

AMERICAN INTEREST IN CHINESE LITERATURE

by

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Dedicated
to the womanhood
of China

PREFACE

Having a definite personal interest in China and her people, I have found this investigation of American consideration of Chinese literature engaging and instructive. In view of the constantly developing contacts between the civilizations of the Orient and the Occident, I trust these chapters may be profitable to world citizens of the twentieth century, and hope that they may be helpful to students of literature during these years of developing interest in the recorded thought of all peoples.

In pursuing this investigation, I have been guided by Dr. S. L. Whitcomb, of the University of Kansas, whose assistance and encouragement I gratefully acknowledge. To those who have aided me in gathering material, especially to Dr. Josephine Burnham, Miss Lulu Gardner, Miss Florence L. Snow, and Mr. Earl N. Manchester, Librarian of the University of Kansas, I express my sincere gratitude.

Emma Webber Wilson

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CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	III.
Introduction	VII.
Part I. Evidence of American Interest in Chinese Literature	1.
Chapter I. Publications Dealing with Chinese Literature	2.
Chapter II. Interpreters and Translators.	8.
Chapter III. Special Chinese Collections in American Libraries	16.
Chapter IV. Instruction in Chinese Language and Literature	24.

	Page
Part II. Criticism and Translation of Chinese Literature	28.
Chapter V. General Character of the Literature and Prose Style	29.
Chapter VI. The Classics and Philosophical Books	43.
Chapter VII. The Novel and the Drama	54.
Chapter VIII. The Folklore and Legends	66.
Chapter IX. Chinese Poetry	80.
Conclusion	91.
Appendices:	
Appendix A. Survey of the History of China and her Relations with America	93.
Appendix B. Brief Chronological Outline of Chinese Literature	103.
Appendix C. Outstanding Features of the Chinese Language	105.

VI

	Page
Appendix D. Comparisons of Noted Chinese with Other Famous Individuals ..	108.
Appendix E. Professors of Chinese Language and Literature in American Universities	109.
Bibliography	111.
Index	126.

INTRODUCTION

Since the early seventeenth century, scholars of Portugal and of France, notably M. Remusat and Judith Gautier, have been studying, interpreting, and translating Chinese works for European readers. English scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries found Chinese literature worthy of careful study, among the most distinguished being James Legge, Herbert A. Giles, Robert K. Douglas, Alexander Wylie, and Arthur Waley. In America, interest in Chinese literature has not been lacking since the beginning of our national life, though the last decade has witnessed the greatest attention to it - in the form of translation of Chinese poetry.

Recognizing the possibilities of increasing interchange of thought and culture between the United States and China, and the fact that no history or comprehensive treatise on Chinese literature has been made by an American, we have purposed to make in this paper a survey of the development and present status of American interest in Chinese literature (Part I), and to assemble the information on the subject which has

been presented to Americans by American authors (Part II).

In Part II, we have endeavored to include all magazine articles, books, and sections of books in which Chinese literature was the subject of direct attention, but have not attempted to find all isolated references to Chinese literature, interesting as that attempt might be. Because of the special significance of reprints of English articles before 1850, as the means of first introducing Chinese literature, we have included them as a part of our study; but those after 1850, when American articles greatly outnumbered reprints, we have not included, though we have listed them in our bibliography for reference. Nor have we called attention to English books or translations though many have been published and circulated in the United States.

It has seemed advisable in Part II to quote directly from the majority of the authors because many of the earlier magazines and books are accessible in only a few larger libraries in the East, while many others are limited in circulation.

In the appendices we have given for immediate reference a brief survey of the history of China, a discussion of the rudiments of the language, and an outline of the literature, as well as other tables of information.

PART I

Evidence of American Interest in
Chinese Literature

CHAPTER I

Publications Dealing with Chinese Literature

During the opening years of the twentieth century, American scholars and general readers have discovered in the literature of China a storehouse of thought and artistic expression. The Chinese language and the classics are being taught in some of the larger universities; there are special Chinese collections in libraries in certain educational centers; and the poetry of the Celestials is being translated and appreciatively criticised by some of America's most prominent verse writers. The literature of that oriental race is claiming attention by the side of Sanskrit, Persian, and the classics of Greece and Rome.

One might naturally suppose that the interest of the last decades was a spasmodic outburst resulting from the developing intercourse between the Orient and America. However, research into the periodical and book press of the nineteenth century reveals a progressing acquaintance and appreciation from the beginning of that century, with a marked increase at the opening of the twentieth century. Certain general aspects of

the developing knowledge of Chinese literature in this country are worthy of note here, while items of specific treatment will be noted later.

The first magazine article devoted to a Chinese literary topic appeared in 1813 in the Analectic Magazine,¹ while the first book, so far as we have been able to discover, was published seventy-five years later.² Up to 1888, magazine articles on Chinese literary topics averaged one every eighteen months; from 1888 to 1900, they averaged two per year; and since 1900, have averaged four per year. During the period 1888 to 1900 books on Chinese literature or in large measure devoted to the literature averaged one every two years and since 1900 one every year. The increase following 1888 is doubtless owing to the greater commercial intercourse resulting from the Burlingame treaty of 1867;³ while the increase of the later period is probably the outcome of the Boxer uprising and the attention to China which followed that episode. Considering the periodical literature on Chinese works from another viewpoint, it is noteworthy that up to 1850 only two of the twelve articles were original

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1. Analectic Magazine 1:345,383, April 1813.
Life and doctrines of Confucius.
 2. Smith. Proverbs and Common Sayings. 1888.
 3. See Appendix I.

American studies (and those two were based on French translations, not on the original Chinese works), while the remaining ten were reprints from English and French magazines. Since 1850, of the one hundred seventy-two articles we have found only twenty-five were reprints from English magazines and none from French. Thus, America was dependent upon English and French scholarship in Chinese, (which had begun in the early eighteenth century) until her own national life was sufficiently secure to give her freedom to cultivate her foreign interests. America had no trade rights in Chinese posts until 1844 and no missionaries until 1836. From then on her acquaintance with China and her literature developed gradually until 1900, when an unusual interest began to manifest itself.

We have no data on the circulation of the magazines printing articles on Chinese literature, or on the number of readers of those articles, but the fact that editors continued to publish them argues for their favorable reception. Several of the earliest reprints were accompanied by introductory notes from the editors; one of them may be quoted here as indicative of the attitude of the editor: "Among other literary gratifications which have resulted from the recent cultivation of oriental literature may be named the publication of the original text of the works of

Confucius and a translation of the same. We presume we will gratify our readers by presenting them with the prefatory memoirs of this great philosopher as they are read and received among his countrymen." ⁴ After 1829, we find no introduction, the articles being presented to prove their own merit.

The magazines which have given most attention to Chinese literature include four devoted to foreign literature - The Analectic Magazine (1813-1820), The American Eclectic (1841-1842), The Eclectic Magazine (1897-), and The Living Age (1844-); and three more general magazines, The North American Review (1815-), The Overland Magazine (1868-), and The New Englander (1843-1892). The Asia Magazine, published since 1900, includes many articles on the culture and literature of China.

During the last few years, magazines have been founded which are devoted entirely to Chinese subjects and include departments on the literature and arts: The China Review, published in Hongkong, The Orientalist, and The Chinese Journal of Science and Arts, edited by John C. Ferguson and Arthur de C. Sowerby. The last named journal, published in Shanghai, was started in 1923 as a means of publishing the results of original research in China in science or in

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4. Analectic Magazine. II:34b, April 1813.

Chinese Art, Literature, or History. It is the official journal of the China Society of Science and Arts. The Chinese Repository, an older magazine published at Canton 1830 to 1861, served as a mouthpiece for missionaries studying Chinese civilization and culture. While published in China, these magazines are circulated widely among the English speaking people resident in China and in America.

The majority of books relating to Chinese literature published by Americans have been translations, - of poems, tales, and the classical and philosophical works. Before 1900, three volumes of translations were published by Americans; and since that date, ⁵ sixteen. There has been no history or comprehensive criticism of the Chinese literature written by an American, and only two monographs on types: Candlin's Chinese Fiction (1898) and Dr. Paul Carus's Chinese Philosophy (1902). Various books treating generally of the civilization or culture of China have given chapters to discussion of the literature. Among the best of these are Martin's Cycle of Cathay, The Chinese, their Education, Philosophy, and Letters, and The Lore of Cathay; Bashford's China; an Interpretation; and Griffis's China's Story in Myth, Legend, Art, and Annals.

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 5. Many books by English authors have been published in America for American readers, but it is impossible to include them in our study in spite of their bearing upon it.

The most scholarly American surveys of the literature are those by Professor Hirth in The Columbia University Lectures on Literature, and in the New International Encyclopedia, and that by William Griffis in the Encyclopedia Americana.

CHAPTER II

Interpreters and Translators

The criticisms and interpretations of Chinese literature are of value only in so far as they are the products of broad and accurate knowledge and are convincing only in so far as their authors are men of experience and intellectual authority. The reader may legitimately question before progressing farther, who are the men who have investigated Chinese works and presented their opinions for American readers. Various groups or types of men have considered the subject and it is the purpose of this chapter to give such data regarding some of the more important of them that later references or quotations may have significance.

Doubtless, there is a general supposition that only missionaries to China have found anything of merit in her literature, and that because of their professional interest in the people, they have a bias toward her literature. On the contrary, however, more American university professors and more American authors have written to introduce Chinese literature to Americans

than have American missionaries serving in China; while almost as many men who have had some governmental relations to China have written on her literature, as have missionaries. The majority of these writers since 1900 are of such importance as to be included in the Who's Who in America, and many of the earlier writers are given biographical notice in the Encyclopedia Americana.

Of the American university professors who have written concerning the works of Chinese literary men, James Freeman Clarke is the earliest. He was a contemporary of Ralph Waldo Emerson and William H. Channing, and with them prepared the memoirs of Margaret Fuller. He was professor of natural religion and Christian doctrine in Harvard University, and his chief work was Ten Great Religions. Another Harvard professor, A. P. Peabody, for twenty-one years Plummer professor of ethics, three years acting-president of Harvard, and nine years editor of the North American Review, revealed his personal judgments of the excellences and the weaknesses of Chinese literature and culture in his critical review of Williams's The Middle Kingdom. Professor John Smith Sewall was a member of Commodore Perry's expedition to Japan and later was for eight years professor of rhetoric, oratory, and English Literature in Bowdoin College.

Ernest Francisco Fenollosa was professor of political economy and philosophy in Tokio University, 1878-80, and of English literature in the Imperial Normal School, 1897-1900. While curator for six years in the Department of Oriental Art in the Boston Museum, he lectured on oriental subjects, wrote Nast and West (collection of poems) and monographs on oriental art, literature, and culture. His works on Chinese poetry and Japanese classical drama were edited by Ezra Pound.

Professor Frederick Hirth, of German birth and parentage, after serving in various governmental offices in China, was for fifteen years professor of Chinese literature in Columbia University. His lecture on that subject in the Columbia University Lectures on Literature is the best general survey of the works.

Frederick Wells Williams, who wrote an extended comparison of Chinese folklore with that of other peoples for the Smithsonian Institute Report of 1900, has been professor of oriental history in Yale University since 1900.

After two years of missionary service in China and eleven years of official service as translator to the Chinese government, E. T. Williams has been professor of oriental language and literature in the University

of California since 1918.

Professor Edward A. Ross, now professor of sociology in the University of Wisconsin and an eminent author on sociological subjects, gave due consideration to Chinese literature as a moulding social force, in his study, The Changing Chinese.

Likewise, Kenneth S. Latourette, professor of history in Denison University (1917-), credited the literature with a large share in the history of the race.

Among the modern American authors who have considered Chinese literature as translators or critics, are writer Tynner, Amy Lowell, Sara Fould, Arthur Guiterman, and Eunice Tietjens. Some others less familiar to modern readers, but prominent in earlier days, are: Alexander Hill Everett, for many years editor of and contributor to the North American Review; Dr. Paul Carus, editor of The Open Court and The Monist and author of forty-seven books on philosophical and religious subjects; G. Valdo Browne, editor of American Young Folks and of The New England and Granite State Magazine, and writer of several hundred stories for juvenile periodicals; and Melvin H. Peabody, the first chief editor of the International Encyclopedia, eleven years president of the University of Illinois, and director of the department of liberal arts in the

World's Columbian Exposition and Pan-American Exposition. A unique author is Frederick Peterson, a physician and a poet, a translator of Swedish and Chinese poems, and an author of medical books.

