals.

Several thousand persons were seized as so-called hostages and murdered, though they had no possible connection with the Uritsky and Lenin affairs, and everywhere on any pretext this system prevailed, assuming "such ghastly dimensions," said Mr. Melgounov, "as to throw in the shade any similar phenomenon known to history." Prince Peter Kropotkin, "old, infirm, and remote from life," remonstrated. He died before the worst enormities were committed on the plea of "blood for blood." The British Consul in Moscow reported on November 10th, 1918, that the Bolshevists had "established the odious practice of hostage seizure. Nay, worse; they have taken to striking at their political opponents through those opponents' womenkind." Parents were shot with their children, and children were shot in their parents' presence. And under a maniac named Kedrov, batches of "young spies" were shot, that is to say, children between the ages of eight and fourteen.

For propaganda purpose the Bolshevists began

their rule by pretending to abolish the death penalty, but as Mr. Melgounov dryly remarked, "it was not long before that penalty came into its own again." The right of pronouncing death sentences was not confined to the central authorities, for local revolutionary committees also condemned persons to death. Lenin is reported to have said: "Even if ninety per cent. of the people perish, what matter if the other ten per cent. live to see revolution become universal?"

Another writer named Schwartz proclaimed the Red Terror in lofty accents, and in reading what are called the "Blood Statistics," one can get an idea of how the Soviet enforced "the dictatorship of the proletariat." As Latzis put it in an article published on November 1st, 1918:

"We are not warring against individual *bourgeois*. We are out to destroy the *bourgeoisie* as a class." When a *bourgeois* was under examination, it was not even necessary to accuse him of opposing the Soviet Government, but simply to ask three questions: "To what class does the accused belong?" "What is his origin?" "Describe his upbringing, education and profession." He added that "Solely in accordance with the answers to these three questions should his fate be decided. For this is what the 'Red Terror' means, and what it implies."

Mr. Melgounov comments on this that "fully to grasp the meaning of the Red Terror, we must first determine the number of its victims." This is not easy, but some idea can be got by considering the vast area of the slaughter, and the statistics

given by the Che-Ka to begin with, limited and understated though these were. Wherever the Bolshevists made their appearance, " some tens, or even hundreds, of executions followed; executions which no trial whatever had preceded."

One instance of horror may be recalled: the reprisals for a strike in Astrakhan in March, 1919, where thousands of workers were shot and drowned. Then the *bourgeoisie* were decimated, and anyone owning any sort of property, a house or a shop or fishery, was executed, until by March 15th not a dwelling in the town was not mourning a father, a husband or a brother, while some families had lost every male. Taking in Turkestan, as well as Soviet Russia, there was an estimate of 138,000 as the number of persons shot up to March 20th, 1919.

In 1920 Latzis published no " Blood Statistics," and Mr. Melgounov, being in a Bolshevist gaol, could not continue his card-index, but he records another official " abolition " of capital punishment, temporary as usual, and also describes the hideous mockery of the amnesties granted, and the awful massacres on " pre-amnesty " nights. Just before the Revolution's third anniversary in October, 1920, so many victims were shot in the Butyrka gaol, Moscow, that it was difficult to get them all to the Kalomikov burial ground. In every case they were shot with a revolver, and while this went on at Moscow " similar things were happening in the Provinces."

The story of what took place up north, and also as far away south as Odessa, is incredible, but these horrors were almost outdone at the

Crimea, when for months the slaughter continued, and "a nightly rattle of machine-guns was heard. The first night alone saw thousands of victims fall —1,800 in Simferopol, 420 in Theodosia, 1,300 in Kertch, and so forth." At last they had "difficulties" in dealing with such numbers—meaning that in the crowd some victims were overlooked and could escape—so "it became necessary to shoot smaller parties at a time, and to divide the nightly quotas into two shifts each—Theodosia, for example, making the two half-quotas each include 60, or a total of 120 to a night."

Disposing of these corpses was "awkward"; at first they were dumped into the ancient Genoese wells, but the wells presently became choked, and then the victims had to be marched out into the country and made to dig huge graves in front of which they were executed at the fall of twilight. "As they were shot they fell forward in layers. And as they fell forward their own layer of quivering bodies speedily became covered with the following layer; and so on until the graves filled to the margin. Many were buried alive."

