

The Saturday Review

of LITERATURE

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Spoiled Child of the Arts

THOSE of us now middle aged were educated in school rooms whose walls were dignified, if not adorned, by an impressive row of American poets—Whittier, Longfellow, Bryant, with magnificent beards, and sometimes the beardless Emerson. Whitman and Poe were conspicuously absent, though, of course we did not miss them. Oliver Wendell Holmes was often runner-up.

Poetry in those days was popular. It may have been a weak gruel, but it nourished thousands. Indeed, from the purely social aspect, it may well be urged that the greatest need of American literature is another Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The popular poetry of our day is as much inferior to his as a Long Beach bungalow to his stately Cambridge residence.

After the passing of these dwellers on the lower slopes of Olympus, American poetry became magazine verse, technically good, graceful, feminine, used chiefly for calendars and to fill the blank ends of magazine pages where a story or an article ran short. The poetic revival at the end of the first decade of our century challenged this innocuous desuetude. With Edgar Lee Masters, Vachel Lindsay, Robert Frost, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Amy Lowell, poetry became masculine even to raucousness, and challenged a wider audience—challenged but was answered by the poetical only, who fiercely liked or fiercely disliked the new realism and the new raucousness. We said, poetry is becoming vital again; it is being read, soon it will be widely read. But the impulse passed; the next generation of poets turned in, instead of out, wrote increasingly for special journals and poetry societies, became more, not less, esoteric, more clever, less strong. Poetry in America became, and is, a kind of esthetic exercise, practised, like dancing and gymnastics, by devoted coteries, a means of self-expression, a vehicle for subtlety, but not one of the great arts, not as interesting as American architecture, not as vigorous as American fiction.

Why this miscarriage? What cold eighteenth century has settled so quickly upon the hopeful renaissance of the nineteen tens? Why are we drifting back again to "magazine verse"?

The poets are writing for each other. The poets are criticizing each other with that special consideration, varied by malice, always characteristic of criticism within a coterie by coterie standards. It is easier now to make a reputation in poetry than in any other art, if by reputation one means a name known in literary circles. A writer may be writing short stories read by hundreds of thousands, and getting for them an income respectable even in business, and yet be utterly devoid of literary reputation, his name unknown except to a few editors and forgotten by his careless readers as soon as they have read a story. But a slender volume of poems, approved by a poetry society, and bruited through all the poetical journals by friends of the author, will add in a year to the list of anthology poets the name of an author who has written only this. He is read by his peers only, reads to them in selected gatherings; they only criticize him, they only are sponsors for poetical fame.

And poets, by and large, are the worst of all reviewers, and the most unscrupulous. They, and not the columnists often accused, are the puffers par excellence of our day. It is the poets who unblushingly review their friends' books on every opportunity, and praise to the skies poetry that nobody

Spring in Chinatown

By LAWRENCE LEE

I WONDER what they think of spring
On Pell and Doyers Street,
And if to Chinese noses now
The morning air seems sweet.

Does Chi Ling mix poetic thoughts
With those he gives to trade,
Or think of one who might put on
His greenest string of jade?

Do shiny cups and yellow plates
Bring Chinese girls to mind;
And does the scent of jasmine buds
Seem like a Canton wind?

Do slim young merchants down on Mott,
Where Wu Chen does not see,
With brush and ink print Chinese odes
On packages of tea?

"Association Items"

By WILMARTH S. LEWIS

AS a collector, I am of all things partial to what are called "association items," a weakness I believe general, for only the other day I heard of a Yale undergraduate who entered a book shop and asked for Dr. Johnson's copy of the "Life." To be able to say "This is the copy of the Strawberry Hill 'Grammont' which Walpole gave to the Duchess of Bedford (his Turtle)" means much to me. I like to think of the many gay and friendly acts that so many of the books in my library represent. Here are Mrs. Chapone's "Letters" going to Mrs. Boscawen; Lord Carlisle, having paid thousands of Charles Fox's debts gives him this specially bound copy of his "Father's Revenge;" Mrs. Vesey—the Sylph—flutters through the thin folio, "Six Poems" by Mr. Gray; and Lord George Gordon admires his specially bound copy of "Scotland's Opposition to Popery," which shows himself surrounded by cannon and flags and thistles in, positively, the garb of John the Baptist. No wonder he was encouraged to loose the Terror upon London, to throw Parliament into confusion, and at last to accomplish the burning of Lord Mansfield's library.

