CHINA

AND

ITS RESOURCES,

AND PECULIARITIES,

PHYSICAL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND COMMERCIAL;

WITH A VIEW OF THE

OPIUM QUESTION,

AND

A NOTICE OF ASSAM.

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PREFACE.

China is, at the present time, a subject of great interest, not only on account of the transactions which have taken place there between the British residents and the native authorities, but also on account of the probability of a sort of war with China, upon grounds which seem a little questionable. It is interesting on account of the Opium question, that is, the smuggling of opium in large quantities into the country, not certainly by the East India Company, or the government under whose control they were, but yet of opium whereof the said Company have a monopoly, and an exceedingly lucrative one, and of the destination of which, neither they nor the government at home can possibly have been ignorant, at any time since it commenced. This is a perfectly new case in international policy; and it is one of so obscure a nature, that, it appears to me, that the parties who have written and spoken concerning it, have proceeded upon their personal interests, or their party views, rather than upon argument drawn from the real state of the case. There

is yet another point to be considered: It has been found by experience that, whenever after a little bravado, we have succumbed to the Chinese, it has made them, what our residents consider, more insolent than before. The present is certainly the widest breach ever made; and therefore, whether the result shall be to succumb, or to send out an armament and batter down a few towns along the coast, we shall be in a worse position with regard to China, than we have been at any former period. If we do make the hostile attack, which, after all, will be very similar to a little dog attempting to subdue an elephant by biting his heels, then we must quit China for ever, and the trade there will go to the hands of our rivals. If, on the other hand, we submit after what has been done, the probability is, that the Chinese will render the intercourse so troublesome and disagreeable to us, that we shall be compelled, of our own accord, to abandon the trade. Tea is the only Chinese article which may be said to be absolutely necessary in England, and which is more generally used here than in any other country. Therefore, as there is danger of losing our supply, or of obtaining it at second hand, we must look to a substitute country; and Assam, which has nearly the same physical circumstances and soil as the district of China, and in which tea could be grown and prepared at half the cost, and which, moreover, is a possession of our own, is the substitute country to which we naturally look.

These are the chief reasons why the book has appeared at this time; but it has another, and, in my opi-

nion, a higher object. People generally know little or nothing of China, and consequently come to erroneous conclusions respecting it; and I believed, and still believe, that the public attention now excited, will create the desire of some knowledge of China, by those who have neither leisure nor disposition to read voluminous works, or collate them with each other, so as to ascertain in what points they are right, and in what wrong. Therefore, I have given a brief outline of all the peculiarities of China, and endeavoured to show that they have placed it in such a position as that other states cannot, as states, hold intercourse with it; and it follows, by parity of reasoning, that if one state cannot form an alliance with another, as little can it make war upon it. The titles of the Sections will show the peculiarities themselves, and the order in which I have taken them, and I have endeavoured to generalize the details of each and carry the whole forward to one grand inference or conclusion. Whether all parties, or any party shall think this right or wrong, is not for me to determine; but I have done it after no small degree of research, and without the slightest prejudice or preconceived bias either way.

In the orthography of the Chinese names, and on many points connected with the history, the policy, and the social state of China, I have profited not a little by the friendly assistance of Mr. P. P. Thoms, of Warwick Square, Printer, who was a resident at Macao, as printer to the East India Company, and by whom Dr. Morrison's Chinese Dictionary was printed, and who

studied with much attention and success the language, the history, the literature, and the natural character of the Chinese, and who is in possession of a pretty extensive and varied library of Chinese works.

Such are the purposes, and the plan of the work, and such the aid I have had on those parts of the subject, which required a personal knowledge of the people, and their language, and literature. Having said thus much, I leave it, with confidence, to the public to decide the question of its utility.

ROBERT MUDIE.

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CHINA

AND ITS RESOURCES, &c.

SECTION I.

GENERAL IMPORTANCE AND INTEREST OF THE SUBJECT.

INDEPENDENTLY of the extent and peculiarity of the British trade with China, the influence which that trade has had in changing the habits of the British population in all its classes, and the occasional interest which is produced by misunderstandings with the Chinese, whose disposition is so jealous, and whose language admits of so many shades of meaning;—independently altogether of these things, and of every pecuniary, or national consideration, China presents to the mind of the enquirer the most extraordinary land and nation upon the face of the globe; and this interest, great as it is in itself, is heightened by the extreme difficulty of obtaining anything like authentic information. In consequence of this latter circumstance, the inhabitants of Britain and of every European country are grossly ignorant upon the subject of China; and the accounts furnished by European writers apply to so few points, that they can-

not be regarded as at all faithfully descriptive of a region of such vast extent, or of the manners of a people so very numerous.