Others were taken out to sea and drowned, and at Yalta and Sevastopol patients were carried from the hospitals and shot. These were not only ex-officers, but "common soldiers, doctors, nurses, teachers, railway men, priests and peasants." In fact, at Balaklava and Sevastopol the greatest number of executions took place, and the Che-Kas are said to have shot a joint total of 29,000 persons.

Through 1921 the Terror in the Crimea continued, on a perfectly absurd plea of stamping out

conspiracies. "Upon the Crimea followed Siberia," says this terrible record, "and, upon Siberia, Georgia." Matters do not seem to have improved in the following years, and up to about 1924 the table of classified totals of the executions, published in *The Scotsman*, Edinburgh, by Professor Sarolea, made out these truly staggering figures:

"Bishops, 28; ecclesiastics, 1,219; professors and teachers, 6,000; medical men, 9,000; naval and military officers, 54,000; military men of the ranks, 260,000; police officials, 70,000; intellectuals and members of the professional classes, 355,250; industrial workers, 193,290; peasants, 815,000."

The total is rather over one million and a half, and even if these victims had been shot or murdered out of hand it would, in all conscience, have been sufficiently abhorrent. But worse remains behind, for in the majority of cases torture was added to the death penalty, torture of every ingenuity, mental and physical. As is recorded by one writer with ghastly dryness: "Each Che-Ka seems to have had its speciality in torture."

These varieties included scalpings, hand flayings, branding, sawing the victim's bones apart, impaling, burning at the stake, crucifying, stoning to death, and chaining officers to planks to push them slowly, very slowly, into furnaces. The prisons were places of terrible ordeals, owing to the conditions of overcrowding, bad food and lack of all sanitary arrangements, and not only were men most horribly maltreated, but women and children were shown no mercy. The mere recital of their

agonies is almost insupportable, and one can only trust in the old belief that—earth has no wounds that Heaven cannot heal.

These terrible facts are, of course, known all over Asia, and probably have lost nothing on their travels. What a picture of Western superiority! And in addition to the sufferings of Russia, we have afforded other races a spectacle of our most strange apathy concerning these sufferings. Our press has recorded Bolshevist atrocities from time to time, but with "detachment"; our *intelligentsia* have been quite "scientific" about the whole affair, and eminent philosophers emit sentiments like the following:

"All that is necessary for development has been given us; but the human will is slow to learn, and it cannot be hurried. Acceptance of our privileges must rest with ourselves. The Universe has been patient in producing us, in allowing time for our free, uncompelled ascent; and patient it will continue still, while we blunder and obstruct and oppose all the agencies that are working for one good."

Further on we are told that: "Signs of higher potencies are never lacking; signs of loftiness are apparent even in mean surroundings; the long labour of preparation of the planet is not to be thrown away. Millions of years before man appeared there were signs of his coming; and still there are signs and indications, to those whose eyes are opened, of a lofty future for the race, in ways as yet undreamt of."

These cheering remarks were published after the Red Terror, and though this cataclysm was not

mentioned in the book it seemed to inspire some of the reflections, such as: "Human thought is not revolutionized without a struggle; and the violence of the conflict is a measure of the thoroughness of the revolution." Again: "Man was to acquire the gift of freedom, and to exercise it consciously. He was to know that he could obey or disobey; that he could do right or could do wrong."

The Churches were agitated to a rather greater extent, and the Pope pleaded for some ecclesiastics, but unhappily many English clergymen—in face of Bolshevist methods—were, and are, willing to call themselves Socialists, and about seven hundred ministers of the Church of England and the Episcopal Church of Scotland presented a memorial congratulating Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in March, 1923—a disquieting portent in view of the Illuminist idea of enlisting the clergy in the work of world-revolution.

The Labour Party were even more "detached" from the sufferings of the Russians, and displayed what Mrs. Nesta Webster called "callous indifference" towards the crimes of the Bolshevists. Appeals from their persecuted fellow-Socialists in Russia had so little effect that—to take one example—Mr. Lansbury wrote in the *Daily Herald* of March 18th, 1920: "Whatever their faults, the Communist leaders of Russia have hitched their wagon to a star—the star of love, brotherhood, comradeship." Shade of Emerson!