It is curious how, once one has committed his heart and soul to the collecting of a man, that man looks after one. I am sure, for example, that often Horace Walpole has said to Mme. de Sevigné, over their tea in the Elysian Fields, "I sent him a little something else today." It may run on almost automatically as it did for me with copies of Walpole's "Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors." When I began collecting Walpole I was not at all excited by this dull sounding work, but presently Walpole, to jack me up, had Messrs. Maggs send me the copy he had given to Kitty Clive! The "Catalogue" was the first thing of his own that Walpole printed at his Press, a year after its founding in 1757. Mrs. Clive was then living under his chaperonage close by at Little Strawberry Hill, and he doubtless delivered this copy in person. The excellent Miss Matilda Hawkins questioned whether Mrs. Clive "would have been as well tolerated as she was in the neighborhood, had it not been for the countenance of Horace Walpole," for Kitty Clive was brief in manner and frank of speech even though she had enough patience to work the carpet with blue tulips and yellow foliage for the Holbein Chamber at Walpole's Gothic Castle. Five other items of importance and interest connected with the "Catalogue" now flowed in on me, including the proof sheets, corrected by Walpole, for the Second Edition, and the copy of the rare "Postscript" which he sent Richard Bull and which still contained his letter. And all these were almost forced upon me!

Then there are the almost unbelievable coincidences. Two years ago when on my way to England, Professor Tinker asked me to get him a copy of the first edition of "The Castle of Otranto." I explained that I had to get one for myself and he replied, that all he wanted was an ordinary copy, but that I could have, knowing my weakness for association items, the copy Walpole gave to—William Cole. He might have said anyone, of course, but Cole probably came first because Walpole's two best letters on how he happened to write the book were addressed to Cole. Six weeks in London produced only one copy and, with a lack of generosity that collectors will understand, I had it sent home with my books. Once this selfishness had been in-

This Week



"The Vanished Empire." Reviewed by *G. H. Danton.*

"A Nation Plan." Reviewed by *Lewis Mumford.*

"The Philosophy of the Abbe Baudouin." Reviewed by *Ernest Sutherland Bates.*

Qwertuiop. A Shirtsleeves History. "Turgenev, the Man, His Art and His Age." Reviewed by *William Lyon Phelps.*

"Brother Saul." Reviewed by *John Haynes Holmes.*

"The Dark Gentleman." Reviewed by *Leonard Bacon.*

Next Week, or Later

"Winds of Criticism." By *Percy H. Boynton.*

reads. It is not log rolling, at least not always log rolling. The principle rather seems to be that poetry is a weak plant which must have the sun, that since it cannot make money, it deserves praise, that if the world will not esteem it, then poets must. And American poetry has become the spoiled child of the arts, protected, pampered, praised for every hint of well doing, spanked in an occasional bad temper, tweaked by the ears now and then, but never disciplined, never submitted to standards that the artistic novel must meet, never discussed like the poetry of the nineteenth century as vital expression of importance to humanity. Never!—well, hardly ever. We do not write of exceptions. It is the rule that counts, and the rule is that our poets are content with a family reputation, and that, more than any other literature, their work betrays a lack of rigid criticism, and an unwillingness or inability to make what they say important beyond coterie and clique.

dulged, however, I was smitten with shame, resolved to turn it over to Mr. Tinker on my return, and left word that the next copy that Maggs found should be sent to me. As soon as I got back I delivered the book in New Haven and then, when I reached home, I found a letter from Maggs saying that they had just secured another copy of the first "Castle of Otranto"—the copy Walpole gave William Cole. Progressive virtue, and approving heaven!

