

informed me that not more than one man in a hundred could write a letter and that not more than one in ten could understand a letter when read to him.

The object of the schools, such as they had, was to cultivate the memory and to teach the pupils to write essays expounding the doctrines of the Chinese sages. All of the schools used the same text book, the primer in universal use having been prepared over eight hundred years ago. Education was limited in the number who received it and limited in the amount provided, and the course of instruction was fossilized. None of the students were taught anything about the outside world and but few of the people were students. It is sufficient evidence of the absolute failure of their educational system to compare this great empire, containing approximately one-fourth of the population of the globe, with even the smaller states of Europe in the production of scientists, scholars and poets. China has had diplomats and astute statesmen, but these have been developed in the school of experience rather than in halls of learning. Considering the educational opportunities furnished, it is astonishing that she has produced any great men at all.

China has her religions and they have doubtless exerted a moulding influence upon the people, but the influence has not been an unmixed good. Take, for instance, ancestor worship; it contains a germ of good in that it teaches respect and care for parents, but the spirit has been lost in the observance of the letter until the welfare of the living is neglected that senseless sacrifices may be made to the dead. At Canton we visited a place called "The Place of the Dead." It is connected with a Buddhist temple and is just outside the city wall. There are some four hundred rooms in the group of buildings and nearly every room contains a coffin. Here the well-to-do deposit the body of an ancestor and keep incense burning as long as they can afford to pay for it. Rent must be paid for the rooms; the light must be kept bright; food and drink must be offered to the departed each day and the incense must be paid for. As someone has remarked, it costs more to care for a dead ancestor than a live one. We saw one coffin that had cost three thousand dollars; it had been in the building for sixteen years and had been moved from one apartment to another, a cheaper one being chosen each time as the resources of the family declined. In some cases the families have become so poor that they can neither pay rent nor buy a burying plot.

There is also at Canton an ancestral hall where for a specified sum the name of an ancestor may be inscribed on a little wooden tablet; incense is also burned here, too. Foreign residents relate instances where servants have spent three years' income in burying a parent, the money being borrowed and gradually repaid from the earnings. Besides the first cost of burial, there must be frequent pilgrimages to the grave. It is within the bounds of truth to say that the money expended in elaborate funerals, in sacrifices to the dead, and in periodical pilgrimages to tombs would have gone far toward the educating and enlightening of each rising generation—and who will say that respect for the dead can better be shown by formal ceremonies than by a proper regard for the welfare of the descendants?

The tombs of the royal family are always objects of interest to the tourist. The most famous of these tombs are north of Peking and so near to the great wall that they are usually visited at the same time, three or four days being required for the trip. There are other tombs of less renown still nearer to Peking, while the tomb of the first emperor of the Ming dynasty is just outside the walls of Nanking. Some of these tombs are mere masses of masonry now, but all were once richly carved. The avenues leading up to these tombs are lined with large stone figures of men and animals. These are arranged in pairs, one on either side of the road—two huge warriors, two priests, two elephants standing and two kneeling, two horses standing and two kneeling, and lions, bears and other animals in like positions. These figures are put near the tomb that the ruler may be supplied with the things needful for his happiness in the spirit world. And speaking of tombs, the worship of ancestors is destined to make China a vast graveyard, if, as now, graves cannot be disturbed. It will be remembered that the Chinese government cautioned the Russians and Japanese not to trespass upon the graveyards at Mukden, where a number of Manchu emperors are buried. The graves of the masses are as sacredly regarded, although distinguished merely by a cone-shaped mound. In the neighborhood of the large

cities the cemeteries cover many square miles, and as they are constantly added to and never diminished, they occupy an ever increasing area. In the agricultural districts the burying grounds are scattered through the fields, each family having its own plot. Sometimes when the family has died out, the mound is neglected and the coffin is exposed. At Shanghai and at Nanking we saw a number of coffins in the fields, never having been covered.

The temples of China are interesting, but are generally in a state of decay. The Confucian temple at Peking is visited once a year when sacrifices are made to China's supreme sage. The court of the temple is filled with gnarled and knotted cedars of great age, in which a colony of crows was chanting a requiem when we were there. There are also in the court numerous tablets of marble, each resting on the back of a stone turtle and bearing inscriptions; there are other tablets bearing quotations from the writings of Confucius.

At Canton our guide took us to the temple of the five hundred gods. They represent Buddhist saints, are life size and each has an incense urn before him. One of the gods has a very long arm, he being the one who puts the moon up at nights; another represents a saint who cut open his breast and exposed an image of Buddha to prove his fidelity to the faith.

(Our guide at Canton was Ah Cum, who has conducted travellers through the city for more than forty years and has brought up his sons to the same profession. I mention his name for the benefit of any readers of these lines who may chance to visit, as every tourist should, this most Chinese of Chinese cities.)

There is in the vicinity of Peking a temple with several thousand images of Buddha but they are small and made of clay, the original bronze images having been carried away by the foreign troops during the Boxer troubles.