Chinese observers of our politics might consider this attitude of the Labour Party as a natural result of their subversive views, but what can they possibly

make of the equal, if not greater, complaisance of the political Party that is supposed to stand for anti-revolutionary ideas? It is open to them to think that the Conservatives either have no principles at all, or are in some way intimidated by the forces of revolution, seeing that the Communist representatives of the Soviet in England were granted diplomatic status, and long tolerated. We cannot expect the Chinese to fathom the inwardness of all this, when we are far from understanding it ourselves, but, nevertheless, they may read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the lesson it holds for them.

CHAPTER XIV

China and the nations—Dr. Sun Yat-sen's "Three Peoples' Doctrine" as explained by his chosen successor, Mr. Wong Ching-wai—The campaign against so-called Imperialism—The Russian Revolution claimed as a powerful help for China, with the practical result of disintegration and bloodshed all over China—Still, in the long run, the Chinese will reassert the principles of peace and commerce—The spread of the Student Christian Movement in China a hopeful sign.

MASSING all these facts and tendencies together, can we reasonably wonder at the unhappy turn which "Nationalism" in China has recently taken, or the delusions of certain students and doctrinaires about liberty and its clash with what they rave against as "Imperialism"? This last is more especially associated in their minds with the British Empire, and they have acquired some fine stout fallacies about it, mostly in the United States. It is getting to be notorious, as Sir Auckland Geddes pointed out recently, that Chinese students in America are almost invariably anti-British, having imbibed amazing ideas of England's tyranny from the school histories in God's Own Country.

All the old twice-told tales of our supposed wickedness in the seventeen-seventies and eighties are carefully passed on to young Chinese, with harrowing details of outrages that never happened, or at least are greatly multiplied and exaggerated.

The implication is also conveyed that as England was then, so she remains to this day, brutal, grasping, cowardly and unscrupulous. Her will to scalp poor innocent Americans survives unchanged, only the power is lacking! Uncle Sam has the upper hand now, and has beaten this presumptuous and degraded people who once rode rough-shod over him. He fired the shot heard round the world!

By itself this sort of brag would do little harm, but unfortunately it fits in with the Illuminism and Internationalism promulgated by the Bolshevists, and in the half-baked minds of denationalized Orientals, wild hopes and theories are linked to a programme of preliminary destruction on the best—or worst—revolutionary lines to usher in the Golden Age.

A good deal of this frothy stuff that is absolutely alien from the finest traditions and most stable philosophy of China can be studied in some recent writings by native enthusiasts, and one reads with a sort of patient consternation all the old follies dressed up again in new settings. One book on International Problems may be taken as an average specimen of this vapouring. It begins with a brief summary of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's "Three Peoples' Doctrine" in order to reveal the aims of the Kuo Min Tang, or People's National Party.

"The Three Peoples' Doctrine, which Dr. Sun elaborates, is a faith and a movement," we are told. "It aims at bringing about a national equality outside the state ('of the people'), a political equality in the state ('by the people') and an

economic equality corresponding to Lincoln's 'for the people.'"

National equality meant that Dr. Sun desired to develop a nationalism leading to internationalism, and avoiding imperialism. Political equality meant establishing an elaborate system of government "which requires a constitutional separation of five powers, the executive, the legislative, the judicial, the inquisitive, and the examinational," while granting to the people "four rights, electoral, recall, referendum, and initiation."

"With regard to economic equality," our exponent goes on, "Dr. Sun advocated two main principles: control of capital and nationalization of the surplus value of land."

It is carefully pointed out that this is not Socialism or any "ism" known to the West, for its aim is to "encourage private enterprise in all ways, exercising, in return, a final control where unrestrained individualism is against the public interest." This is somewhat vague, but seems to suggest the principle of bees in a hive—to encourage them to go out individually and collect honey, and then take the comb from them and thus exercise "a final control." Bees may be run on these lines, but Chinese human nature will certainly defeat the idea when it is applied to the sturdy individualists of that great country.

However, that is a purely domestic concern, and what we may look at with more interest is the international policy outlined by the doctrinaire successors of Sun Yat-sen. They claim to speak in his name, and to carry on his propaganda, and

represent him as the hero of modern China—since his death. In other words, he who was a mere figurehead has become a myth. I knew him personally and formed certain opinions of him, but I prefer to give an estimate of him in 1912 from a prominent Chinese official, of Republican sympathies, who said:

"Sun is a good man, and has some ideas, but he has no grit. Yuan Shih-Kai is not such a good man, but he has grit and he can govern. Sun cannot govern; what he is best suited for is to stand in a group of reformers and be photographed."