One can never tell when the great moment will arrive, the moment when a beaming heaven will open and drop a treasure at one's feet. Two years ago I was looking through the catalogues of some pending art sales—a thing I had never done before. That very night, I found, was to be sold the Arthur Tooth Collection and Number 26 was Lady Mary Churchill by Francis Cotes. The only Lady Mary Churchill that meant anything to me was a half-sister of Horace Walpole, the natural daughter of Sir Robert by the amiable lady who subsequently became his second wife, but of course it might be she, and so I went to the auction rooms to see if there were any family resemblance. There was, a quite remarkable one, one strong enough to gamble on, and that night, with a flap of my hand, I got Lady Mary with only one opposing bid.

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My problem then was to get her home before I sailed the next week. With her frame she was about thirty-five by forty inches, a sizable picture to carry; but I couldn't wait for her to be crated and packed and so I decided to take her myself. The auctioneers refused to wrap her up. "People," they explained, "are liable to stick their umbrellas through it, but if they see it's a picture they will keep out of the way." Then I bundled Lady Mary into a taxi and, clutching her tightly, stepped out upon the marble stage of the Grand Central. It was noon on Saturday and the station was crowded, but trains stopped running and the crowd stood still as our party—my porter, Lady Mary, and I—made our brilliant way across the floor to the farthest end. One man was impelled to inquire if Lady Mary was over a hundred years old, another boldly asked if she had cost over a thousand dollars, while a third, evidently a lover of the ancients, asked in an awed voice if she had come from Athens. Arrived at the barrier, the ticket collector threw a great chain in front of me and announced truculently, "You can't take that thing through here." Balancing Lady Mary on my toes, I fell into a stupor until roused by the ticket collector. "Follow me!" he hissed even as I began searching for a crisp bill. I did and he fairly took my hand, like the Red Queen, as we raced to a mysterious little unseen door. "I'd get hell for this," he volunteered, "it's violating the franchise. You're not supposed to carry things like that. What would happen to the express companies?"

At last home, with Lady Mary looking wistfully down from the wall, over her half-open music book, I began my researches. Was this faintly moustached lady Walpole's half-sister or was she not? Francis Cotes was not mentioned in Toynbee's edition of the letters, nor was the portrait. No help there. The only other place was the Catalogue of the Sale of the Contents of Strawberry Hill, which took place in 1842, forty-five years after Walpole's death. The Catalogue was largely based on Walpole's own "Description of Strawberry Hill" which saved Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, who wrote a foreword to the Sale Catalogue, no end of trouble. This I now consulted and there in the twenty-first Day's Sale, number 39, was "A half length portrait of Lady Maria Walpole, only child of Sir Robert and Maria Skerret, and wife of Charles Churchill, only son of General Churchill." Then follows a line of description taken from Walpole. "She is represented in a veil, with a music book before her." So my Lady Mary was not only Walpole's sister, but his own portrait of her which he had commissioned Eckardt, not Cotes, to paint for Strawberry Hill.

Poor Lady Mary had a hard time of it. Born illegitimate, one of the first things her father did when he fell from power and became Lord Orford was to have her legitimated by Royal Patent, a balm which had previously been reserved for royal indiscretions. The outcry was fearful, great ladies swore they would not give her place at court, the mob carried her about in effigy. But soon the tide turned. Sir Robert's geniality won nearly every-

body back; whereupon his daughter became the greatest match in England. The richest and highest born young men of the day placed their coronets at her feet, but, to her brother's intense disgust, she married Charles Churchill, the natural son of old General Churchill by Mrs. Oldfield, the actress. From this point on, Lady Mary's life was one happy succession of babies and journeys to France. Churchill proved an excellent husband, Hori's affection was won back, Madame du Deffand did all that could be done for her and her daughters in Paris, and she lived, consoled to the end of a long life, by her proficiency on the harpsichord.

The great thing about the portrait is the remarkable resemblance to the portrait of Horace painted by Richardson when he was about the same age. There was a story current in the eighteenth century that Walpole himself was the natural son of his mother by Carr, Lord Hervey. If this were true, he and Lady Mary would be no relation whatever and might be expected to bear no resemblance to each other. But the resemblance between the two portraits is astounding. There is the same long sloping nose and oval chin, the shape of the two heads is almost identical. It is pleasant to think that, at this late date, Lady Mary is doing her bit to dispel a gossiping rumor about her brother's name, a rumor whose actuality had clouded so much of her own life.