Again, there have been many men connected with China in some official capacity who have investigated and written concerning her literature. Chester Holcombe, who served as interpreter and secretary of the United States Legation at Peking (1871-1886), as minister (1876-1882), and as assistant in construction of railways and establishment of railway schools, wrote three books on Chinese questions and three for Chinese students. John D. Long, Secretary of the Navy of the United States (1897-1902), in his introduction to G. Waldo Browne's China, The Country and Its People, showed an unusual acquaintance with the Chinese and an honest appreciation of the literature of the Middle Kingdom. Paul S. Reinsch, who served in China from 1913, and from 1920 was counsellor to the Chinese government, regarded her literature as one of the preserving and moulding forces of China's civilization. A similar view is held by T. W. Willoughby, a professor of political economy in Johns Hopkins University until called to be constitutional adviser to the Chinese government. James Harrison Wilson became acquainted with the literature while

commander of the American forces in Peking under the China Relief Expedition, while Dr. Walter T. Swingle of the United States Department of Agriculture discovered in Chinese books valuable agricultural and botanical information in connection with his work as agricultural explorer.

with the opening of China to western science and education, and the establishment of imperial universities, many American professors were called by the government to responsible positions in Chinese schools. Two of these men have contributed largely to American knowledge of Chinese literature. Professor W. A. P. Martin, after serving as a missionary and college professor in Peking, was called by the Emperor to become the first president of the Imperial University of Peking, in 1898. He was for many years the adviser of the government in matters of international law. Though his translations of Chinese poetry cannot be ranked with those of Witter Bynner or Amy Lowell, his criticisms and interpretations are some of the earliest and most valuable we have. Professor Norman H. Pitman was professor of English and pedagogics in Peking Normal School from 1912 to 1921 and received the Chia Ho Decoration by the President of China in 1915. His four books on China bring the folk tales and the mysteries of the orient to American

children.

An anthropologist, Berthold Laufer, who visited China on various investigating expeditions, gathered (1907) for the Newberry Library of Chicago a remarkable collection of Chinese works in the originals, many⁶ being first editions and some the only existing copies. He referred to "the inexhaustible wealth of Oriental literatures and of Chinese in particular," characterizing it as "the most extensive and important literature of the East, and the one from which the light of the others radiates".⁷

It is not only American writers who have responded to our interest in Chinese literature. A number of Chinese and Japanese have aided in giving us knowledge of the wealth of her stores. Shigeyoshi Obata, a Japanese student who did graduate work in the University of Wisconsin during 1917 and 1918, and has traveled in America since, published in 1922 his volume of translations of the poems of Li-Po - one hundred twenty-three in all. In his preface he expressed his purpose and the significance of his volume: "This is the first attempt ever made to deal with any single Chinese poet exclusively in one book for the purpose of introducing him to the English speaking world".⁸

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6 These 631 works being a part of the East Asiatic Collection of 1,216 works.

7 Laufer: East Asiatic Collection, p. 1.

8 Obata: Works of Li-Po, p. V.

T. Y. Leo, a Chinese formerly in the diplomatic service to America, is a thorough student of the ancient civilization and literature of his country and in 1920 in the magazine Asia presented to the American public for the first time an English rendering of the earliest Chinese romance.

Other orientals have collaborated with Americans in translating Chinese treasures; Mrs. Florence Ayscough, a Japanese working with Amy Lowell in her recent translations, Fir-Flower Tablets; Dr. Kiang, collaborating with Witter Bynner in translating the Chinese anthology; Chou Leung and Yin-Chwang Wang Tsen-zan who assisted Mary Hayes Davis in rendering Chinese folk tales and fables; Chu Seoul Bok who collaborated with Vincent Van Karter Beede in retelling some of the five minute tales told in China; and Teitro Suzuki, a Japanese scholar who was associated with Dr. Paul Carus in his translations and is now connected with the University of Tokio.

Formal and stereotyped as these facts may appear, they are presented with the purpose of giving to matters discussed later the significance which they merit, and of revealing the fact that men of varied professions and preoccupations have found something of value in the literature of the Celestials.

CHAPTER III

Special Chinese Collections in American Libraries

One of the most significant evidences of a growing interest in the literature of China is the development of large and expensive collections of Chinese books of translations and of histories and criticisms of the works. Two remarkable collections of original Chinese works are those in the Library of Congress and the Newberry Library of Chicago. Other collections in academic and public libraries are largely translations and studies made by Americans and Europeans.

In reporting on the Chinese collection in the Library of Congress, Dr. Walter T. Swingle stated in 1917 that the collection had been increased largely "during the past few years and as a result now stands first in this field among the Chinese libraries of the New World and probably third among the Chinese libraries in Western countries".⁹ It consisted of 40,000 volumes of Chinese printed books and manuscripts bound in book form and occupied 1594 feet of shelf space. There are in the collection many rare and valuable books which would be highly prized even in China.

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9 Library Journal, 42:104-5 (Feb. 1917).

Some imprints are from the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, being older than some much prized Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, while some are editions supposed to have been lost even in the Orient. There is authentic material illustrating the three largest books in the world: The Great Ming Encyclopedia of 22, 937 large folio volumes one-half inch thick; The Imperial Encyclopedia of 5,044 volumes, and the Ssu ku Ch'uan manuscript.

The work of the catalogue division of the Library of Congress has made possible a systematic classification of the Chinese books and the reprints of the Ts'ung shu which makes "the collection without question the most easily accessible to scholars of any Chinese library in western countries". Dr. Swingle states that the Chinese works are in constant use by investigators of the Department of Agriculture in discovering new crop plants for introduction into this country. "It is probable," he declares, "that as the Chinese collection of the Library becomes better known it will be largely used by all investigators of East Asiatic subjects."

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10 Library Journal 42:104-5 (Feb. 1917).

Note: The report of the Library of Congress for 1923 states that as usual the Chinese accessions to the Library exceed all other East Asiatic accessions, there being added in that year four hundred forty-four works in 3,626 volumes.

A similar collection in the Newberry Library was gathered by Dr. Berthold B. Laufer, commissioned by the trustees, in connection with an expedition of the Field Museum, (1907), to make a representative collection of East Asiatic works on history, philosophy, religion, belles-lettres, and art. Concerning the 631 Chinese books which he purchased, he said, "My primary aim was to secure of all standard works first editions, or whenever this was not possible, the best editions procurable with the idea of permanency in view."¹¹ Though since the awakening of China ancient books are more highly prized than ever before and the price of printed books has doubled within six years because of the establishment of public and academic libraries and government protection of old manuscripts, Dr. Laufer "was able to secure a good many original and Palace editions of such standard works as form the nucleus of every Chinese library. Among the accessions were included the famous dictionary of the Emperor K'ang-hi in the original Palace edition of 1716 in forty volumes; the great concordance P'ei wên yün fu in the Palace edition of 1711 in one hundred and nineteen volumes; the P'ei wên chai shu hua p'u, a collection of essays on

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 11 Laufer: Description Account of East Asiatic Collection, p. 13.

classical and historical books in sixty-four volumes dated 1705; - a fine edition of the collected works of the philosopher Chu Hsi, the Ya ch'i Chu-tse ts'üan shu, twenty-four volumes, 1813, and an anthology of poetry chronologically arranged, the Yü ch'i li tai fu hui of 1706, in eighty volumes".¹² In concluding his description of the histories, poetical works, and all other types represented, Dr. Laufer thus expressed his conviction: "I believe her literature will bring forth new facts and new thoughts, and that the time will come when it will arrest the attention of the world at large. It is hoped that the near future may see many American scholars taking a real interest in this literature, and when that time comes they will have at hand here in Chicago ample foundation material¹³ for their studies and investigations."

Inquiries concerning collections in public and academic libraries have given some indications of the status of Chinese literature in these libraries, though replies varied in explicitness and in many cases the desired data could not be supplied. The table on page 20 presents the figures we were able to obtain, but it is most unsatisfactory because it is incomplete. The number of Chinese texts and translations in New York City, both in the Public Library and in Columbia

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 12 Laufer: Descriptive Account of East Asiatic Collection, p. 13.

13 Ibid.

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Chinese Literature in Representative American Libraries

	Books in Chinese	Transla- tions	Books on Chinese Literature	Books on China and Chinese Subjects
New York Public Library.....	104	115-16	16 - 14	3,000 - 550
Chicago Public Library.....	0	-	-	-
Portland, Oregon, Public Library..	6	-	13 - 1	175 - 42
Seattle Public Library.....	6	6	-	128
Harvard University Library.....	-	-	-	3,300
Columbia University Library.....	1,100	-	-	1,350
Dartmouth College Library.....	-	30	-	-
Cornell University Library.....	-	-	Wason Collection	Wason Collection
University of Kansas Library.....	-	10	4	
Kansas City Public Library.....	1	-	20	400
San Francisco Public Library.....	0	-	-	-

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Note: Where two numbers are given, the first represents the volumes in the reference department and the second the volumes in the circulation department. dashes indicate no data, not absence of books.

University Library, is noteworthy, as well as the member of books on Chinese literature in New York and Portland, Oregon.

Where it was impossible for librarians to give exact figures, they made statements of their judgments which are indicative of the general trend. From the University of California this statement was made: "We have a good many books on Chinese subjects such as may be found in most of the larger libraries, but have not specialized in this field"; from Seattle: "Obviously because of our geographical location, our interest in China is largely that of the traveler and the exporter and importer". The librarian of Harvard University Library replied that in their collection special attention had "been given to obtaining early works, historical and geographical, and translations into English, French, and German of Chinese literary works. Chinese texts are not wanting, but we have nothing remarkable in this line." From Chicago Public Library this statement is made: "On the whole we find very little interest in Chinese subjects", while from New York comes a contrasting reply: "There is no question that China is a steadily popular subject both in our circulation and our reference departments. Translations of Chinese poetry and the sayings of Confucius stand out."

A topic of interest, though not exactly relevant to our subject, is the number of Chinese patrons of American libraries. One Chicago Branch Library, Hardin Square, reported that "about fifteen young (Chinese) men and women of high school and college age make use of the facilities offered by the library "though they have never requested Chinese books, but read the very best books available based on their school work - literature, history, sociology, and psychology". Another Chicago branch library, Legler Regional, made request for a small collection of Chinese books in response to the inquiry of a few Chinese merchants operating chop suey restaurants in the vicinity. Miss Franklin of the Chicago Library staff said: "To my knowledge this is the first and only time that such books were asked for by any branch library". The librarian of the New York City Public Library wrote: "I doubt whether there are more than a hundred visits a year made to our Oriental division by people of Chinese birth or descent calling for books relating to China. Of course we have many Chinamen among the three thousand readers and eight thousand to ten thousand visitors who come to the reference department each day, but their interest is usually at least as great if not greater, on topics not connected with China as it is on Chinese subjects.

In our circulation department, our experience makes me believe that Chinamen resident in the city would use the library for Chinese books more than they do if our present stock were not antiquated. We have not had funds sufficient to import from China the latest text books and similar publications needed by these students." The librarian of Portland, Oregon, explains that there are probably six Chinamen among the patrons of the library, while the librarian of Seattle states that "there are probably fewer Chinese borrowers using the library than any other nationals and they do not come ~~some~~ for Chinese books",

It is evident then that the Chinese books and books on Chinese subjects in American libraries are not for the Chinese resident in America but for American readers. It is natural that Chinamen in a foreign country should study to adjust themselves to the new conditions rather than read concerning their homeland and native literature. Doubtless many Chinese who hold letters in high regard brought their literary treasures with them.

CHAPTER IV

Instruction in Chinese Language and Literature

Though American universities have from their earliest foundation been offering courses in Greek and Latin, and comparatively early began instruction in contemporary European languages, they have only in the last few decades offered courses in contemporary oriental languages. The earliest instruction in Chinese was in Harvard University in 1879, and since then there have been courses almost every year in one or more of the universities of the country. However, the language will probably not receive a great deal of attention in coming years in American education because of the intensive and extended study required and because greater practical knowledge can be attained through study in language schools in China.

The courses in Chinese language were first taught in Harvard through the generosity of Francis P. Knight of Boston, who raised a subscription to maintain at Harvard a teacher of Mandarin Chinese, and went to China to secure Mr. Kun-hua for that purpose. After his three years of instruction (1879-82), the language was not taught in Harvard again until 1922-24

when Dr. Yuen Ren Chao was called from Cornell to teach Chinese and philosophy.

In Columbia University the Chinese language has been taught since 1902. In 1923-4, six courses were offered with this statement of purpose: "This department offers courses in spoken and written Chinese to meet the needs of students interested in commercial, educational, missionary, or diplomatic life in China,¹⁴ and of students with philological interests as well".

For a few years the University of Washington gave courses in Chinese but Professor Gowen wrote in 1924: "We have given up for the present the language courses in Chinese as ministering to dilettantism. A student will learn more by six months close study in the language schools at Nanking or Peking than by any possible arrangement of courses in the ordinary college curriculum."

Chinese was taught in Yale until recently and in the University of Southern California for a short time, while it is still taught in the University of California.

It is possible that the Chinese language will not be extensively taught in American universities in the future, but as America and China become more and more

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 14 Columbia University Bulletin, series 23, No. 24,
 p. 28.

related through diplomatic, commercial, and scientific intercourse there will undoubtedly be an increasing study of the history, culture, and literature of the Middle Kingdom. Courses in Chinese civilization and history now predominate over language courses. Columbia University offered in 1923-1924 five courses "designed to explain the growth of Chinese civilization and to interpret the characteristics of Chinese culture to Westerners",¹⁵ as well as a series of public lectures "which aim to give to a wider audience an interpretation of the essentials of Chinese life and thought".¹⁶ In the description of one course this statement is made: "the question will be raised as to a possible contribution from China's cultural heritage to world civilization".¹⁷

In the University of Washington three-hour courses in Chinese History, Literature, and Institutions were offered in 1923-24 and are to be extended to five hour courses for the next year. One doctor's thesis of last year was prepared on The Jewish Inscription of Kai fîng fu. About one hundred under-graduates take Chinese History each quarter. Yale, Dartmouth, Harvard, and the University of California teach history

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15. Columbia University Bulletin, Series 23, No. 24, p. 28.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 29.

and culture courses in which attention is given to the literature.