In fact, it was the opinion of this official, and of other Chinese that Sun owed his position mainly to his romantic adventures in the Chinese Legation at London, when he was captured and got a message out to Sir James Cantlie which secured his release under the limelight of the whole world. This happy advertisement gave him a personal prominence, otherwise, according to his own countrymen, he would have been merely one of the revolutionaries and not necessarily the leading one. In his lifetime he was generally either stirring up trouble, or running away, and he certainly made very little of his great opportunity when he arrived at Nanking in 1912, to take control, accompanied, among others, by that quaint little American, Homer Lea, self-dubbed "General," who was soon thrown over and seemed to die of frustrated glory. But if the living Sun had weak points, the dead hero is represented as invincible, and it is perhaps again a case as Pirandello puts it, "That's the Truth (if you believe it is)."

Dr. Sun's chosen successor is Mr. Wong Ching-wai, and he has gathered up a number of principles to guide and dominate China's international policy, if the Nationalists win and can put their ideas into practice. Mr. Wong is said to be tall, cultured, quick in humour, exceptionally endowed, even for a Chinese, with intuition, and to impress people with his honesty, determination, and the great reserve of mental power in his personality. "He is an idealist, celebrated for the austerity of his life, and for the energy of spirit which constantly outwears his health and has temporarily broken it. He is a famous orator."

It is to be hoped that Mr. Wong not only means well by his country, but will do well. Yet the above description of him rather reminds an historical student of the familiar type of agitator who, with a high personal character and the noblest motives, starts a revolution of which he soon loses control and which automatically develops into a Reign of Terror.

In order to win favour for their new Internationalism, the Kuo Min Tang are inflaming native opinion somewhat one-sidedly and prematurely against what they call Imperialism. Their pronouncements and arguments are well worth examining, and in some aspects win both the sympathy and the assent of foreigners who, like myself, admire, understand and esteem what is best in China. But a great deal of their propaganda is not only negatively un-Chinese, it is actually more anti-Chinese than anti-foreign, being a hash of Western Socialism, Jacobinism and other doctrinaire

stuff that is quite alien to the fundamental principles of Chinese ethics and modes of government.

To begin with, Imperialism is described as economic invasion, and a term "used to indicate a type of policy, and the methods resulting therefrom; not a form of national constitution." It is defined as "The utilization by any people of its political and military ascendancy, for subjecting to its economic encroachment some foreign country or territory or race."

Its effects are said to have been up to the present to extinguish or enslave three and a half of the five great races of mankind and to change the colour of three and a half of the five continents. The Red Indians of America, the Negroes of Africa, the Brown Race in Australia, the Yellow Race in Central and Western Asia have been "dominated." "Their death-rate is increasing, their birth-rate declining. Cruelty and death have ever been their lot at the hands of the European; but the mortal brutality of gun and bayonet was merciful beside the cruel death imposed by economic penetration, whose continuous pressure at last renders life, even a precarious life, impossible for the subject peoples."

This, broadly speaking, is three parts false and misleading, and does not redound to the credit of the Kuo Min Tang. It may be that fanaticism and a sort of monomania blind them to facts, but the whole matter is on record and can be investigated, when it will be found that no "cruel deaths" have ever been imposed by "economic penetration," and that no races or peoples have been enslaved or extinguished by its "continuous pressure."

Making all the allowance one can for patriotic obsession, it is difficult to avoid suspecting that these leaders of the Society are quite aware of the facts, yet are stirring up revolt by vaguely exciting the population about some imagined danger with rhetorical appeal like this: "All peoples, who desire emancipation from servitude and deliverance from death must fight against Imperialism. There is no choice." These leaders cannot be altogether acquitted of a conspiracy to mislead their own countrymen for purposes not quite on the surface, otherwise they would scarcely rant about "emancipation from servitude and deliverance from death" when they know perfectly well that they could not produce the smallest evidence as to the dangers of either owing to economic penetration, as they call it, by foreign nations.