Marginalia may make a book of the greatest association interest, and also, as Mr. Percival Merritt has recently shown, they may be most illuminating. The eighteenth century annotated its books with a care and a passion which seems remarkable now. At most we underscore a line or mark a passage in the margin. The ladies and gentlemen of the eighteenth century poured out their emotions with little regard for any subsequent eye that might speculate upon them. Among these arch-annotators a conspicuous place must be reserved for that great poetess, Miss Anna Seward, the Swan of Litchfield.

Miss Seward's "piping" annoyed Horace Walpole. "An out pensioner of Parnassus," he rudely called her, but there were many others to hail her as the modern Sappho, the Tenth Muse, and she was actually known as The Swan. "The mind of Miss Seward was early imbued with the vivid and sublime imagery of Milton," Mr. E. V. Lucas quotes from the *British Lady's Magazine* in his "A Swan and Her Friends," "and she lisped 'L'Allegro and 'Il Penseroso' when only in her third year."

From this auspicious beginning, the Swan flew powerfully on until, in a surprisingly short time, she occupied a position in the female world remotely comparable to that of her great fellow-townsmen to whom there are many feminine references in her letters. Her grandfather had taught Dr. Johnson when he was merely a "huge, over-grown, misshapen, and probably dirty stripling," and she could never quite rid herself of the idea that he was her rival in fame. But among female geniuses she stood at the top, striking her lyre with bold but graceful sweeps. England, virtue, and nature were among her special charges, and she looked forth upon the world with an Empress's, a good Empress's solicitude.

Before me is her copy of "The Vales of Weyer: A Loco-Descriptive Poem," by J. Gisborne, Esq. J. Gisborne, Esq., was known, with the weakness of the eighteenth century for calling people by any name but their own, as The Man of Prayer. He was a Poet, and "The Vales of Weyer: A Loco-Descriptive Poem" was one of his most perfect expressions. Published a year before "Lyrical Ballads," it is not to be confused in any way with the great movement which was about to usher in the nineteenth century. Miss Seward, happily still unconscious of young Mr. Wordsworth and young Mr. Coleridge, was ripe. Fifty-five years of this world had established in her the manner of a seeress. Dr. Johnson had been dead for thirteen years, the great Mason was dying, dear Mr. Hayley was still going strong, but as she herself had confessed nine years before, "the silver cord of our amity is loosening at more links than one." For the moment she was quite without peer as she picked up the Man of Prayer's Loco-Descriptive Poem.

She read, so the book shows, until the ninety-fifth line before she brought into play her critical pen in the margin.

While many a rill with querulous tones
Frets o'er the moss-embroider'd stones,
And liquid music softly wakes
The stillness of those tangled brakes.

Opposite this she marked a bold line and wrote "beautiful description." The Man of Prayer had won his spurs, but, in line 126, he began a sin which was to prove nearly fatal. The moon, he said in effect,

Sheds a glory on the streams,
and the Swan underscored "glory" and wrote sternly opposite: "too strong a word for moonlight. It is the Sun's property." As soon as line 131 he again makes this mistake—

Pale o'er the woodlands moonshine glows
and the Swan after underlining "Pale" and "glows" tartly says "Nothing that is *Pale* can *glow*." Nor is the peril past. In line 163 we read

Queen of the skies, who silver'st wide
This dreary world with glory's sea,
Roll from thin orb the radiant tide
And pour thy lucid streams on ME!