The development of departments of world literature and of courses in comparative literature must of necessity bring attention to Chinese literature, and as years go by it will have an opportunity to prove itself to Americans in comparison with other better known literatures.

PART II

Criticism and Translation of
Chinese Literature

Chapter V

General Character of the Literature and the Prose Style

Even as the Chinese people have characteristics peculiar to their race, so their literature has characteristics peculiar to itself, and the proper appreciation of either arises from a consideration of the distinctive qualities, not from a childish remark that they are "not like ours" and are, therefore, of no value. Consequently, statements regarding the general nature of the literature of China, made by men who have carefully comprehended its significant characteristics, are of value in introducing the occidental reader to that oriental literature.

As early as 1841, Absalom Peters, the senior editor of the American Eclectic, reprinted a Chinese tale from the Asiatic Journal. In his introductory note he characterized the literature as ancient, stationary, and unimaginative, while he showed that he was aware of writings of the Chinese other than the Classics. "Their valuable books", he said, "are of ancient date, . . . Their intellectual lethargy and feebleness are apparent in the best of their romances, tales, and fictions. Their imagination is tame and simple and indicates a people but half awake to the

consciousness of their mental resources".¹⁸ The tale which he reprinted, Yin Seau Lou or The Lost Child, seemed amusing to him because of its inanity and detail.

In the same number of the Eclectic, Absalom Peters quoted two foreign comments, giving his readers further information regarding the wealth of the literature and the lack of scientific knowledge in China. The first was a quotation from the German missionary, Charles Gutzlaff, who in his Sketch of Chinese History Ancient and Modern (1834), had said, "There are few subjects in the wide range of the sciences upon which we do not meet with a Chinese work. As far as their own history, philosophy, polity, and poetry are concerned, they may furnish us with very valuable hints; but their works upon natural history, geography, chemistry, etc., are very defective and often childish."¹⁹ Gutzlaff had pointed to the fact that while Europe of the early nineteenth century was fast producing new publications, in China among three hundred sixty-seven millions of people there was "not one original writer; nor has there been for many centuries". In an anonymous review of Poo Nang Che tsang sin (A Supplementary Back

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18 The American Eclectic, 2:318-19, (Sept. 1841).

19 Ibid.

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of wisdom), quoted from the Chinese Repository, were statements regarding the inexhaustible stores of the literature and the dullness of this particular treatise.

In 1868, J. T. Doyen, writing about the novel, The Dream of the Red Chamber, described the romance as "too tedious and minute for the western reader", and too lacking in exciting incident. "But", said he, "it would be a mistake to despise any literature that can influence millions of minds and solace millions of readers in a reading country. Confucius has already taken his place on our bookshelves not very far from English philosophers; and who knows but ere long lesser lights from the land of Sinim may demand recognition
 21
 in the broad arena of world thought."

The marked contrast between the imaginative character of the Sanskrit literature and the "calm, serious, and moral" tone of the writings of the Chinese was noted by James Freeman Clarke in 1869, when he wrote, "We might naturally expect to find in far Cathay a still wilder flight of the Asiatic muse. Not at all. We drop at once from unbridled romance into the most colorless prose. No more aspiration, no flights of fancy, but the worship of order, decency, propriety,
 22
 and peaceful commonplaces."

.....
 20 American Eclectic 3:609 (May, 1842).

21 Overland 1:95 (Aug. 1868).

22 Atlantic Monthly 24:336 (1869).

Bishop James Bashford, after quoting Professor Hirth's four characterizations of the literature²³ "ancient and continuous", "varied and exhaustive", "accurate in historical statement", and "ennobling in standards and lofty in ideals", - enlarged upon the two latter points. He stated that educated Chinese are thorough, and "this thoroughness naturally gives rise to accuracy in historical references"²⁴. Again, he noted that though there is more coarseness and obscenity in the conversation of the Chinese common people than among those of Western lands, there is certainly no impurity or vulgarity in the classical literature or any of the writings classed by the Chinese scholars as literature. He also described their writings as "concrete and practical", "seeking to express at all times the golden mean".

Professor Hirth emphasizes the fact that China's literature "is absolutely autochthonous", being only[^] "national literature worthy of the name that may be said to have taken its own course without being influenced by the civilizations of neighboring nations.- All attempts", he continues, "to drive its origin from^ε quarters outside the traditional cradle of the Chinese

.....
23 Giles: A History of Chinese Literature.

24 Bashford: China: An Interpretation, p. 160.

race near the banks of the Yellow River should be
 25
 treated with suspicion."

Assembling all these individual comments we have an American characterization which compares favorably with that of Professor Giles, the author of the only history of Chinese literature in the English or the Chinese language. The American writers quoted in this chapter have noted: (1) The antiquity of the literature; (2) the extent and variety of the subjects treated; (3) the philosophical and practical tone as opposed to the imaginative; (4) the moral purity of the writings, and (5) the independent or autochthonous nature of the voluminous literature.

The general characteristics having been considered, the Chinese classification of their literature will be significant. Professor Hirth explained the four divisions into which the writings were divided in 618 A.D. by the great catalogue of the T'ang dynasty, and have been divided by all subsequent classifications. The Four Treasuries (Ssi-k'u) arranged in the order of relative estimation are:

(1) Classics (king) - "the works of the Confucian school with their extensions and commentaries".

(2) Histories (sh) - historical, biographical, geographical works, etc.

(3) Philosophies (tzu) - the entire Taoist literature and miscellaneous philosophical writings excluding those of the Confucian classics; works on agriculture, military science, astronomy, divination, medicine, etc.

(4) Belles-lettres (Wen Chang) - "poetical literature and miscellaneous prosaists".
26

It will be noticed that this classification does not include the novels, dramas, or fables and folk tales, for reasons which will be noted in later chapters. We shall give those types consideration because they have been classed as literature by western scholars and have received considerable attention from American writers. Of the four classes explained above, we shall give the minimum of attention to the second, which from the western viewpoint is not strictly considered as literature.

Closely related to the study of the general character of a literature is the analysis of the prose style, and of the characteristics of the poetry. Reserving all consideration of the poetry for a later chapter, we shall here present the significant American criticisms of the style of Chinese prose.

Professor W. A. F. Martin's extensive analysis of

the prose style, prepared in 1872, is apparently the only American attempt to make a scholarly examination of the peculiarities and salient features of the Chinese prose. There were, however, various isolated remarks on the style of separate pieces, before and after Professor Martin's study, which are worthy of notice as indications of the growing appreciation and understanding.

In reprinting the English abstract of the tale The Lost Child (Yin Seou Iou), the editor of The Eclectic quoted the English writer's statement that an abstract seemed to him preferable to an exact translation, because "the Chinese author is frequently concise where the English would ^{be} diffuse and vice versa".²⁷ A similar criticism was made by J. F. Doyen in 1868 when in speaking of the novel, The Dream of the Red Chamber, he said "the style is so exceedingly prolix and minute as to be unendurable to the desultory reader".²⁸ However, concerning the style of the Classics a writer for the Nation in 1870 stated that the marked qualities were "brevity and force".²⁹ while Bishop Bashford wrote in 1916: "The nine classics which were compiled in the Confucian era bear no comparison in imaginative qualities with the

.....
27 American Eclectic, 2:318 (Sept. 1841).

28 Overland, 1:95-98 (1868).

29 Nation, 11:176 (Sept. 15, 1870).

Greek and Roman classics, but they are characterized by an elliptical conciseness which reveals forceful personalities back of them", writers of "a moral earnestness seldom equalled in Greek and Roman literature".³⁰ It seems, then, that an abundance of detail marks the narrative style while successions of packed, concise statements characterize the classical style.

William Elliot Griffis in his interpretative book on China mentions allusion as one of the prized elements of style. "It is", he said, "this constant allusion to good stories, happy omens, or things that suggest pleasure that makes a literary composition or the conversation of Chinese gentlemen with one another so sparkling";³¹ and again, "no language is as luxurious as Chinese in allusion to ancient stories, anecdotes of famous people, or places and things delightful".³²

Both Griffis and Professor Edward Alsworth Ross have considered the antiquity of the language and the conservative, stereotyped style resulting therefrom. Said Griffis, "Chinese is perhaps the oldest written living language in the world, but the very fact that

.....
30 Bashford: China: An Interpretation, p. 149.

31 Griffis: China's Story in Myth, Legend, Art, and Annals, p. 39.

32 Ibid., p. 54.

33

it began to be written so early prevented its growth." As early as 400 B.C. a dictionary of the written characters had been compiled which became the basis for the writing for centuries after. Professor Ross, having referred to Chinese painting as arrested before perspective, and music before harmony had been achieved, noted the lack of relative pronouns or other words to indicate the relation of one statement or idea to another. What could be more hampering to a smooth, coherent style? "Their writing", he said, "is arrested at the level of ancient Babylon".³⁴

The ancient, almost unmodified language, is one symptom of the conservative "psychological climate" which has made vigorous, innovating thought and creative literature almost impossible. "As well expect the appletree to blossom in October," says Professor Ross, "as expect genius to bloom among a people convinced that the perfection of wisdom has been granted to the sages of antiquity. Before he has fairly begun to bring forth, the fresh thinker has been discouraged and intimidated by the leaden weight of conservative opinion about him."³⁵ May not this mental attitude be the cause of that lack of an original thinker in China, which the German author,

.....
 33 Grißis: China's Story, in Myth, Legend, Art, and Annals, p. 50.

34 Independent 71:527 (1914).

35 Ibid.

Gutzlaff, had noted in 1834. It may be safely said that only a radical change of China's philosophical worship of antiquity and precedent can make possible a living, expressive style, and a new creative composition. In the wake of the twentieth century political revolution, may come such a philosophical and literary revolution.

Passing from the scattered remarks of various individuals, we find in Professor Martin's careful study, published in *The New Englander* in April, 1872, a most instructive analysis. He first quoted the report of an American professor's having said that "in the Chinese language there is no such thing as a florid style or a beautiful style. Style is not taken into consideration. It is in writing the language that skill is displayed; and the man that executes the characters with dexterity is the one that understands the language." To these statements Professor Martin replied that one would expect to find a counterpart of the taste displayed in the embellishment of their characters, in the refinement of style, and he did find it, though it did not manifest itself in the same qualities as does that of westerners.

He said, the "Chinese, moreover, being from our idiom the most remote of all languages, suffers most in the process of rendering", but "their style is as varied as their chirography, and as much more elaborate as that of other nations."

Though in the lower literary examinations for government office an elegant execution of the characters guarantees the success of an essay only mediocre in other respects, in the examinations for ~~the~~ higher degrees, which are copied by clerks before the examiner sees them, "style is everything and handwriting nothing". Indeed, Mr. Martin states that many of the more intelligent scholars lament that the style of the essays has come to be more carefully regarded than the matter which it presents. Ch'ung-hau, an elegant stylist himself, remarked that the emphasis of the literary tribunals on mere style qualities was a "clever contrivance adopted by a former dynasty to prevent the literate from thinking too much". There is indeed a superficial glitter to the late essay style which is a distinct contrast to the "solid simplicity of the ancients".

Having dwelt upon the fact that the Chinese language is in itself ill-adapted to rhetorical ornaments because of the necessary "strict order of collocation", there being no inflection of words, so that their

meaning varies with their position in the sentence - Professor Martin considered two compensating qualities which become definite requirements of style: conciseness and symmetry.

Concise expression, concentrated thought, is perhaps in part a natural result of the monosyllabic character of the language, but it is also the chief aim of the Chinese writer, who is satisfied if he has given a suggestion of his meaning, not determined to avoid all possibility of misinterpretation, as is his western brother. In comparing the two styles, Professor Martin said, "Our style is a ferry boat that carries the reader over without danger or effort on the part of the writer; theirs is only a succession of stepping stones which test the agility of the passenger in leaping from one to another". With them "obscurity is less a fault than redundancy".

Symmetry, their second requirement, is a kind of parallelism, but not that of the Hebrew tautology. They seek to express their ideas in phrases which correspond part by part: "Every sentence balanced with utmost precision; every word having its proper counterpoise and the whole composition moving on with the measured tread of a troop of soldiers".

The bane of the Chinese style, Professor Martin thinks, is servility to the ancients, in imitation, allusion, and quotation - a commendable trait carried

to the furthest extreme, "disfiguring modern literature by spurious ornaments borrowed from the ancients".

We can only briefly suggest the careful differentiations which Professor Martin has discovered in the style of various types and individual writers:

(1) The schools of religious philosophy:

Confucian - clear or perspicuous;

Tauistic - symbolic and metaphoric;

Buddhistic- obscure, using quotations from Sanskrit.

(2) Letters and epistles - stiff and affected.

(3) Official correspondence and state papers- dignified, clear, free from pedantic allusions.

(4) Didactic writings - lucid, expository.

(5) Narratives - varying from grave, detailed history to simple, graphic description.

(6) Confucius - direct, practical, comprehensive, rhythmical.

(7) Wen Cheng - (polished essays) - formal, expository.

(8) Lau-tse - semi-poetical, obscure, paradoxical.

(9) Mencius - less dogmatic and vehement than Confucius.

(10) Chwang-tse - exaggeratedly obscure.

Chinese literature, then, does have distinctive qualities and the prose does have style, and both these become interesting and rewarding to the extent to which they are considered by an un-prejudiced mind.