Even the foreign wars with China have been far less destructive of life than their own internal revolts, and more Chinese were killed by the Tai Ping—or Great Peace—than in all the foreign campaigns put together. But it is quite true that China has serious grievances, and the time is coming to put matters straight. It is arguable as to whether foreign nations had a right to thrust themselves upon what used to be the Celestial Empire, or Middle Kingdom. The Chinese are presumably the best judges of their own affairs, and they did not want any of us, yielding only to the force of arms when we persisted in "opening them up." At the same time it is utterly untrue and absurd to assert that Imperialism has driven China "along the common road that leads to extinction or enslavement."

Neither is it true that "China's sovereign rights cannot be exercised on Chinese territory," and it is hardly more accurate at present to say: "If foreigners would accept China's sovereignty, they could, without doing harm to China, travel and trade in China freely." But all who wish China well must hope that it soon will be accurate. However, one thing is certain, that any recognition of China's sovereignty will be embittered and delayed by the propagation of this violent ill will. China's case is a good one, but only if accompanied by a display of the power and the will to act moderately and fairly in a very painful tangle.

Just as the foreign nations are beginning to recognize the equity—in the abstract—of China's demands and contentions, it is a sad thing that these *intelligentsia* of the Kuo Min Tang should try to inflame native opinion against Britain in particular, and incite to outrages which only complicate matters. There is a time for all things, and this in China's best interests is not a time for violence, nor is it a time for the development of a most sinister nationalism inspired by hate of all the world.

To read and mark a book like the one we are considering is almost to despair of so-called enlightenment and education. Where they could help their country these fanatical propagandists seem bent on injuring it more than any foreign aggression has ever done, or ever could do. And it is not altogether hard to trace the source of their ill-guided ideas. After rehearsing all their wrongs—some real, some imaginary, and others sentimental—these leaders let a streak of light fall on

their intentions by some comments on the Russian Revolution.

"Whilst the struggle between Imperialism and the People's Revolutionary movement was becoming acute, there suddenly appeared a most powerful help for China. This was the Russian Revolution," says our author exultantly, and after explaining that no Power in former times encroached more than Russia he goes on: "But it was not until 1917 that the Russian Revolution shattered the Tsarist régime. . . . As soon as the Revolution was secure, the Russians advanced demanding justice for the races victimized and downtrodden by Imperialism throughout the world, in an effort to strengthen their resistance, deliver them from repression, and restore to them an equal and free status. These aims Russia has repeatedly expressed with regard to China."

After formulating an Agreement that abrogated the Unequal Treaties, and so on, it is announced that the Union of Soviet Republics had only one reason for doing this. "They desired to carry their revolutionary design to a completion both definite and unmistakable." Of the other nations it is said: "Robbers and cut-purses always band together, if they mean to be brigands. Did Russian desire to join the brigand band, she would, of course, be welcomed by the others. Because she does not join them, the other Powers hate her to their marrow."

All critics of this new and heavenly Russia are "fools who swarm with fools," and this writer goes on to advocate the slogan of "Down with

Imperialism." The people in every country desire to crush Imperialism, but less strongly than the Chinese do. They would gladly welcome Chinese co-operation in this great work, and the destruction of Imperialist governments would benefit all the world. "To unite, in their overthrow, the strength of the Chinese people with the strength of the peoples of all the world is not impossible."

International Law is strongly reprobated. "It is an instrument for securing the privileges obtained from the weak by the powerful nations. . . . A wolf and a lamb talking justice." Yet, apparently, to International Law the Kuo Min Tang would appeal, or perhaps to World Revolution in its place, with a programme of reform. China must resume her lost territories, and her vassals, like Korea and Annam, must be restored to independence, when they shall be free to decide the question of federation with China. All concessions and territories, railways, and so on, must be regained. All spheres of foreign influence must be abolished, and the right of navigation on China's Inland Waters must be withdrawn. Extra territorial rights must be ended, and tariff autonomy regained, while foreign debts will be reviewed, and a discrimination "between those which justly demand payment, and those which do not."

"When these resolutions are proclaimed, let us shout aloud:

"'Away with the Unequal Treaties.'

"'Destruction to Imperialism.'

"'Success to the Chinese People's Revolution.'

"'Long live the Independence, Equality, and Freedom of the Chinese Republic.'"