Glory and radiant are underscored. Then the Swan: "Pope's example betrays succeeding Poets into the error of allotting that magnificent term for the modest Moon. Radiant also is too fine an epithet." Finally one feels that all is lost when one finds the modest moon again glaring, for Miss Seward, losing patience, coldly says, "the moon never glares." Fifty lines flow by before the warmth of the poetic fire can thaw the frozen Swan, but at last it proves too hot and she exclaims, with an exclamation point, "beautiful." This lucky hit is followed by a long passage telling how Hygeia, with her sweet voice, "leads stout youths and maidens o'er the mead." Applause breaks out in the middle and at the end Miss Seward's critical hands beat together in honest praise: "The whole of this invocation is very poetic." Useless to multiply evidences of the Swan's generous recognition of a younger genius. Fortunately, no further references are made to the glaring moon and through the rest of this Canto and the second—the Swan apparently did not read the last—praise is profligately bestowed. Nay more, so completely does she enter into the Man of Prayer's mood that she unbuttons her own bosom and bares it, so to speak, to the modest moon. J. Gisborne, Esq., was not above appending a footnote of a few hundred words here and there to help the stumbling feet of his less informed readers. "The dire Empress of the North" is mentioned and receives a superb footnote of three hundred words full of indignant horror. Miss Seward is caught up and swept on in her turn until she cries out: "Yet how is the Military Monster who executed her dire behests, the cruel Suvaro, extolled in all our public papers, now he is fighting for our allies." Poor Suvaro was made to feel the full force of a virgin's wrath—and England with him, for in another place Miss Seward again bursts out: "Blush England blush for thy applauding epithets for that infamous Homicide."

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It is pleasant to turn from the spectacle of such duplicity to "Immortal Washington—Columbia's lord," who was, J. Gisborne, Esq., declared in a footnote "the Saviour of his Country, the Supporter of Freedom, and the Benefactor of Mankind." Miss Seward was in complete accord, and does not hesitate again to confront England. "What then," she asks with a bristling exclamation point, "has England to answer for in that unjust war!" This is a challenge which even today stirs answering chords in Republican breasts.

And then we come, suddenly, at the foot of page 49, upon a passage that makes us catch our breath. Mr. Gisborne backs up a note on the nightingale by reference to three great poets. "I think Shakespeare, Milton, and Mason have noticed this circumstance; and it has not escaped Dr. Darwin:

There as sad Philomel, alike forlorn,
Sings to the night from her accustomed thorn.
Botanic Garden, Vol I., 1.34."

In words of fire, the Swan has written opposite: "those lines are not Dr. Darwin's, they are Anna Seward's, though inserted without acknowledgment, together with thirty-six more of hers which form the exordium of his *Botanic Garden*."

Picture her, alone with her book, as she set the sinister truth down. Dr. Darwin—whose grandson was also to be a naturalist—had done this thing to her, after their life-long friendship and after she had written an immortal biography of him. Her note was again addressed to England, but it was also addressed to posterity. And now posterity, in America, publishes the fact nearly a hundred and thirty years later. *Fiat justitia ruat coelum!*

What to Do in China

THE VANISHED EMPIRE. By PUTNAM WEALE. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1927. \$5.

Reviewed by G. H. DANTON

Tsing Hua College, Peking

OF Mr. Bertram Lenox Simpson, who writes under the pen-name of Putnam Weale, the "blurb" on the yellow jacket of this book naïvely says, "Mr. Weale has lived in Peking during the past year and the notes from his diary give a vivid and dramatic account of the recent fighting, etc." These remarks prove that the writer has looked into the volume: they do not even hint that Mr. Simpson, one of the most prolific and colorful living writers on Chinese affairs, has spent the greater part of his life in the Orient, that he has a thorough command of the Chinese language, both written and spoken, that he founded and edited a bilingual newspaper in Peking, and that he is still technically a political advisor to the President's office in China. The total of his works runs to about a score, some more or less literary, and a whole series of political books, of which "The Vanished Empire" is the latest. Like its immediate predecessor, "Why China Sees Red," there is a definite bid, in the very title, for a journalistic approach on the part of the reader, an approach which is kept open throughout the book by every trick in the journalistic bag, and which captivates by picturesqueness of incident, cleverness of phrase, dogmatism of statement, and constant brilliance of aperçu.