CHAPTER VI

The Classics and Philosophical Treatises

The Chinese Classics occupy the first place in the national literature. They are without doubt the Chinese writings most familiar to Americans, while Confucius is probably the only Chinese name commonly recognized by westerners. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that the first magazine article evidencing any interest in Chinese literature (1813), should be devoted to the "Life and Doctrines of Confucius",³⁷ and that during the next fifty years, eight of the fourteen articles relating to the literature were studies of Confucius or of the philosophy and ethics revealed in the Classics.

Because of this primacy of the Classics in China and America, and because all the other literary groups and types are influenced strongly by them and cannot be rightly understood apart from them, the Classics should receive our first attention as a literary group and almost as a special Chinese type. In the same connection the closely related philosophical treatises may be briefly noticed.

.....
37 Analectic Magazine 1:345, a reprint from the
Monthly Magazine (English).

Considering the multitude of articles and comments upon the Classics and the numerous repetitions of common opinions, an attempt to follow the criticisms chronologically would be more tedious than instructive. Only a summary of the salient features noted will be given in this chapter.

No complete translation of the Classics has yet been made by an American. During the eighteenth century Latin, French, and Portuguese translations had been made, but since 1870 English and American readers alike have been dependent upon Dr. James Legge's scholarly translation, giving the Chinese text, a literal English rendering, and exhaustive notes. From Dr. Legge's translation Professor Hirth and Robert Ellsworth Lewis have made careful analyses of the nine books, for American readers. Their analyses we may here reduce to a definition and brief explanation of each book:

The Chinese Classics consist of two series of books, the "Five Canons" (wu-king) texts compiled largely by Confucius from works existing before his time, and the "Four Books" (ssi-shu), texts embodying the teachings of Confucius but written and edited by later authors.

.....
 38 Columbia University Lectures on Literature, p. 73ff.
 Hirth; Chinese Literature.
 Lewis, Educational Conquest of the Far East, Chapter XVII.

I. The Five Canons.

- (1) The "Canons of Changes" (I-king or I Ching), dating from 1150 B.C., is mainly a work on natural philosophy and divination accredited to Wen Wang, a contemporary of Pythagoras.
- (2) The "Canon of History" (Shu King or Shu Ching), describing the ancient legendary history from 2300 B.C. to the 8th century B.C., is the only source of the most ancient history and, though certain eclipses recorded by them have been confirmed by Western astronomical calculations, the records have been criticised as rather untrustworthy and narrowly Confucian or idealistic.
- (3) The "Canon of Odes" (Shā-king or Shih Ching), containing about three hundred poems or odes selected by Confucius from more than three thousand, is a valuable source of information concerning Chinese culture, though no English translation has yet revealed the poetical charms which the Chinese claim for them.
- (4) The "Canon of Rites" (Li-ki or Li Chi) is a ceremonial guide, dating from the time of Chou, for the Chinese gentleman for all occasions of daily life.

- (5) The "Spring and Autumn" (Ch' un-ts'in) or (Ch'un Ch'u), a record by Confucius of the state of his birth, Lu, covering the years 722 to 469 B.C., has been criticised as extremely biased and misleading though the terse language has been the pattern for many later chronological works.

II. The "Four Books".

- (1) The "Analects", "Conventions", or "Discourses" (Lun Yü), compiled by the first disciples, presents in dialogue form the teachings of Confucius on filial duty, the supreme virtue.
- (2) "The Great Learning" (Ta hio or Ta Hiao) is a treatise on self-culture, the compilation of which foreign critics attribute to K'ung Chi, the grandson of Confucius.
- (3) "The Doctrine of the Mean", or "The Golden Medium" (Chung-yung or Choong Yoong), also compiled by Kung Chi (Chee-see), describes the ideal man and recommends the middle course in all things.
- (4) "The Philosopher K'ung" (Mong-tzai or Mung Chee) presents the practical application of the teachings of Confucius, being made by Mencius, the teacher of personal character, who lived about two hundred years after the death of Confucius.

From even this brief explanation of the nine books it may be clearly seen that it was through the influence of the life and teachings of Confucius that they were created. That relation of Confucius to the books and the fact that the Classics have been the core of all Chinese education, elementary and advanced, until the early twentieth century, explains the dominance of Confucius over the Chinese mind, to which their saying gives expression: "What Confucius teaches is true; what is contrary to his teaching is false; what he does not teach is unnecessary".

There is discussion among writers as to how far Confucius was responsible for the conservative character of his people and how far he was simply the interpreter and formulator of it. Though that question is not exactly relevant to our study, his influence upon the literature of succeeding centuries is vitally important. Professor Hirth said: "Certainly, the personality of the sage stands in closer relation to the development of Chinese Literature than that of any other individual stands to any other national literature in Asia or in Europe." As early as 1868 J. W. Wiley had observed: "His writing constitutes not simply the elements of Chinese

.....
 39 Columbia University Lectures on Literature, Hirth: Chinese Literature, p. 67.

literature, but the substance and measurement of
 Chinese education and literary excellence".⁴⁰

Regarding the influence of the sage upon the literature of other nations, Robert M. Lewis said: "Confucian learning was for many cycles the touchstone of scholarship in Japan, Annam, and among those mountain peoples who flank the Persian and Afghan domain."⁴¹

Professor Latourette referred to Confucian learning as being to the neighboring countries "what the culture of the Mediterranean world was to the Germanic peoples of Northern Europe".⁴²

The ethical teachings of the Classics, of which the keyword is filial duty, have been repeatedly discussed by American writers, among whom are Paul Carus, Alfred Wilhelm Martin, Ernest F. Fenollosa, and James Freeman Clarke. Titles bearing on the moral and philosophical phases of the Classics have been included in our bibliography (p. 111) for examination by the interested reader.

Concerning the magnitude of the Classics, A. P. Peabody wrote: "How the Chinese Classics were ever written is a profound mystery but 'there were giants in those days' and the feats of authorship which for

.....
 40 National Magazine 8:413 (1868).
 41 Lewis: The Educational conquest of the Far East.
 42 Latourette: The Development of China, p. XI.

so many centuries have been unapproached and unapproachable are to be placed in the same category with the walls of Babylon, the pyramids of Egypt, and the great Chinese wall itself".⁴³ The feat is yet more remarkable when the destruction of the books and their restoration from memory is recalled.⁴⁴

Comparisons or analogies, if intelligently drawn, are helpful in cultivating a genuine appreciation for foreign works. In 1872, Professor J. S. Sewall made the following comparisons: Confucius "impressed upon his disciples rules of behavior that resemble those of Chesterfield, axioms of common sense that remind us of Franklin, and principles of morals that would have been worthy of Seneca, or Cato, or even of Paul".⁴⁵ Lewis called Confucius the Aristotle of Asia, while Secretary Long named Mencius the Chinese Socrates. Arthur H. Smith wrote, "The orthodox Chinese view of the Chinese Classics appears to be much the same as the orthodox Christian view in regard to the Hebrew Scriptures; they are supposed to contain all that is highest and best in the wisdom of the best, and to contain all that is equally adapted to the present time and to the days of old."⁴⁶

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43 North American Review, Oct. 1848.

44 See Appendix I.

45 New Englander 31;57, April 1872.

46 Smith; Chinese Characteristics, p. 116. (1894).

Though there has been no complete American translation of the Classics, there has been an interest in translations since 1813. In that year, the Analectic Magazine reprinting an article, "The Memoirs of the Life of Confucius", from the Monthly Magazine, introduced it thus: "Among other literary gratifications which have resulted from the recent cultivation of oriental literature may be named the publication of the original text of the works of Confucius and of a translation of the same by Mr. James Marshman (English). We presume we will gratify our readers by presenting them with the prefatory memoirs of the great philosopher as they are read and received among his countrymen."⁴⁷ In 1868, after an anonymous American author at Worcester, Massachusetts, had published a reprint of Legge's translation of the Analects, The Great Learning, and The Doctrine of the Mean, omitting all the author's notes, the North American Review printed a criticism of Legge's translation, concluding thus: "A judicious selection from Dr. Legge's Prolegomena and notes would have rendered this volume of great worth to American scholars, few of whom would require the Chinese text, but many of whom would regard as a desirable acquisition a properly edited translation."⁴⁸

.....
47 Analectic Magazine 1:34b (1813).

48 North American Review 103:549 (1868).

Apparently, however, no American has undertaken the translation of the Classics or of one complete book, though many selections have been translated and presented to American readers. As yet we seem to be satisfied with English translations except for the recent translations from the Book of Odes by Witter Bynner and Amy Lowell.

Apart from the Classics, the Chinese literature is rich in philosophical treatises. There are over eleven hundred commentaries on the Classics which have been ranked as literature besides numerous non-Confucian essays and systems of thought.

But numerous as are the philosophical writings in the third of the "Four Treasuries", only one has received much attention from American scholars. That book, the Tao Teh-King, was written about the same time as the "Five Canons", by Lao Tza (Lao Tze), the founder of the mystical philosophy or religion known as Taoism (Taoism). A. Kingsley Glover characterized the Tao Teh King as a picture of primeval man and considered Taoism rather than Confucianism the "origin of Chinese conservatism and opposition to occidental civilization and science".⁴⁹ Dr. Paul Carus, who has done more than any other American to present the Tao Teh King to Americans, said "Lao-tze's Tao Teh King

contains so many surprising analogies with Christian thought and sentiment, that were its pre-Christian origin not established beyond the shadow of a doubt, one would be inclined to discover in it traces of Christian influence. He (Lao-Tze) insists on the necessity of becoming like unto a little child, of returning to primitive simplicity and purity, of non-assertion and non-resistance, and promises that the crooked shall be straight.⁵⁰ Besides his translation of the Tao Teh King, and the extract published as The Canon of Reason and Virtue, Dr. Carus translated the Yin Chich Wen and the Tai Shang Kan Ying Pien, other Taoistic works, and wrote two treatises, Chinese Philosophy and Chinese Thought.

Other philosophers who have received brief comment from Americans are: Mo Ti (Micius), "the philosopher of mutual love", whose altruism approaches Christian benevolence; Yang Chu, the philosopher of ignoble pessimism, and Cheeche, Chowtze, and Chengtze, the three great pantheistic philosophers of the Sung dynasty (960-1279 A.D.).

Another very important work is The Mirror of the Mind, which contains twenty chapters of quotations from over fifty books of which many of the originals have been lost. Rev. A. W. Loomis stated that

quotations from the Mirror were recognized and applauded by Chinamen wherever they were met, and said that "with some exceptions and some revisions, it is worthy of being made the vade mecum of any person."⁵¹

A complete translation of Chapter I was given in the Overland Magazine in 1868⁵¹ (Loomis's translation) and again in 1872⁵² (anonymous).

The Classics and philosophical writings of China are the core of her literature and reveal a people thinking and searching for the truth.

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51 Overland Magazine 1:525 (1868).

52 Ibid., 8:555 (1871).

CHAPTER VII

The Novel and the Drama

What must have been the surprise of American readers when, in 1828, the North American Review gave notice to a Chinese novel! Because romances and narratives are not included in the "Four Treasuries" and are not recognized by the Chinese scholars as literature, foreigners have been slow to discover the ancient romantic tale of the Celestials. But in 1828 Alexander Hill Everett introduced one Chinese romance to Americans and since then a few others have been brought to our attention.

Everett stated, "It has long been known by the accounts of missionaries who visited China in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that the literature of that country was extremely rich, especially in the department of poetry and romance;" but, he explained, the nature of the work of the Jesuit missionaries prevented deep research into the works. However, they had sent none to France large collections and from the five or six thousand volumes in the Royal Library of Paris, M. Remusat, "undoubtedly the most

.....
53 North American Review 27:524-62 (October, 1828).

distinguished Chinese scholar" of his day, prosecuted his studies. It was his translation of The Two Cousins (Yu-Kiao-Li) which Everett carefully reviewed, compared, and criticised for American readers of 1828.

Though the writings of J. T. Doyen, S. Wells Williams, and Isaac Taylor Headland, eight Chinese romances or novels have been introduced. We shall first glean from their studies and those of Griffis and P. Y. Leo, a few general comments on the type and then give a brief description of each of the romances.

In 1911, William Elliot Griffis explained the origin of the Chinese romance in this manner:
 "Whether the Mongols brought the romance from that paradise of the story-teller in Central Asia, where grew up from the soil of Persia, India, and Arabia the so-called 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments', or whether they invented it in China, the credit of the Chinese novel belongs to the Yuan era. Before that there were only fables, anecdotes, short stories, and the lore that Buddhism supplied".⁵⁴ The clash of the vigorous alien races with the natives deepened the Chinese consciousness and kindled the imagination so that "from this era literature is infused with a new spirit and takes on more fascinating form"; there

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is more "sublimity of thought and boldness of imagery". Yet it is uncertain whether the novel was developed out of the native drama or from the Buddhist mystery and morality plays and pageants.

Though but few novels have been translated, Griffis stated that there was a vast storehouse of fiction which may be classified according to the themes as: (1) "usurpations or plots"; (2) "love and intrigue"; (3) "superstition, local legend, mythical zoology"; and (4) "lawless characters",⁵⁵ comparable to those in American cheap fiction.