It is noteworthy that in all this pleading there is not one word to acknowledge what the Western nations have done for China, either in trade, medicine, science, literature or religion. To read the effusion anyone might imagine that Britain especially had done nothing but oppress, starve and try to exterminate the Chinese. For example, the only reference to Christianity is as follows:

"Foreigners in China, under the profession of preaching the Gospel, have protected the Chinese Christians in the courts of law, and encouraged them to sue, and to victimize and hinder good people. The Chinese legal authorities cannot control them."

It is a case of special pleading, of course, and not one word in favour of the foreigner is allowed, which decidedly weakens the appeal of the Kuo Min Tang, and disqualifies the author of the book.

As in all our other attempts to see the Chinese point of view, it is rather hard to judge how this vehement revolutionary stuff will strike the people to whom its appeal is addressed, but "on known form," as it were, one has great confidence in the shrewdness and quiet commonsense of the bulk of the population, high and low, and would not expect the extremists to make much permanent impression. The Chinese may be trusted in the long run (and even in the short run) to prefer peace and commerce to the red terrors and ruin of revolution.

Representing the ordinary foreign merchant as a bandit to be robbed and an assassin to be crushed

will not deceive or excite solid Chinese opinion, but there is a danger of certain elements of the people being roused and misled by a skilful mixture of real and fancied wrongs, and here our responsibility comes in. How far have we contributed to the present troubles? We must judge ourselves before we venture to weigh China in the balance.

To some of these fierce indictments against us we, alas! have to plead guilty, but as it is impossible to retreat entirely it seems that we must hold on, though in truth and in deed we are in a most awkward position. With the best intentions we have apparently done much harm, and in the day of trial a great deal of our work has gone down, built on sand. "The rain descended, and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

We have erred not only in what we have given China, but perhaps also in what we have taken away. One of the most ominous things to happen, came to pass lately in Hankow. These advanced students, clamouring for the Independence, Equality and Freedom of the Chinese Republic, trampled under foot the portrait of Confucius!

But the situation—bad as it is—still leaves room for wider hoping, and one of the most encouraging signs, because founded on the Rock of Ages and the great Redeemer of the World, is the Student Christian Movement commenced some twenty-five years ago for the express purpose of presenting the challenge of Christ to the student world. The reaction to this movement in China is well described in the first and second series of a noteworthy book

entitled "China To-day Through Chinese Eyes," written by men of light and leading in the modern Chinese Christian world.

We forbear to analyse or criticize it here. Suffice to say that such a propaganda with its insistence on spirituality as the supreme test of all upward efforts is full of good augury for the troubled world—East and West—in which the human race has to struggle on to-day.

L'ENVOI

FORTUNATELY this is a book to which one need not write Finis!

China is very old, but she is also marvellously young, and every day and hour may shift the scene towards a happier issue for her and for us. Let us hope and work for this.

Meantime these pages are a humble attempt to suggest very briefly the atmosphere of the great Chinese traditions in philosophy, ethics and religion that have endured for three thousand years, and should never be lost sight of by the presumption of uninstructed Occidentals. From their own standpoint, and with justifiable steadiness therein, the Chinese weigh us and our religious propaganda, and they have every right to do so, and to examine what we give before they receive it.

All through these pages I have repeatedly explained that the views therein recorded and described are in no sense my own. I have aimed at showing only a mirror in which to reflect a tangled case as impartially as may be. Facts have been collected and set down accurately to the best of my ability, and I must here make most grateful acknowledgment to the many authors of books

consulted, and especially to Dr. Lionel Giles of the British Museum, whose scholarly translations of the classics of Lao Tzu, Confucius and Chuang Tzu place Chinese thought very accessibly before British readers. (The Wisdom of the East Series. John Murray.) He and the Publisher have very kindly permitted me to quote from these works. I am also much indebted to Mr. Chalmers Werner of His Britannic Majesty's Consular Service in China (retired) whose book "China of the Chinese" is quite the best résumé of the subject in compact form, and to the late Alexander Michie. My thanks are also due to Mr. Ernest H. Hayes for permission to use freely his excellent "Life of Robert Morrison," a most eloquent and touching picture of the man and his mission.

As Morrison's character and career were so remarkable, and also in view of the fact that he was the Pioneer of Protestant missionaries in China, it has seemed worth while to consider his achievements at some length.

To-day, as in the past, it is not a simple matter to reconcile the East and the West. That in the future this reconciliation is not impossible will, I hope, be the inference of any who are kind enough to read this humble "Attempt at Explanation."

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