Everything which Mr. Lenox Simpson writes bears the mark of his trenchant personality, though it is not always clear that it bears that of his intimate ideas: his prejudices are more obvious than his mature reflection. This is due to the fact that, while understanding the Chinese thoroughly, he has no real inner sympathy with them, a phenomenon all too often observed in those who have been born and brought up in China. On the other hand, he is too much imbued with knowledge to be in entire sympathy with their Occidental opponents. The result, in all of his recent works, is a fundamental antinomy. This antinomy, which is so difficult to reconcile, causes the attention to be arrested on every page, while, at the same time, the judgment is as constantly challenged. In the presence of a particularly brilliant *jeu d'esprit*, one is as fully aware of the stick which is coming down, as of the rocket which is ascending.



So, in the first section, where the history of China is outlined with a really dramatic brilliance, there is, in briefest compass, an excellent recital for those who do not desire the meticulous documentation of proved facts. The general reader will find this part interesting through its clever avoidance of the ballast of unfamiliar names, through its ingenious interweaving of fact, legend, tradition, and fiction. Indeed, the attention is held as in a novel. But the author's fondness for *ex cathedra* statements leads him to sweep aside, in the confines of the first seven pages, all doubts on a number of questions which are far from being settled. He makes bold statements regarding the origin of the Chinese, though he must be aware of the significance of all the latest discoveries in the anthropological field: the Yan Shao culture, the work of Anderson and Li, the discovery of the *homo pekingensis*. Again, there is a remarkable pronouncement on the origin of "tones" in the Chinese spoken language, a statement entirely innocent of knowledge of the pioneer work done by Conrady as long ago as 1896, and of the recent brilliantly collected data of Karlgren. Nor will it do to take for granted, without further comment, even in a popular book, the pre-existence of the matriarchate in China, though the Chinese ideogram for family name (*hsing*) seems to point in this direction. The result of such positive statements will be that scholars are bound to regard the work with suspicion, while the public will be misled into taking a brilliant piece of journalism as a standard work on a difficult subject.

At the same time, some excellent points are made: the whole progress of the Tartarization, not merely of North, but of South China, is graphically delineated, and the influence of cavalry on Chinese warfare gives a new point of view. Such a statement as, "The Chinese were to become a people with elaborate ethics but with no other protection. . . . And this weakness, growing from generation

to generation, encouraged the people to remain at heart lawless, relying upon violence as a corrective and unable to do as other races did in codifying their rights," is a very keen observation on the long series of bloody wars and on the frightful oppressions to which the Chinese people have had to submit. Of Confucius he says, "To give life decoration—yes, that was a worthy pursuit, not merely with beauteous silks, or grave music, or altars of wood and stone, but with silence and respect." A deep fundamental of Chinese life is hit off here, as is rarely the case in works from the West.

The second section of the work follows out an extremely interesting postulate. According to Mr. Simpson, the ability of the Chinese as navigators has been greatly overestimated by the Occident. In fact, from one point of view, they are hardly to be considered as seamen at all, and even the mariner's compass, which they invented, degenerated in their hands to a geomantic instrument. Through a clever development of the theory of Chinese maritime incompetence, the inevitable clash of the priest-king, with claims to world dominion, and the hungry sea-power of the West is dramatically told. It may be objected that the development was not quite so one-sided as Mr. Simpson depicts it. The attitude of the first adventurers from the West was hardly more than that of pirates; even as late as the War of 1812, the British left much to be desired in their treatment of the Chinese, and character played a far greater rôle than the deterministic historical philosophy of the author seems to admit. The Chinese, too, while obstinate and corrupt in their dealings with the early foreigners, only show definite *national* hostility at a comparatively late



LADY MARY CHURCHILL

Eckardt Portrait

(See opposite page)

date, and are able practically to assimilate a highly trained Jesuit like Ricci.