To the incredulous American, T. Y. Leo made a clear explanation of the status of romance in China: "The Chinese race, no less than any other race on the planet, is much given to sentiment and romanticism, and in the art of love-making, certainly lacks no proficiency. Only it is not considered a sign of education or culture, freely to demonstrate and betray the inner self to the whole world at large;" "the fact is that stories and novels, whether in rhyme or in prose, have never been regarded in China as a branch of literature, never considered, with a few exceptions, by the Chinese themselves with any serious attention, and consequently their writing was not cultivated as an art."⁵⁶ Mr. Laufer makes a

.....
 55 Griffis: China's Story, p. 163.
 56 Asia 20:392 (1920).

statement to the same effect but also says that fiction covers a wide field and is immensely popular. In his collection he secured some of the more important novels and "those having a certain value as illustrating the history of culture".

Professor S. Wells Williams has made the only American study of the Chinese historical novel, stating in 1880, that a score of imaginative works including plays, novels, and poetical extracts had been translated but no historical novel of any size, except The Rambles of Chingth in Kiangnan. Of the many historical writings "corresponding most nearly to our historical novels", etc., ^{it} is difficult to discover "in which fact and in which fiction most prevails". Yet "the insight they give into national manners and customs of various ages, habits of thought of the people, and the influence they still exert in the formation of national character, recommend them to foreign scholars as among the most interesting portions of Chinese literature". The historical novel is more highly regarded in China itself than other fictions, because history is an esteemed class of writing.

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57 Laufer; East Asiatic Collection, p. 29.

58 New Englander 39:30 (1880).

The Two Cousins, (Yu-Kiao-Li), was the first Chinese novel called to the attention of American readers. In 1828, Alexander Hill Everett, having read Reusset's French translation of the novel, compared the plot, in which the hero wins the hands of two cousins, with the plots of Samuel Richardson's novels. ⁵⁹ He gave an extended outline of the plot, a few quotations, and a discussion of the social system portrayed.

The Dream of the Red Chamber, (Hung Lou Meng) was the next novel with which Americans were made acquainted. In 1868, J. T. Doyen reviewed the introductory chapter in which a peasant family of artless simplicity sought aid from wealthy friends of the upper class. He also included a translation of a portion of the chapter as an example of the ⁶⁰ detailed style of the Chinese narratives. The Dream of the Red Chamber was the first novel handed to Isaac Taylor Headland when, in visiting a book shop in Peking, he asked for the best standard novels in

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59 See quotation of Goethe's comparison of a Chinese novel with Richardson's and with his own Herman and Dorothea. Forum 67:333-4.

60 Overland 1:95-98 (July, 1868).
Note: The interesting statement is made in this article that "it is considered exceedingly bad taste for an author to put his name of the title page of his book". They say it is "impertinence for an author to flourish his name about before the public has tasted his merits".

the Chinese language. The explanation was made that it had been translated into English, German, French, and other European languages.⁶¹

Three other novels handed to Mr. Headland in the Peking shop were: A Garden of Flowers in the Capital, illustrated with Chinese wood-cuts; The Students' Courtship, in a beautiful hand-painted copy; and the Hsi Hsiang Chi, a story of the inevitable match-maker. After offering these, the Chinese clerk said, "The most of the others are insipid and vulgar but these contain nothing that may not be read by ladies". Later he said, "We have one other historical novel which, outside of the classics, is the most widely read book in the Empire. It is called The History of the Three Kingdoms and is poured over by every boy who is able to read and can secure a copy of the book."

In 1880 Professor S. Wells Williams had discussed the History (Records) of the Three kingdoms (San Kwoh Chi) as the source of incidents and heroes which have become common subjects for ballads, stories, and dramas. Another historical novel which he discussed was Record of the Feudal Kingdoms (Lih Kwoh Chi), a narrative of the acts of twenty-four monarchs of the Eastern Chou dynasty (B.C. 790-300).⁶²

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61 Critic 38:440 (1904).
62 New Englander 39:30 (1880).

The Romance of the Western Pavillion (Hui-Chen-Chi) translated and briefly commented upon by T. W. Leo in the magazine Asia for May, 1930, is a simple tale upon which a more elaborate and celebrated drama has been based, The Record of the Western Side Chamber, (Hsi-Siang Chi). Leo, a Chinese, was the first to attempt a translation of the romance into English.

The best novel to be introduced to Americans was one of romantic love. The Fortunate Union (Hao Ch' in Ch' uan), which recounts the experiences of two lovers in escaping the intrigues of a wicked uncle. 63

The Chinese drama, like the novel, is a fruit of the mingling of the Mongol and the native civilizations in China. Griffis explains that before the mongol invasion there had been court songs, and acting, and the blending of the two in opera, one of the Han emperors having established (A.D. 713) the Imperial Dramatic College where youths were trained for musical and dramatic entertainments. Nearly all these dramatic pieces began as religious rites and had developed during the Middle Ages, but "there was no real theatre or full dramatic performance until the Mongol era". 64 Kate Buss, the French student of Chinese drama, referred to it as coming "into China

.....
63 Forum 67:331-340 (1922).

64 Griffis: China's Story, p. 162.

as quietly as a fall of snow over night".⁶⁵

Frederick J. Masters in 1895 had given a more specific account of the founding of the Chinese theatre by Ming Wang, emperor about 720 A.D.

According to popular tradition he trained a group of youth to reproduce his dream of a journey to the moon with a Chinese Ariel, (Tseung Ten Sze), for the spiritual benefit of his wife.⁶⁶ The royal

performance thus inaugurated soon waned after the Emperor's death but was revived by the great dramatic trio of China, Tin, Tau, and Chung.⁶⁷ The Yuan

Dynasty, A.D. 1280-1386, in which eighty-five playwrights lived and more than four hundred

sixty plays were produced, was the Augustan Age of the drama.⁶⁸ Not until 1730 were the theatres

opened to the people or professional theatres permitted to organize in Peking.

During the great dramatic period the theatre sought "to improve the tone of society" and "to inculcate morals - but like the average western theatre, it has degenerated to a mere place of amusement and unhealthy excitement".⁶⁸ Though all the great literary books

.....
65 Buss: Studies in the Chinese Drama, Chapter I.

66 Chautauqua 21:434-42 (July 1895).

67 Century 7:27-44.

68 Chautauquan 21:434-42 (July, 1895).

denounce the theatres as immoral influences and exhort the people not to indulge in them, "the people are passionately fond of them". An actor, no matter what his literary proficiency or his personal attainments, is socially ostracized, and neither he nor his descendants can qualify for the lowest examinations for the literary degree.

The first plays were historical and exalted patriotism and filial piety, but the modern dramas, said Masters, are "mostly comedies of farcical dialogue", in which Henry Surden McDowell recognizes seven types of plot:

- (1) Fu Cheng - historical play or tragedy;
- (2) Fai-Wood - comedy;
- (3) Oi-Yue - Platonic love play;
- (4) Tai Mong - Court play;
- (5) Hong-Koi - chivalry play;
- (6) Yueng-Wang-persecution play; and
- (7) Po-Yeng - merit rewarded play.

Some of the interesting features of the Chinese dramas which McDowell noted were: they are seldom divided into acts; in almost every play a scholar receives a literary degree; each play is conceived to be a part of the history of China, and several plays,

averaging less than an hour in length, are given in succession, as an epic. George H. Pitch said, "the tender passion, which lends the main interest to the dramatic literature of other nations is almost wholly ignored by the Chinese playwright. The majority of the national dramas turn upon the quarrels of petty dignitaries and the arbitrations by which their differences are settled."⁷⁰ John Dewey, in writing of the Chinese political and social conditions in 1919, observed that "As with the drama of the Chinese stage, the main story (of China's transformation) is apparently lost in a mass of changing incidents and excitements, that lack movement, climax, and plot".⁷¹ Again we quote Masters, who said, "A Chinese play may be simple in plot and even silly, but it is commendably free from those nasty accompaniments of our modern stage".⁷²

Let us now list the Chinese dramas which have been considered by American authors.

The Dragon Disputing Pearls centers the attention upon the jealous intrigues of the two wives of an Emperor.⁷³

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 70 Century 2:189 (1882).
 71 Asia 19:1103 (1919).
 72 Chautauquan 21:434 (July 1895).
 73 Century 2:189 (1882).

The Mender of Cracked China is a simple burletta.

The Western Pavilion, merely mentioned by masters, was, according to the statement of Kate Buss, the first Chinese drama ever translated into a European language.

The Chancellor of Six States, (Luke-Kwok-Tung-Seung) or (Loke-Kwog-Fong-Shung), is "distinguished", says McDowell, "as the best play in the Chinese language".⁷⁴ It is indeed elaborate, requiring the rich royal garments for six kings and their wives to appear at one time.

The Story of the Lute (Pi-pa-ki) is more generally⁷⁵ "regarded as the masterpiece of the Chinese theatre. Will Irvin calls it the standard drama of China, "greater among them than Hamlet with us, for the author of Hamlet wrote many plays but the author of Pi-pa-ki (an obscure schoolmaster of the 15th century) wrote only one".⁷⁶ Again, Irvin said, the Pi-pa-ki is "a work of art which has influenced to morality and love of beauty, more millions than our theatres ever held". Its theme is the theme of China, filial piety.

The only Chinese play, so far as we have been able to discover, which has been rendered for

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 74 Century 7:27-44 (November 1884).
 75 Chautauquan 21:434-42 (July 1895).
 76 Everybody's Magazine 20:857-69 (June 1909).

Americans is The Yellow Jacket, an actual adaptation from the Chinese by George Hazelton and Harry Benrimo. Arthur Hornblow made this criticism of The Yellow Jacket: "This play is an absolute novelty, not a variation of something we have known before. Those parts which are true to the original are ludicrously amateurish from our western point of view, but they are nevertheless effective. The play was instantly acknowledged as a unique contribution to American drama."⁷⁷

A collection, One Hundred Plays of the Yuan Dynasty, was gathered and published in 1620, three years before Shakespeare's First Folio appeared. Of these, we know little. There is much for American scholars to do in interpreting and translating, or adapting, if necessary, the yet unknown dramas of China. We hardly know what is to be found in them and there may be many a surprise in store for us like that of Barrett Wendell, who exclaimed, "Why its Shakespeare's stage!" after seeing his first Chinese play.⁷⁸

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77 Quoted from Theatre Magazine in Current Opinion 54:34-6. (January 1913).

78 Ibid.

Note: China now has moving pictures and is producing her own movie plays for the screen. See Colliers 57:23 and Literary Digest 53:1757.

CHAPTER VIII

The Folklore and Legends

The quiet, contemplative people of the Middle Kingdom have for centuries been telling and retelling their folk tales and fables of mysterious charm. But Europeans and Americans, who for generations have fed the imaginations of their children with primitive stories from The Arabian Nights' Entertainments, The Fairy Tales told by Hans Christian Andersen, or the Greek Fables of Aesop, have only during the last generation discovered the wealth of simple wholesome stories repeated among their oriental cousins.

In 1841 a story The Lost Child (Yin Seau Low) was reprinted from the Asiatic Journal for American readers.⁷⁹ It was one from a series, The Twelve Apartments (Sheh urh-low) in which there is one story for each of the twelve chambers or apartments of the moon. It was probably because of the unimaginative tameness and simplicity of the one tale, as it appeared in foreign dress, that the group has not been further discovered to American readers, interesting as it would be to compare it with The Arabian Nights'

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79 American Eclectic 2:318-26 (1841)

Entertainments, The Decameron, and other group stories.

However, since 1893, a few nuggets from China's mine of folklore have been brought to America by Adele M. Fielde, Frederick Wells Williams, Vincent Van Marter Beede, Norman H. Pitman, and Mary Hayes Davis.

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In writing for the American Journal of Folklore in 1895, Miss Adele M. Fielde gave translations, which she wrote sentence by sentence as they were narrated to her, of four short folk tales from their "innumerable store". The stories each have a moral, implied or expressed, and are "singular revelations of the native mind". They are stories of living interest and novel mystery but contain no element of romantic affection.

The four stories presented in the article were:

The Obedient Python, showing that art not power made efficiency, The Marriage of the Carp, An Unlucky Demon, and The Pearl Lantern, showing that kindness to dumb creatures is rewarded. In 1893 Miss Fielde had published a collection of tales under the title Chinese Nights' Entertainments, which was republished in 1912 as Chinese Fairy Tales.

Six short stories Americanized by Chu Seoul Bok and Vincent Van Marter Beede were published in the Chautauquan in 1900.⁸¹ They reveal a wit characteristic

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80 Journal of American Folklore 8:185 (1895).

81 Chautauquan 32:240 (1900).

of the Chinaman but not found in his literature proper.

The titles were: Confucius dumfounded, ~~The Merchants~~
~~Dumfounded~~, The Merchants Revenge, A Bad Matter Made
Worse, Two Dinners instead of One, and A Sure Cure.

The humorous situations in the third and fourth stories would call forth laughter from the most critical foreigner.

In commenting on the myths and tales of China, Griffis said, "Chinese wonder tales contain little more of exaggeration than do those of our Forbears"; "in European and Semitic lore, the hero overcomes and slays the dragons, man's wit and valor prevailing over brute fierceness and strength. This human phase of struggle is as nearly absent from the Oriental lore as praise from their worship".⁸²

Another comment of Griffis was that in their fairy tales "the naughty boy or girl is the lazy one, the good is always notably industrious"; and again he remarked that in their lore one learns to detect the elements of Taoism, Buddhism, or Confucianism in characters, symbols, and the course of the story.