Close to the walls of the city of Peking stands what is called the Yellow Temple, a rare work of art. The carved figures representing incidents in the life of Buddha are very skillfully wrought and one can not help feeling indignation at the vandalism of the foreign soldiers who, during the Boxer troubles, defaced this ancient monument. By far the most impressive and elaborate religious structure in China is the "Altar of Heaven," not far from the city of Peking. It was built under the Ming dynasty five hundred years ago and is still visited twice each year by the emperor, who here offers sacrifices to heaven. The sacrificial altar is built entirely of white marble. It is a triple circular terrace, the base being a little more than two hundred feet in diameter, the middle terrace one hundred and fifty feet and the top terrace nearly a hundred feet, each terrace being enclosed by a beautiful carved balustrade. It stands about eighteen feet high, and the emperor ascending to it alone, kneels at midnight and as the representative of the whole people makes his offering to heaven. A bullock without blemish is used as the offering on these occasions. In architecture the altar reminds one of the Greek structures, while some of the features of the ceremony recall the rites of the Israelites as described in the Old Testament.

Near to this altar is a pagoda, standing upon another triple but smaller marble terrace; it is popularly known as the "Temple of Heaven." Here on the first day of the Chinese year the emperor offers his supplications to heaven for a blessing upon the year. This is the most graceful and symmetrical pagoda in the empire, if not in the Orient, and no one who visits the capital should fail to see it. Both the altar and the temple are surrounded by a high wall, and the enclosed court is shaded by veteran cedars.

While Buddhism has been regarded as the religion of China, Taoism has also influenced the thought of the nation. It teaches the existence of spirits but has degenerated into superstition and the attempted conciliation of evil spirits. For instance, before each official residence and before many private residences will be found a wall, higher and wider than the front door, the purpose of which is to keep out the evil spirits, which are supposed to travel only in a straight line. When a building is to be made more than two stories high, bunches of leaves are often tied to the top of the poles used for scaffolding to deceive the evil spirits and make them believe that it is a forest instead of a building, they being supposed to be hostile to high buildings. After the roof is on, however, the building is safe, but the ridge pole must curve up at the ends to keep the spirits from descending. Boys are very much at a premium in China, because the duty of guarding the grave devolves upon the oldest son. If a man loses a boy or two, he sometimes dresses

the next boy like a girl in order to deceive the spirits, for a girl is, or at least used to be, beneath the notice of even evil spirits. A very intelligent Chinaman explained the disinclination of the ordinary Chinaman to rescue a drowning man on the ground that if the evil spirits were trying to drown the man, they would resent and punish any attempt to save him.

But more potent than either Buddhism or Taoism has been the influence of Confucius and his commentators. This great philosopher was born 551 B. C., and Mencius, his greatest disciple, nearly two hundred years later. The moral principles discussed by them were not presented as original conceptions but rather urged as the principles of previous emperors whose lives were regarded as ideal. In another article, in the discussion of China's awakening, I shall speak of the ethical teachings of Confucius, but it is worth while to note at this time that his utterances with regard to government fall far short of the generally accepted doctrines of today. While he insisted that rulers owed certain duties to their subjects, and were good or bad in proportion as they set an example of virtue and governed wisely, he did not intimate that the people have either the right to, or the capacity for, self-government. His doctrines support the idea that classes are necessary, the "superior" people governing and teaching, the rest doing the manual labor.

Confucius taught that those who were not in office need not concern themselves about the administration of the government—a doctrine which paralyzed the patriotism of the masses and invited abuses on the part of the officials.

The system by which officials were chosen was also calculated to breed selfishness and indifference to the public weal, as well as to impede progress. The course of instruction, as before stated, contemplated merely the memorizing of the Chinese classics, composed of the sayings of the sages, poetry and Chinese history.

The aspirants for honors were not required to think for themselves, to understand the problems of their generation or to know anything of the science of government. To compose a good essay upon what Confucius said, upon what Mencius thought, or upon what Shun or Wan or Woo did was sufficient. This naturally chained each generation to the past and locked the door to advancement.

The successful candidate felt that his appointment was due to his own merit and that he was under no obligation to anyone except the members of his family who had furnished the money necessary to enable him to take the various examinations. Neither the securing of the office nor the retaining of it rested upon his ability to devise wise policies or upon his interest in the people at large. The emperor with unlimited power was above him, and the people with unlimited patience were below him.

In later years the examinations have sometimes become a farce and rank has been offered to the highest bidder, bidding being encouraged by an intimation that this might be the last chance. But even when honestly conducted the civil service system of China was not calculated to develop the official or to secure a good, wise and progressive government.

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### A FARCE FROM THE BEGINNING

From the beginning the proceedings with respect to the beef trust have been farcical. Commissioner Garfield, sent to investigate, promised the packers immunity, and then reported that there was no beef trust. Garfield's promise of immunity was used by the packers as a method of escape before the federal judge, and now the federal authorities must be content with proceeding against two or three corporations named in the indictments. We are told that the trial of these corporations will last for a long time, and that at least two thousand witnesses will be summoned. In the event of a conviction the penalty would be a fine, and in the meantime the beef trust will continue to put upon the consumers the same old impositions.

If Mr. Roosevelt really means business in his anti-trust campaign, he will do well to rid his administration of Commissioner Garfield. If in the light of the court proceedings at Chicago he continues to hold Mr. Garfield in office, the president need not be surprised if many people who have heretofore had confidence in his "trust-busting" program conclude that he is not, after all, serious in the fair words he speaks against trust evils.