

coupled with present internal disturbances in the czar's domain, contains its lesson.

As early as 1901 a commission was appointed to examine and report on all proposed measures affecting the organization and administration of the government, and in 1904 a general assembly of the ministers of the principal boards was provided for. While these newly created bodies have no legislative power, they indicate the trend toward a more popular government. The constitution, when adopted, as it ultimately will be, will inaugurate a parliamentary system. There is, therefore, a distinct advance along governmental lines, and this in itself means much for China and for the outside world.

A revision of the criminal code is also being perfected. The Hon. Wu Ting Fang, former minister to the United States and now vice-president of the board of foreign affairs, has been made a member of the board of punishments. He and Shen Chia Pen, the vice-president of the board of punishments, have by imperial decree been entrusted with the revision and codifying of the laws of China. They have established a bureau with a staff of secretaries and translators and have spent two years in the examination of the civil and criminal codes of the different countries in order to select laws which are applicable to the conditions existing in China. Ex-Minister Wu has taken a deep interest in this subject and kindly furnished me with the following list of reforms to which the imperial sanction has been secured.

1. Ling Chi, slow death by slicing to pieces, has been abolished. It was the punishment formerly prescribed for one found guilty of paricide, high treason, wilful murder of husband (the murder of husband by wife was according to Chinese law a much graver offense than the murder of wife by husband.)

2. The heads of criminals were formerly exposed to the public after execution. This has also been abolished.

3. The beheading of a corpse of a criminal who died before execution, is no longer permitted.

4. According to the old law, parents, relatives and friends of one convicted of serious crimes were subject to punishment; now the punishment is confined to the guilty party. (While the practice of including innocent relatives in the sentence seems barbarous in the extreme, it was, after all, not so different in principle from the practice of the western nations which in times of war inflict punishment indiscriminately upon innocent and guilty alike.)

5. The branding of criminals has been abandoned.

6. Corporal punishment of criminals is also abolished.

7. The torturing of accused persons during trial, except where the accused is charged with murder, and where the evidence of guilt is clear, has also been abolished. According to the Chinese law a person convicted of murder cannot be put to death until he confesses, and torture has been retained in a case of this kind as a means of compelling confession when the guilt has been otherwise established, but Mr. Wu expresses the hope that torture in such cases will be abolished in the near future.

The revision commission has also succeeded in obtaining an imperial decree ordering the construction of more modern prisons, requiring the inspection of prisoners and compelling humane treatment. Formerly relief from cruel treatment could only be secured by paying the official in charge.

The commission is now working upon a code of procedure and intends among other things the recommendation of a system of trial by jury, the admission of lawyers to practice in the courts and the relieving of prisoners and witnesses from the humiliating practice of kneeling in court.

In order to secure competent judges and lawyers for the carrying out of the new code, the commission have obtained the sanction of the government for the establishment of a law school at Peking (the site has already been purchased), and the high schools and colleges of the various provinces have been instructed to add law to the curriculum of their studies.

Minister Wu called attention to other reforms that have been introduced into China within the last few years, among which may be mentioned the construction of railways, the establishment of a government board of commerce, the formation of a police force, municipal and provincial, the promulgation of incorporation laws and the establishment of mints.

At first the railroads were built by concessions issued to foreign companies, but because of the constant difficulties which grew out of such concessions, there is a growing sentiment in

favor of government railroads. It was in the pursuance of this policy that the government acquired the rights of the American company which was projecting a road from Hankow to Canton. Some of the Americans residing in China have expressed regret that this road should have passed out of American hands, but I am satisfied that it is better for the United States that China should own the road than that it should be in the hands of foreigners or even in the hands of Americans. It would be impossible to operate the road without more or less friction which would involve the countries in diplomatic controversies. If China operates the road herself, we will have equal rights with foreigners without the risks involved in private ownership. And, speaking of roads, the city of Peking is passing through an era of street improvement. Some eleven miles of pavement has been laid within three years, and concrete sidewalks are making their appearance.

The finances of China have been in a miserable condition. Cash is the money in common use, and these brass coins, running about one thousand to the dollar, are too heavy for any excepting the smallest transactions. Think of doing business with money so heavy that you must carry a hundred pounds of money to make a ten dollar purchase. Some complained of silver in the United States because of its weight, but the silver certificates completely answered this argument, for a silver certificate is as convenient as a gold certificate and more convenient than gold coin; but in China they had no paper substitute. The monetary unit is called a tael and, if coined, would weigh about one and one-third times the Mexican dollar, but no coins of this denomination are in circulation. The Mexican dollar is in common use, and in some of the provinces there are fractional silver coins. But the Mexican dollar is so often counterfeited that it is customary to test each coin as it passes from hand to hand. I secured one of the "three piece dollars" as they are called. These are made by sawing a thin disc from each side of the dollar; the silver is then removed from the center and the cavity filled with lead and the two faces soldered on. The work is done so skillfully that the counterfeit can only be detected by the ring. Several of the banks issue paper notes payable in Mexican dollars, but they are discounted in the various cities so that a traveler's currency is always undergoing a shave. The government has decided to establish a uniform system of currency consisting of gold, silver and copper, the silver tael to remain the unit.