In a report to the Smithsonian Institute in 1900, Professor Frederick Wells Williams compared Chinese folklore with that of western nations in such a way as

82 Griffis: China's Story, pp. 3, 38, 44, 163.

to show how universal are many of the ideas and conceptions which have made up the lore of different peoples. ⁸³ We can only suggest some of the analogies here:

(1) The "Swan Maiden" group: Chinese story of maïd swimming analogous to Ksan of Arabian Nights, moon ^{northern} maidens of Japan, and maid of Samoyeds, of far [^]Asia.

(2) Woman's inconstancy: Chinese ballad, Panning the Grave, paralleled in the Talmudic legend of Perurya and Miër, and Petronius's Matron of Ephesus.

(3) Heroine who killed the dragon and won her prince: "Here is almost a perfect analogue to the Vedic Indra and Ahi, the Iranian Mithra and Ahriman, the Greek Perseus and Andromeda, the British Beowulf and Grendel, and the Teutonic Siegfried."

(4) The fairy or "ideal islands", described by Lie-tsz about B.C. 450; comparable to Atlantis, Hesperides, Ogygia, Avalon, and Horizan (Japanese).

(5) Magical sleep, suggested probably by the sleep of nature in winter; comparable to seven sleepers of Ephesus, Charlemagne, Barbarosa, Rip Van Winkle.

(6) The judgment on two mothers, one of whose sons was found dead; comparable to the story of Solomon's judgment upon the two mothers.

Interesting as are these comparisons, we must omit further discussion, only to mention Williams's statement that "the popular success of Loetz's doctrine and its permanence in Chinese culture may be quite confidently ascribed to its acceptance of folklore creations handed down from primitive man in Asia. It is in the writings of the earliest Taoist disciples that the fairy myth of primitive China first takes literary form."⁸⁴

During the last fourteen years various renderings of Chinese fairy tales have been made by Americans. In 1910, Norman H. Ditman published a book, Chinese Fairy Tales and in 1919, Chinese Wonder Book. In 1921 Frederick H. Martens translated into English from the German R. H. Wilhelm's The Chinese Fairy Book. In 1922 appeared Brian Brown's Chinese Nights Entertainments: Stories of Old China, which are not translations but are adaptations of material gathered from original sources. The publishers describe the collection thus: "Little known stories of Peach Blossom Land, showing the love legends, the quaint folk beliefs, the mystery and passion of the ancestral races. These tales, brief but sharply etched and entertaining, betray the true heart of China." Other collections are: Mrs. M. M. Russell's Gleanings from

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84 Report of Smithsonian Institution (1900), pp. 575-600.

Chinese Folk-lore, E. M. Felges's Chinese Fables and Stories, and W. A. Hunt's Chinese Story Teller.

Concerning the Chinese fable, we have said nothing. In 1908, Mary Hayes Davis, in offering her Chinese Fables and Folk Stories, wrote in her preface: "It has long been the accepted belief of the world's best scholars that Chinese literature did not possess the fable, and chapters in interesting books have been written on this subject affirming its absence." In her study of the people and their literature, Miss Davis had found many fables, and in the introduction to her book Mr. Yin-Chwang Wang Tsen-zan of the University of Chicago explained why the Chinese fables "had never been heretofore known to the world", and why, before this book was produced, they were never found in any of the European languages: First, because they are written here and there in the advanced books which are known to only the highly educated Chinese literati; and second, because they are written in the book language which few foreigners master sufficiently to enable them to find the Chinese fables. "So far as I know," concluded Mr. Yin-Chwang, this book being the first of its kind, will tell the world of the new discovery of the Chinese fable."

Miss Davis's volume contains thirty-seven stories each accompanied by the title in Chinese characters

and an illustrative Chinese print in black and white. The moral of the story is always proverbially expressed at the close, and notes of explanation are frequently inserted.

knowing something of the folk stories and fables of the Celestials, we feel more akin to them than through any other portion of their literature, excepting possibly their poetry.

CHAPTER IX

Miscellaneous Writings

There are various types of literature, such as encyclopedias, juvenile books, and proverbs, which may not be considered literature proper, but, nevertheless, are revelations of the thought of a people and their regard for literature. American comments on types such as these may properly be reviewed in a study of American interest in Chinese literature.

The Chinese encyclopedias are monuments of their reverence for recorded thought. Repeated efforts have been made to assemble and preserve all the valuable books of the empire; the four most important being: the imperial collection made by Liu Hsiang in B.C. 26; the T'ai P'iang Yü Lau made about 900 A.D.; The Yung Lo Fa Tien (1409 A.D.), a universal encyclopedia comprising 22,937 volumes; and the Usu-ku ch-tan (The Four Treasuries of Literature), a collection of 3,500 works, made in 1723-36, and embracing the cream of Chinese literature from the most ancient times. China is now (1924) making arrangements to have the one intact copy of the last encyclopedia reprinted in five hundred sets, of which

four hundred would sell at three thousand dollars each and the remaining sets, forming a special edition, would sell at eight thousand dollars a set.

China's exhaustive histories and biographies are a field for endless study.

China also has her proverbs. Disraeli is quoted as saying that there are more than twenty thousand proverbs in common use in Europe, but Scarborough (English) and Smith (American) are confident that China alone has as many. In his Proverbs and Common Sayings of the Chinese, which Bishop Bashford considers the best exposition of the proverbs of China, Arthur H. Smith said, "Chinese proverbs contain an almost complete chart of human nature as the Chinese understand it, while Bishop Bashford, who had spent years in China, said, "the proverbs probably exercise a larger influence on the people than any other form of literature". There are, however, few Chinese collections, as the scholars appear to despise the proverbs and would consider the task of collecting them as beneath their dignity, because they are not expressed in the classical language. Yet a scholar freely spices his writings with proverbs and an orator can almost be certain of carrying conviction if he can

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85 See Bashford: China: An Interpretation, p. 164.

quote a proverb to sustain his point.

Arthur H. Smith's Proverbs and Common Sayings appear to be the only American collection, though
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Bashford has quoted one hundred four from Scarborough,
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and A. W. Loomis and others have quoted proverbs frequently in their discussions.

China has specimens in a field of literature entirely unrepresented in works coming down from Greece and Rome and unrepresented in Western works until the last two or three centuries - books prepared for children, to give them what is deemed desirable for them. The first child's book was the Trimetrical Classic prepared by Wang P'ih-hao (about 1050 A.D.) for his domestic school. It consists of one hundred seventy-six lines of two sections, each containing three characters. The rhythm and tonal rhymes make the memorization of it less difficult than the complex characters, among the most complex in the language, would make it seem. "It has a popularity", says Rev. H. A. Sawtelle, "which no other first book for the child in the world possesses. No book of its
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class has been handled by so many little hands."

It seeks not alone to teach the characters but to form a nucleus of knowledge of history and literature and a

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86 See Bashford: China: An Interpretation, pp. 165-9.

87 Overland 10:82-5 (1873).

88 Ibid., 6:177 (1873).

respect and thirst for learning. The Chinese say, "It forms a passport into the regions of classical and historical literature".

When Chu Hsi, about 1200 A.D., established the elementary course which persisted down to 1911, he made the Trimetrical Classic the first in the series of six, the others being, Family Surnames, Thousand Character Classic, Odes for Children, Canon of Filial Piety, and Juvenile Instructor (Siao Hieh).

Two interesting primers which are purchased by parents who cannot give their children a complete classical training, are described by S. Wells Williams.⁸⁹ The first of those primers, Words Which Confucius Did Not Speak (Tsz' Puh Yu) is a series of seven hundred tales of talking beasts, apparitions, and monsters, told in a simple style and in the smallest number of characters possible. The other, Eastern Garden Miscellany (Tung Yuen Tshah-tsz) is a Chinese Book of Knowledge, a compendium of useful facts. It consists of seven hundred pages (octavo) with the following divisions: Frontispiece of Confucius, Plan of the Heaven (28 constellations), Description of the World (China in the center with all other nations as surrounding islands), Anecdotes of Confucius, Text of the

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89 New Englander 37:297-310 (May 1878).

Thousand Character Classic (see above), Surnames (see above), Disciples of Confucius, and stories and pictures of common objects.

Another child's piece, of which Dr. Williams gave a complete translation, is the metrical Rules for Sons and Younger Brothers printed in Shansi in 1865, giving principles of duty towards others.

The little children of the Flowery Kingdom, deprived of many of the pleasures which western children enjoy, have not been denied the joys of nursery rhymes. In 1901 Isaac Taylor Headland published a small collection of child rhymes which he entitled Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes. "There is," he said, "no language in the world we venture to believe which contains children's songs expressive of more keen and tender affection than those we have mentioned." ("Sweeter than Sugar" and "Sweet Pill"). In Headland's handsome little volume, one page was devoted to each rhyme giving the song in Chinese characters, the professor's free translation into rhymed lines, and a half-tone reproduction of a photograph taken especially for the book to illustrate the rhyme.

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Edward S. Holden, in describing Headland's volume,

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 90 Bookman 13:150-2 (April 1901).

quoted three of the rhymes ("Sweeter than Honey", "The Bat", and "Sweet Pill") and mentioned "The Snail" and its musical accompaniment. He then criticised the author's translations saying that it would have been better to translate them into prose "line for line and to have avoided the shackles of rhyme". He quoted four unrhymed specimens given to him twenty years before by Tsai Sih Yung, an accomplished attaché of the Chinese Legation at Washington, which had been liked by children and had a "value that no rhymed translations possess". They were "A Little Chick", "Oy, Oy, Oy", "Our Emperor Appreciates Talent" and "The Moon Brightly Shines", the latter having repetitions like those in "The House that Jack Built".

Another interesting Chinese book is a new geography written by the lieutenant-governor of Fuh-Chau, about
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 1850. It repeatedly refers to the "western men" and expresses and urges confidence in their ideas of geography and history, though contrary to ancient Chinese ideas. Littell's Living Age reprinted sections from the book on "The Earth and Its Oceans", "The United States", "George Washington", and "The People of the United States". The biography of Washington was very appreciative and closed with this interesting and rather amusing comment: "I have seen

his picture. His countenance exhibits great mental power. Ah! who would not call him an uncommon man." This book has a particular value as a revelation of the play of western ideas of the world, upon the mind of that contemplative people.

One other item we would note in this chapter of miscellaneous matter is a dainty piece of needlework, "as celebrated as is the Bayeux tapestry on which the Norman invasion of England is depicted".⁹² In the fourth century A.D. the wife of a governor exiled among the Tartars, "embroidered her laments in an intricate circular scrollwork in eight hundred forty characters on satin and sent it as a souvenir to her absent lord".⁹² This specimen is one more evidence of fundamental qualities common to Anglo-Saxons and their yellow cousins.

In noticing China's vast encyclopedia, her wealth of proverbs, her simple child rhymes, her amateur geography, and her memorial satin, we should recognize them as expressions of racial thought life of which the classical literature and the poetry are only more formal and more artistic expressions.

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92 Griffis; China's Story, p.40.

CHAPTER X

Chinese Poetry

The story of American interest in Chinese poetry has been like the life history of a tulip bulb; imported as a brown uninteresting lump apparently dead but guaranteed to contain life, buried for three or four months, sending up green leaves, and then suddenly producing a beautiful blossom. In 1829 the imported bulb was planted,⁹³ (a reprint of an English study of Chinese poetry), in 1901, after seventy-two years, the first green leaves appeared in Professor Martin's study,⁹⁴ and then suddenly about 1919 the interest blossomed in the sympathetic and appreciative translations of Witter Bynner and Amy Lowell.⁹⁵ During the last five years the native beauty and simplicity of the poems have attracted many scholars and literary readers.

Littell's reprint of 1829⁹⁵ from the Quarterly Review first discussed the early poetry, the songs and odes in the Confucian Book of Odes (Shu-king), stating

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93 Littell's Museum of Foreign Literature and Science 15:366 (1829).

94 North American Review 172:853-862 (1901).

95 In current magazines and in volumes of translations; see bibliography.

that "in our paraphrase it has been necessary to embody the full sense of what is only hinted at in the original and explained at length in the commentary." Concerning the later poetry there were several topics discussed: the poetic Tang dynasty and the great poet Li-tae-pih, the many heroic poems, the absence of epics and true pastoral poems but presence of those celebrating tillage, the abundance of moral and didactic poems, the numerous metrical essays on the doctrines of Confucius, the absence of satire but the abundance of anonymous lampoons against officers, and the volumes of descriptive and mythological poems.

After seventy-two years, in which only British translations of a few poems appeared, ⁹⁶ Professor W. A. P. Martin published an exposition of Chinese poetry. He noted the absence of epic poetry, though the historical romance exhibited all the features of the epic except the verse form; dramatic poetry, he said, was abundant, and didactic was ever present. Of China's lyric poets, he said, "In the face of all competition they are able to vindicate a high position." Brief mention was made of an ancient book of elegies, chiefly the work of one man, Chu Yuen.

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 96 Living Age 200:351 (1893). Other reprints were
 Living Age 259:477 (1908) and 264:820-3 (1910).