Most serious criticism may be made of the author's attitude toward the opium question. His statement that its omission from the treaty of Nan-king (1842) is proof that it was considered unimportant by both sides, is completely at variance with the facts. While it must be insisted that the war was not waged by the British in order to force opium on the Chinese (as the latter too often assert), it is still an open question whether or not the Chinese would have yielded in the end without warfare, if it had not been for their fierce hatred of the drug. Observers like Bridgeman, who was on the spot, and who had interviews with Commissioner Lin, sensed the Chinese psychology at that time and asserted categorically that, to the Chinese, the war was an opium war; it remains so, in the minds of the Chinese today. The East India company had left China, in 1834, with unclean hands; the majority of the English merchants and some of the Americans inherited the evil legacy of corruption and smuggling of the "foreign dirt." So that the Chinese clearly thought that they were defending their country from degeneration and a heavy drain of silver (as Mr. Simpson admits), whatever may have been the motive behind the British during the period. It is too easy a solution to say that the break resulted from a clash of East and West, and that the matter of audience with the Emperor was the question at issue. The motives are more complicated and more actually mixed than that. There is

an interesting parallel with the attitude of the British today in regard to the smuggling of liquor into the United States. The ultimate blame rests with those who buy: those who supply them among their countrymen are practically equally guilty before the law, but the foreigner is not blameless because he offers the opportunity, makes propaganda, and uses his best efforts to get his wares to market. This, *mutatis mutandis*, was the British attitude during the time when the opium question became acute. They could (as Palmerston did) point to the corruption of the Chinese officials, a point which contemporary Chinese are too unwilling to admit, but they produced the opium and brought it to China and tried to sell it to a people who, after all, might be said to be in need of tutelage. There was no thought of *noblesse oblige*. For all the rigidity of the Confucian ethics, it has never proved a barrier to the entrance of foreign luxury. The author is not the first to point out the inadequacy of both the Ming and the Tsing courts, and especially of the camrilla surrounding them. He is too generous in his treatment of the eunuchs in later Tsing times: they were amply responsible, with a frightened literary caste, for the stubborn resistance to foreign aggression; it is also quite probable, as Mr. Simpson points out, that the Nepalese War of 1792 opened their eyes to the power of the British in India, but just this ought to have, and would have, lessened their resistance, if the opium question had not come so much to the fore.



The third section of the book is a diary of events. This part is of the most immediate interest, but is the least edifying of the three. Here the author reveals himself as an uncompromising advocate of the policy of the big stick, who despises the "sentimentality" of the American diplomatic attitude and who deplores the lost opportunity for intervention. He is a remarkably keen observer, whose prognostications have a habit of coming true; his criticisms of military failure show that his early training for the army was not in vain. Throughout the whole narrative, however, one misses completely the realization that something has happened in China which was not in the calculations, even eight years ago, when the students first struck against the compact of Versailles and the twenty-one demands. Foreigners in China are divided by nature into two classes: those who understand, more or less, that Chinese nationalism is a fact, and those who do not. It is like a taste for caviar or an ability to judge vintage wines or pictures: you either have it or you do not. If you have it, you know that future policy in the Orient must take this nationalism into immediate and constant consideration. If you have no sense for it, you still believe in the table-pounding form of diplomacy, which implies, at present, so much in the way of men and money, that no nation can really afford to carry it through to its final conclusion. Political intrigues, "peace by treachery" (to use a phrase from an earlier editorial of Mr. Simpson), in fact, the whole venal, sordid jockeying for money and place, the incompetence and tyranny of the military caste, are the final stage in a struggle which will ultimately end only through an access of real nationalism in China. The author has cleverly remarked that the present struggle is like that in the "Three Kingdoms," with names changed. One can go farther: one can take almost any incident from that famous novel, and can carry out the parallels with today, by the use of a very little time and effort. A.D. 200 and A. D. 1927 are strikingly alike on the surface, but there is something in 1927 which was not present in 200. Whatever this something is, it has permeated China and leaves the conventionally-minded perplexed, both as to methods and attitude. Its manifestations are frequently absurd; its connections with the Soviet, unpleasant to contemplate from afar or to endure personally; in fact, it is quite possible that the present movement may blow up, may split China, or split itself into various groups. It may even force intervention from Japan, Russia, or Great Britain. It is even possible that force may be used on China again, or that the strings may be pulled so that serious trouble results as in 1900. This sort of thing has already occurred—in Canton, for instance, during the riots at the bridgehead leading to Shameen; and in Peking, by the firing on the students by the President's guard, in March, 1926. But where such force brings collapse of opposition, as in the latter case, it brings only renewed bitterness. The captain of the "Cockchafer" who bombarded a city, comes in for praise