Patent laws and trade mark laws are now being prepared; in fact, China is being quickened in many ways by the increasing knowledge which she is acquiring the ways of western civilization. They are considering a change in the alphabet and characters in order that the language may be more easily learned.

I have already referred to the fact that China has until recently been practically without newspapers. There is no better evidence of the progress which China is making than is to be found in the increase in the number of her newspapers. While the circulation of these papers is small as compared with the circulation of similar papers in the United States and Japan, still the growth is constant and the colloquial dialect sometimes employed bring the news and editorial pages within the comprehension of those who cannot read books. Many of these newspapers are published in the interest of reforms. One of the papers started at Hong Kong opposes the examination system by which civil officials were selected, the foot-binding custom and the habit of wearing the queue. The editor cut off his own queue as an example and is now encouraged by the fact that the soldiers are gradually adopting a like course. He is also able to note progress in the matter of foot-binding. An imperial edict has been issued exhorting the people to abandon the practice, and numerous societies are engaged in spreading literature upon this subject.

But more important still is the recent abolition of the examinations. This is a revolution that has shaken the ancient empire to its foundation, for the examination system not only affected the government, but moulded the educational system as well. In the larger cities elaborate provisions were made for these examinations, in some places from ten to fifteen thousand stalls being constructed. These stalls were about three feet wide by six deep and high enough to permit the student to stand erect. The only furniture was a board for a seat and another for a desk. At a given hour the students entered these stalls, were given their themes and kept in their stalls without communication until their

tasks were finished. Now the stalls stand idle and the officials are chosen from the graduates of the newly established schools.

We visited the examination stalls at Peking and found them in ruins. They had been occupied by the Boxers in 1900 and the rafters were torn out and used for fuel. After the roofs had fallen in, the unprotected walls rapidly crumbled.

The conservatives have been very much incensed by the abandonment of the examinations, but the reformers regard it as a long step in the right direction.

On every hand one sees signs of intellectual development. As stated in another article, the private school was for centuries the only source from which instruction in books could be gained. Now a complete system of schools is being established consisting of primary, middle and high schools, with colleges in the larger cities. Viceroy Yuan Shih Kai, who presides over the district in which Peking is situated, and whom through the courtesy of Minister Rockhill I had an opportunity to meet, informed me that he had established three thousand schools within his jurisdiction within the past four years. The viceroy is the successor of Li Hung Chang and is considered the most influential man in the empire. He is about forty-six years old and impresses one as a man of great mental vigor and alertness. He seems to take a deep interest in the reforms now being worked out and is cordial in his treatment of Americans.

Consul General Rodgers of Shanghai happened to be in Nanking during our visit there, and we paid our respects to Viceroy Chou Fu. This viceroy is quite old and feeble but he is grappling with the new problems and is a patron of education. He has established one thousand schools during the last few years and estimated the number of Chinese students in Japan at this time at five thousand.

At Shanghai there is a government university, the buildings of which cost two hundred and ten thousand dollars. We learned that in some places Buddhist temples were being converted into schools; that girls' schools are already being provided for. This is even a greater evidence of progress than the opening of schools for boys, because of the inferior position which woman has occupied in the celestial empire.

Besides the government schools there are numerous missionary schools in which instruction is given to both boys and girls. We visited some of these schools at Peking, Nanking and Shanghai, and found the instructors encouraged by the attendance and the interest taken. A number of Americans, and a still larger number of Japanese, are teaching in the government schools.

But enough has been said to indicate the regeneration through which the Flowery Kingdom is passing. What will be the effect of the change upon the world? Who is wise enough to peer into the future and outline the record of the next century? Japan furnishes the nearest parallel. Compare the Japan of fifty years ago with the Japan of today and some conception can be formed of China fifty years hence. As Japan's commerce increased, so is China's commerce increasing; as Japan sent statesmen abroad to investigate the methods of other governments, so China is now sending inquirers abroad; as Japan turned her attention to schools and colleges, so China is learning the advantage of universal education; as Japanese students journeyed into distant lands in search of knowledge, so Chinese students are in increasing numbers studying in foreign colleges. Even in the enlargement and training of her army she is patterning after Japan and employing Japanese drill masters.

It need not be thought strange that there is an anti-foreign sentiment in China. Was there not an anti-foreign sentiment in Japan forty years ago? The Shimonoseki affair was not unlike the Boxer trouble, except that it was less fatal to life, but it exerted a large influence in the overthrow of the shogun and in the restoration of the emperor. Just as in Japan the old finally gave way the new and progress took the place of stagnation, so in China the old must give way to the new.

Advance is inevitable and the world need not fear the result. If China were strong enough to give effect to the hostility which some of her people now feel, she might be a menace to the peace of the world, but she cannot grow in strength faster than she grows in knowledge, and as she grows in knowledge she will learn as other nations have learned that nations help rather than injure each other by the material, intellectual and moral development of their people.

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