Having discussed the various poetic types, Professor Martin commented on The Book of Odes and on individual poets. The classic Shu-king, he said, was re-edited, not compiled, by Confucius, and because of his careful selection the sage could say, "Of these three hundred odes, there is not one that departs from purity of thought". The characteristic refrain of the odes, the initial poetic image being repeated in each stanza, he compared to the refrain in Burns's Green Grow the Rushes, O and Tennyson's Break, Break, Break. Several poets of the Han dynasty, in which the lyric form was perfected and lyric poetry reached its climax, were named: Kia Yi, whose Bird of Ill Omen reminds us of Poe's Raven, Su, Wu, Lin, and Pan Tsi Yu, the Sappho of China. Other poets discussed were Tu Fu and Li Po of the Tang dynasty, Emperor Kieu Ling of the last dynasty, and Pao and Tung, contemporary ministers of state.

Ten years after Professor Martin's exposition, an article expressing enthusiastic admiration appeared anonymously in the Harper's Weekly, The Diaphanous in Literature.⁹⁷ Quoting Walter Pater's description of the diaphanous - "effects of supreme loveliness, so faint, so rare, so true, that years and years of

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97 Harper's Weekly 55:6 (1911).

familiarity will still lend new and strange beauty to the delicate words in which he (the poet) caught the veil of impressions almost too frail for embodiment," - the writer said, "it is this quality above all others with which Chinese poetry is replete". No occidental, he continued, has been able to attain their clarity and simplicity of impression. After quoting his translation of Li-Tai Pe's The Fisherman, he said: "It is a vanity, a despair to try to turn it into English, so pale and frail and vague it is". That suggestive brevity and beauty which he valued so highly, the English author of 1929 had thought necessary to shroud with English matter-of-fact paraphrase that would "say everything". Referring to Thou Fu's (Tu Fu) poem in which the eyebrow of the mistress is compared to the horn of a butterfly; the author remarks, "What a keen and quick perception, and how perfectly one gets the delicate curve of the line from the simile". Bandelaire, Verlaine, Arthur Symons, and Fiona McLeod (William Sharp) all sought to attain this diaphanous quality but as yet the oriental alone excels in the art.

Among the modern American verse writers Chinese poetry is enjoying unequalled popularity. During the last ten or fifteen years translators have been bringing forth oriental verse from its hidden pages,

but "of all the poetry of the East that of China has excited the greatest admiration among circles of critical distinction".⁹⁸ Ezra Pound, Louise S. Hammond, Amy Lowell, and Witter Bynner are the Americans to whom we are indebted for translations, while Arthur Waley and L. Crammer Byng are translating contemporaneously in England and Helen Wadell in Ireland.

The analysis of Chinese poetry by Mrs. Eunice Tietjens⁹⁹ is a fitting introduction to a brief notice of each of the American translators. She warns against our thinking of the simplicity of Chinese verse as the simplicity of folk verse. Added to the complexity of the language (See Appendix C) is a complexity of prosody which prompts Mrs. Tietjens to say, "Let anyone who finds it difficult to write poetry in English offer praises to Apollo that he is not a Chinese". In a given verse pattern the length of the line is fixed, the rhyme scheme is determined, and the tonal pattern allows of only a very few variations. Since in their language the tone of a word is essential to the meaning conveyed, there being four tones (in Mandarin; nine in Cantonese) in which a word may be spoken, giving it as many different

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 98 Literary Digest 55:51 (December 29, 1917).
 99 Poetry 20:268-74 and 328-332 (1922).

meanings, the management of a tone pattern is most difficult. The system of prosody combines the rising, sinking, and abruptly arrested tones as one tone, distinguished by the term "tsch" from the flat or low tone, "ping". The pattern of a "tsuch", a standard four line form may be indicated thus:

ping ping tsch tsch tsch ping ping
 tsch tsch ping ping tsch tsch ping
 tsch tsch ping ping ping tsch ping
 ping ping tsch tsch tsch ping ping.

(Except for six characters, three in the second line and three in the third line, permitting variation, the "tonal pattern is absolutely set".)

To attempt to translate such a form as this into a comparable English pattern and still to express the thought, is trying to solve a modern Gordian knot. Realizing the problem, we are less likely to question and to criticize when versions of translators vary widely in verse form and in fullness of expression.

Mrs. Tietjens's characterization of the work of various translators is instructive, though perhaps not all scholars or readers would agree with her. We shall briefly suggest her comments, including English translators for comparison:

H. A. Giles (1896, English) - "rhymed English verse in older English idiom".

James Legge (1870, English) - "scrupulous prose".

Arthur Waley (1911 ff, English) - "combines rime and literalness with wonderful dexterity"; his translations being "at once so simple and so scholarly", carrying with them instant conviction of authenticity.

Louise S. Hammond - conforming in syllables, rime, scheme, and as nearly as possible, in rhythmic pattern to the original but necessarily omitting much of the thought; accompanied by the "chanting tunes in which they are recited".

Helen Waddell (born in China, resident in Ireland) - done from Legge's translations not the originals. Her translations of 1913, said Mrs. Tietjens, are "the first translations into English so far as my knowledge goes which belong to the new movement in English poetry.

Whitall - renderings from the French versions of Judith Gautier.

Ezra Pound - "chose a single image that pleased him from a long poem and gave us that only"; produced "airy snatches".

E. Poveys Mathers - "so overly decorated as to be genuinely dishonest".

W. A. P. Martin - "dreadful doggerel".

Charles Budd - "trite and wearisome mouthings".

Any Lowell - claimed by her publishers to have furnished the first English version of Chinese poems "at once the work of a sinologue and a poet."

L. Crammer Byng - "neither very good English verse nor very scrupulous translation".

Witter Bynner - "promises to be the most satisfying of free verse translations".

Following upon Mrs. Tietjens's analysis of the technique of Chinese poetry, we may consider Witter Bynner's interpretation of the thought and spirit of their poems. ¹⁰⁰ "Wordsworth", he says, "in his lyrics, is the most nearly Chinese of our poets. The poetry of the Chinese is, like his, the poetry of the mature, or, better, of grown children. It sings not the rebelliousness of youth, but the wisdom of age; not the excitement of artificial life, except for the elevation brought by wine, but the quiet of nature; not the unsteady joys of passion but the steadfast joy of friendship. It is attached to daily life, not reserved for an ethereal pastime."

In 1918, Mr. Bynner undertook to translate the Chinese anthology of the Tang dynasty, three hundred poems which are memorized by every Celestial boy.

The task which he thought to accomplish in one year was still unfinished after three years of continuous work, yet he felt it was most worth while and rewarding. He traveled in China in 1918 with his collaborator, Kiang Kang-nu, visiting scenes where the poets had lived and spots which they had made sacred to memory. There he became imbued with the spirit of the poets and described the Tang poets as those who "see things as they are and thereby bring the high, the deep, the everlasting, into simple easy touch with the immediate. They are masters of the momentous minutiae, the small things that make the big. They know and record the immense patience of beauty. There is a sadness in that beauty, but it is an honest, a hearty, an ever relishable beauty."

Tu Fu, Mr. Bynner said, is generally considered by the Chinese as their greatest lyric poet, though of him and Li Po it is said: "How shall we tell when two eagles have flown beyond sight, which one came nearer the sun?" A number of Witter Bynner's translations of Li Po and Tu Fu and a few from the anthology have appeared in the magazine Asia and in the Freeman. His volume of translations will be enthusiastically welcomed when it comes from the press.

Concerning the work of Amy Lowell and Mrs. Florence Ayscough in translating Chinese poems,

published as Fir Flower Tablets, we can say but little. Mrs. Ayscough, an eminent student of the language and literature, considered Amy Lowell's attitude to poetry as akin to that of the Chinese poets and welcomed the opportunity to work with her. She transliterates the poem, placing in brackets other possible renderings. Miss Lowell then expresses the thought in an English line which Mrs. Ayscough says is nearer to the original than any other translation she has read.

101

Another volume of translations which should not be passed without notice is that by Shegiyoshi Obata, a Japanese student of the University of Wisconsin, who prefaces his volume thus: "This is the first attempt ever made to deal with any single Chinese poet exclusively in one book for the purpose of introducing him to the English-speaking world." His book contains one hundred four poems by Li Po, eight short poems about Li Po by other poets, and three critical-biographical notes by Chinese authors.

102

Mr. Laufer in his descriptive account of the Chinese works in the Newberry Library thus expresses his estimate of the importance of Chinese poetry: "Its study is valuable to us for its high aesthetic merits, but at a future date it will surely fulfill a

101 Literary Digest 72:38.

102 Obata: Works of Li Po.

a greater mission and furnish the fundamental material for the most difficult of all subjects connected with China - the psychology of the Chinese. Here their sentiments have crystallized, and he who wants to get the spirit of Chinese feeling and thinking must turn to their poetry, which is also the basis for the understanding of their painting and music." ¹⁰³

Without further comment, we urge the reader to taste for himself the fruit of China's poetic thought in translations of Amy Lowell, Witter Bynner, and Arthur Waley. ¹⁰⁴

.....
 103 Laufer: East Asiatic Collection, p. 29.

104 Note: An interesting study which the limits of our subject do not permit us to pursue is that of the imitation of Chinese poetry by Americans and the influence of the poems on American free verse and the "imagist" school. The works of Christopher Morley and Elizabeth J. Coatsworth afford an introduction into that field.

CONCLUSION

Through the work of various individuals in studying one type and another, American readers have caught glimpses of almost every literary form found in China. The classics and philosophical books have, perhaps, little more to offer than has been gathered during the many years that they have been known. The poetry is now opening up treasures of imagery and simple beauty and will undoubtedly receive and reward much future study. While our appreciation of the novel and the drama has been comparatively slight, it may be that our realization of the values they contain is as limited as was the early understanding of the poetry compared with Witter Bynner's appraisal.

While Americans and Chinese continue to interchange goods and labor, ideals and curios, and while China is borrowing our scientific and literary books, we may wisely continue to open our eyes to the works of ancient and modern Chinese authors. We can better understand the China of today and her marvelous transformations of the present hour if we know something of the thought life of the centuries and centuries before her new birth, - H. C. Reynolds is not alone in his expectations expressed in 1919,

"In literature alone the performances of the past would lead us to expect that a literate China would produce something of inestimable value to the whole

105

world". We are having a part in China's advance and when her new national language gives her new national spirit and literature, we will recognize in her human qualities which before had been concealed.

APPENDIX A

Survey of the History of China and her Relations with America

China is the eldest living member of the family of nations, having flourished during the triumphs of Babylon and Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and having lived on in seclusion while the nations of Europe and of the western hemisphere contested for power and territory. During the nineteenth century, she reluctantly came forth from her retirement and at the opening of the twentieth century she is eager to play an active role in the drama of nations.

Proud as she is of her long history, China has no authentic birth certificate. Modern scholarship is endeavoring to trace the source of the Chinese civilization from the Yellow River valley back to the Tigris-Euphrates valley, and it may in the process of investigation establish its theory of the relation of Chinese to the Sumerian (Turanian) race and civilization. However, the Chinese chronicles do not admit any possibility of a foreign origin of the race. That territory which throughout history has been occupied by the Middle Kingdom is "the scene of action

of all their prehistoric figures from P'an ku, the first human being", ¹⁰⁶ and Yu-hi, whom they regard as their first ruler (2852 B.C.), down to the three model emperors, Yao, Shun, and Yü. The last of those traditional emperors is reported, in fairly trustworthy account, to have drained a great flood from the land and founded the first dynasty, Hsia (Hsia), 2205 B.C.

After another millenium of clouded tradition, the light of history shines upon the founding of the Chow dynasty in 1122 B.C. Wu Wang, prince of Chow, a buffer between the Huns and the Imperial territories, revolted against the corrupt emperor and established himself upon the throne as the "Son of Heaven", liege lord over twenty-two hereditary principalities. In this dynasty (1122B.C.- 256 B.C.) the mould was cast for China as she was to be, with little change, until the opening of the twentieth century: the manners of dress and speech were established by imperial regulation; the written language took a permanent form differing less from that of the present (before the late reformed alphabet) than the language of Chaucer differs from twentieth century English; competitive examinations were begun, to last until 1905; the three great moulding philosophers, Lao Tzu, Confucius, and Mencius

lived and taught; and the Classics, the four books and the five canons, became the standard literature of the nation.
107

In 221 B.C. Wang Pan, the "Napoleon of China", abolished the decaying feudalism and united the states of China under himself as Shi Hwang-ti (the First Universal Emperor). He planned and began the erection of the Great Wall and ordered the burning of all the classics, that he might redate history from his reign and prevent quoting of precedents in criticism of his arbitrary purposes.
108

Passing over the Han dynasty, in which the classics were restored and Buddhism was brought to China (65 A.D.), over the period of the Three Kingdoms, and over the Sui (Suy) dynasty, we come to the great Tang dynasty (618- 907 A.D.), in which Empress Wu cruelly dominated for fifty-one years, Nestorian missionaries were welcomed to China, and Li Po, the greatest poet of China, lived.

In the Sung dynasty (960 - 1280 A.D.), the emperors resisted successive attacks of the Tartars, then established in Manchuria; but in joining the Mongols against the Tartars, the emperor gave Genghis Khan, the Mongol chief, entrance into China. Genghis

.....
107 Latourette: The Development of China, p. 21.
108 Bashford: China: An Interpretation, p. 572.

then proceeded to take China for himself and by 1280 his son Kublai Khan assumed complete authority over China. Though an alien, and for that reason a hated ruler, he extended the power of the nation to her widest bounds and made her the most illustrious in her history. Marco Polo's visit and reports were made during his reign, and brought China to the attention of Europeans.

The next of China's great dynasties, the Ming (1368 - 1644), was founded by Chu Yüan Chang, the son of a Chinese laboring man, who drove the Mongols from China and sought to restore the China of the past. During his dynasty the first Roman Catholic missionaries entered China, and the Dutch who had settled in Formosa (1600) sought a foothold in China at Amoy.

In the T'sing (Manchu) dynasty (1644 - 1911) began China's contacts with Europe and the western world. The stages in the development of her international relations can be most clearly presented by an outline:

1680 - Trade with the East India Company nominally began in Canton - "practically all legitimate foreign commerce, English, and otherwise, was confined to Canton, until the first ~~period~~ war with England broke out

109
in 1840".

- 1692 - An edict of toleration of Christianity issued by Kang-hi.
- 1716 - Because of Roman Catholic refusal to comply with terms of Kang-hi, missionaries were forbidden to remain in China.
- 1807 - First Protestant missionary, Robert Morrison, an Englishman, arrived in China.
- 1839 - "Commissioner Lin, at Canton, destroyed 20,283 chests of opium which British merchants had brought to China contrary to Chinese law"¹¹⁰
The English government paid for the opium and began the first Opium War, "basing her warfare upon Chinese restriction of commerce"¹¹⁰
- 1842 - By the treaty of Nanking, China ceded Hongkong to Great Britain and "opened Canton, Amoy, Ningpo, Foochow, and Shanghai as ports of foreign trade and residence."¹¹¹
S. Wells Williams characterizes that treaty as "one of the turning points in the history of mankind."¹¹¹

.....
109 Parker: China, p. 96.
110 Bashford: op. cit., p. 605.
111 Ibid., p. 606.

- 1844 - Treaties with America and France, granting to them the same trade rights in open ports which had been granted to Great Britain.
- 1867 - Anson Burlingame, as representative of China, "negotiated the Burlingame Treaty with the United States which did much to make China known and respected in the Western world".
- 1873 - First formal reception of foreigners by the emperor in person. Foreign coolie trade abolished.
- 1894 - 5 - Japanese-Chinese war; Japan winning because of her western war methods.
- 1895 - 7 - Two Americans called to the presidencies of the University of Tientsin and the University of Shanghai.
- 1898 - Sir Michael Hicks Beach declared in the British Parliament that "The government is absolutely determined at whatever cost that the door in China shall not be shut".
112
- 1899 - Empress Dowager issued secret edict to the governors of the maritime provinces urging them "to restrict the aggression of the foreign Powers".
113
Boxer massacres began.

.....
112 Bashford: op. cit., p. 609.

113 Ibid., p. 619.

1901 -Siege of Peking. Boxer settlement.

1904-5 - Russo-Japanese War.

The story of China's replacing an imperial system of government by a republican government is a long series of plots and counterplots. The motives and leaders directing the change have been variously interpreted by western observers. Probably no one, not excepting the Chinese themselves, understands all that took place between 1898 and 1922, and why. However, the change is vastly significant and certain stages of the revolution can be clearly discerned.

During the later years of the nineteenth century, the Manchu dynasty, in power since 1644, became weakened by the failure of male heirs. The Empress Dowager, acting as regent for forty-seven years (1861-1908), had with remarkable power maintained the form of the empire until ⁱⁿ 1898, the young Emperor, Kuang-Hsu, of liberal training, made such a reckless and daring attempt at reform that the liberals as well as the Manchus were startled to opposition. The Empress herself began to work against Kuang-Hsu, and temporarily reverted so decidedly to the old conservative position that she unwittingly caused the anti-foreign reaction known as the Boxer uprising of June 20 to August 14, 1900. Her successive attempts to save the dynasty failed and the revolution which

broke out in Wuchang (Oct. 10, 1911) to expell the Manchus from power "soon changed into a movement for the abolition of the monarchy itself",¹¹⁴ and on the twelfth of February, 1912, the Emperor abdicated, authorizing Yuan Shih Kai to make provisions for a new government for China. - The resulting republic, of which Yuan was elected president in October, 1913, had begun to provide a permanent constitution when Yuan broke up the Parliament and after two years of monarchial plotting secured his election as Emperor (December 1915), to be cancelled under compulsion three months later. During the succeeding eight years there has been constant constitutional and parliamentary wrangling. Since the summer of 1918, there has been a Parliament in Canton and a Parliament in Peking, each claiming to be the constitutional government. In May 1921, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was elected president by the Parliament of Canton and styling himself President of China has sought recognition for his government by foreign powers as the "de facto and de jure government of China". The United States and European powers have not seen their way clear to transfer their recognition

.....
 114 Willoughby: Constitutional Government in China,
 p. 14.

from the Peking government to the Canton government, which, according to leading Chinese and American press comments, is the more honest and efficient
115
government.

How the Canton customs question and the civil war imminent in China will terminate is for the history of the next few months to determine. American and European attitude will have a large part in directing the course of that history which will without doubt affect the future of all nations. The prophecy of John Hay seems now to be calling for fulfillment: "The storm center of the world has gradually shifted to China. Whoever understands that mighty empire socially, politically, economically, and religiously has the key of world politics for the
116
next five centuries."

Since the beginning of American intercourse with China in 1784, when the first United States consul arrived in Canton, America has been a friend to China and has been considered by China as a friend. She took no part in the European partition policy; returned half the indemnity secured in 1858; compelled the reduction of the Boxer indemnities demanded by

.....
115 See China Review 6:53-56, and 5:20-25.
116 Ibid., Feb., 1924.

Europeans and remitted the unclaimed portion of America's share (\$16,000,000.); in May, 1913, recognized the new Republic and loaned three of her best American experts in problems of government as constitutional advisers to the Chinese government. The Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1882 and 1884 and succeeding decades are abrogations of treaty agreements and are not legally a credit to our nation. Far less pardonable seems our government's attitude since December 1923, in interfering in the Canton customs affair.

APPENDIX B

Brief Chronological Outline of Chinese Literature

827 B.C. - Inscriptions on famous stone drums at Peking.

551 - 478 B.C. - Confucius

c. 400 B.C. - Mencius.

" A dictionary of Chinese characters.

" Earliest proverbs.

214 B.C. - Burning of the Classics by order of
Shi Hwang-ti to redate history and to
prevent quoting of precedents against him.

206 B.C. - 214 A.D. Lyric poetry at its height.

c. 177 B.C. - Classics restored from memory.

100 B.C. - Ssu-ma Ch'ien wrote the first great history
of China which has been a model ever since.

" Lectures on the Classics inaugurated.

175 A.D. - Classics cut in stone.

300 A.D. - Wang Hsi Chih standardized Chinese writing.

c. 800 A.D. - Block printing invented.

" Yuan Chi and Tsung Tse, poets.

705 - 762 A.D. - Li Po, poet.

c. 700 A.D. - Tu Fu, poet.

918 A.D. - College built and library of 80,000 volumes
established.

- 932 A.D. Nine classics for first time cut in wood, printed, and sold.
- 1155 A.D. Chu Hsi, famous Confucian commentator, criticised as giving materialistic interpretation of Confucius.
- " - - Choutze and Chengtse, philosophers.
- 1202 A.D. Law condemning Chu Hsi's metaphysics rescinded. (His commentary on Confucius has remained the standard down to 1900, and "probably influenced the intellectual life of China more than any text book ever issued in any language has done". Bashford: China, Appendix XIV).
- 1280 - 1386 A.D. Augustan Age of Drama.
- " Tin, Tau, and Chung, dramatists.
- 1407 A.D. Universal encyclopedia of 22,877 sections.
- 1492 A.D. Rare books collected.
- c. 1667 A.D. Hwang-ti's conquests and lexicon.
- 1707 A.D. Complete collection of poetry of the Tang dynasty.
- 1747 A.D. Dynastic history in 219 volumes.
- 1879 A.D. Lu Sin Yüan's collection of rare ancient manuscripts.

APPENDIX C

Outstanding Features of the Chinese Language

There is a difference of opinion among scholars regarding the nature and stage of development of the Chinese language; e.g. Professor Hirth says, it is "among the most rudimentary forms of speech that have maintained a long existence anywhere in the world";¹¹⁸ while Mrs. Tietjens says, "The Chinese language which used to be thought more primitive than ours because it is not inflected is now thought by philologists to have gone through our inflectional stage almost before the dawn of history. So that our method of speech became too simple for the Chinese thousands of years ago, and their language went on around to the point where it is found today, in which root ideas only are used and the rest is left to the imagination. The effect on the westerners is as though they were always cabling at so much per word."¹¹⁹

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118 New International Encyclopedia, V, pp. 235-240.
119 Poetry 20:268-74 (August, 1922).

The Chinese language offers a rich field for philological study but for our purpose here we shall suggest only the outstanding features of the language system.

Chinese is a monosyllabic language, each word being made by a single movement of the organs of speech and expressing one single idea or thing. There is no inflection of words nor formal distinctions in parts of speech. The relation of a word to others is determined by its position in the sentence and the addition of other words. One syllable may have several meanings, (an average of one hundred five), according to its position in a sentence and in speaking according to the tone in which it is spoken. In Mandarin, which is spoken by four-fifths of the Chinese, there are four tones - flat or low, rising, sinking, and abruptly arrested. In Cantonese, spoken in southern China, there are nine tonal distinctions.

Each syllable or character was derived at first from the object or idea. There are in the language over forty-four thousand characters but the average speaking vocabulary is about three thousand.

The new system of writing, officially adopted in November 1918, it is believed, will transform China from a state of five per-cent literacy to at least

eighty-five per-cent literacy within one generation or even in ten years. It will require two to four weeks of lessons two hours a day to learn to read instead of five or six years. The new system uses thirty-nine symbols, twenty-four initials, two finals, and three medials or connecting sounds, with which it can represent all sounds of what is to be the new national language. Since the government decree of November 23, 1918, the system is being taught in normal schools, in elementary schools, and in public lectures.

APPENDIX E

Professors of Chinese Language and Literature in
American Universities

Columbia University

Frederick Hirth, 1902-17.

Chinese student instructors, 1917-1922.

Lucius C. Porter, 1922-4.

Thomas F. Carter, under appointment, 1924-5.

Harvard University

Ko Kun-hua, 1879-1882.

Yuen Ren Chao, 1921-1924.

Yale University

Harlan Beach.

University of California

John Fryer, LL.D.

Alfred Forke, Ph.D.

Edward T. Williams, M.A., LL.D.

Assistants.

Kiang Kang-hu.

Ch'en Tsing-hua.

Nelson C. T'ang.

University of Southern California

Rev. Mr. Headley.

University of Washington

Rev. H. H. Gowen, D.D. - 1924.

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INDEX

Bashford, James	6, 32, 35, 74, 75.
Beede, Vincent Van Marter	15, 37.
Brown, Brian	70.
Brown, G. Waldo.....	11, 12.
Bynner, Witter	11, 15, 51, 80, 84, 87, 88.
Carus, Paul.....	6, 11, 15, 48, 51, 52.
Clarke, James Freeman	9, 31, 48.
Classics; Five Canons and Four Books	33, 43ff.
Confucius	21, 41, 44, 47, 49, 50, 76, 81, 82.
Davis, Mary Hayes	15, 67, 71.
Dewey, John.....	63.
Doyen, J. T.	31, 35, 55, 58.
<u>Dream of the Red Chamber</u>	58.
Encyclopedias, Chinese	17, 73.
Everett, Alexander Hill	11, 54, 55, 58.
Fenollosa, Ernest	10, 48.
Fielde, Adele M.	67.
Fitch, George H.....	63.
Griffis, William E.....	6, 7, 36, 55, 56, 60, 68, 79/
Guiterman, Arthur	11.

Hammond, Louise S.....	84, 86.
Headland, Isaac T.....	55, 58, 59, 77.
Hirth, Frederick K.....	7, 10, 32, 33, 34, 44, 47.
Irvin, Will.....	64.
Kiang Kang-hu.....	15, 88.
Lao-tse.....	41, 51, 52.
Latourette, Kenneth S.....	11, 48.
Laufer, Berthold.....	14, 18, 19, 57, 89.
Leo, T. Y.....	15, 56, 60.
Lewis, Robert Ellsworth.....	48, 44, 49.
Libraries, Chinese Literature in American.....	20.
Li Po.....	14, 82, 88, 89.
Loomis, A. W.....	152, 53, 75.
Lowell, Amy.....	11, 15, 51, 80, 84, 87, 89.
McDowell, Henry B.....	62, 64.
Martin, W. A. P.....	6, 13, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 81, 82, 86.
Masters, Frederick J.....	61, 63.
Mencius.....	41, 49.
Missionaries.....	8, 54.
Obata, Shigeyoshi.....	14, 89.
Peabody, A. P.....	9, 48.
Pitman, Norman H.....	13, 67, 70.

Pound, Ezra.....	11, 84, 86.
Reinsch, Paul S.....	12.
Ross, Edward A.....	11, 36, 37.
Shü-king (Shih Ching).....	55.
Smith, Arthur M.....	49, 74, 75.
Tietjens, Eunice.....	11, 84, 85, 86, 87.
Two Cousins.....	55, 58.
Wendell, Barrett.....	65.
Williams, E. T.....	10.
Williams, Frederick wells.....	10, 67, 68.
Williams, S. Wells.....	9, 55, 57, 59, 76, 77.
<u>Yellow Jacket, The</u>	65.