That there should be, on any part of the earth's surface, a single, compact, carefully regulated, and well cultivated empire, about eleven times as large as the whole British islands, and containing probably eight times the number of inhabitants, all living as one people, without rebellion, sedition, or even political disputation and squabbling, is, in itself, a very extraordinary matter, and renders it highly desirable to know to what it is owing that such an immense multitude of human beings, spread over so wide a territory, should have continued from a period probably more remote than the very origin of European history, to live in a state of domestic peace and prosperity. It is true that dynasties of rulers have yielded both to time and to conquest in China, as well as in other countries; but amid those changes of dynasty, which, after all, have been few as compared with those in most places, the Chinese as a nation, have remained unconquerable, and almost unchanged and unchangeable through the lapse of nearly two thousand years. Take any other country whereof the annals can be at all trusted for such a period, see what it is now, inquire what it was when the period commenced, compare these together, and you will find that every institution of the people, and also, in the majority of cases, their names have vanished from the map.

Of the great empires of antiquity which were probably coeval with that of China in their origin, scarcely a vestige remains, except crumbling ruins which are now in great part situated amid deserts sown with salt, or covered with sand, and which have no inhabitant but

those wandering hordes who, during the imperial times were cooped up in the fastnesses of the mountains, and only issued from those mountains to speed its ruin when the imperial strength began to give way. Even the very language of those people has gone, or at least it has been blended with other tongues, so that it is no where spoken in its purity. The empires of the middle ages have shared the same fate, and that which promised to be the greatest empire of recent times, and probably had more both of the physical and the intellectual means of conquest on its side, than any other empire that ever existed, rose and fell like a meteor, and is now scarcely more remembered than the years before the flood.

But all this while, China has remained one and the same. Her government, her people, and her language have undergone comparatively little alteration, at least for many centuries; and from all the information which can be gleaned upon the subject, there is not even now the slightest symptom of decay, or of invasion and conquest by any foreign power. This is a fact so well demonstrated, and at the same time so unique and unparalleled in the history of man, that the causes upon which it depends, are of the utmost consequence to every one who desires so to know the world as to be able to act his part in it with understanding and propriety.

Those causes are partly owing to the geographical position of China, partly to its physical character, and partly to its government and the whole structure of its population. Therefore, those three subjects will form the main substance of the subsequent pages, though each of them will admit of many subdivisions; before such a brief analysis can be made, as will enable the reader to

form a proper estimate of this extraordinary country and people. In pursuing this analysis it will not, however, be either convenient or desirable to treat any one branch or ramification as a detached and distinct subject; for a knowledge of the whole of any one matter, and especially one so extensive as China, is not to be obtained from the study of the parts individually, so much as of the relations that they bear to each other; and in order to render the view as clear and as perfect as possible, it will also be necessary to consider the principal relations in which China stands, or has stood to the other nations. These have been much more limited than in the case of any other nation so numerous and occupying so extended and varying a territory; and perhaps it is owing to this, as much as to any thing else, that the Chinese have maintained their character unchanged for so long a period, and it is probable also that the very circumstances which occasionally lead those foreign nations resorting to China, to complain of, and quarrel with the Chinese institutions, are the very circumstances upon which the extraordinary stability and endurance of China depends.

Before, however, we venture to draw conclusions, we must be in possession of the data upon which those conclusions are founded. There is, however, one matter which we may mention in *limine;* because, among all the civilized nations that exist, or have been known to exist, China is the only one in which they are to be met with. This preliminary matter consists of two branches, in each of which the Chinese differ from every other great nation under the canopy of heaven. In the first place, religion, which has been a powerful cause of prosperity and adversity, of rise and fall, in other empires

and states, has no political influence among the Chinese. The whole foundation of their political creed, and it descends through all classes of the population, is, that there is one Almighty Creator in heaven, who is wise, good, and beneficent; and that there is one, and only one immediate vicegerent and representative of this Almighty power upon earth, namely, the emperor of China. If we stop here, this seems a most arrogant, and even impious position, in which the emperor is placed, by his own command, and by the universal consent of his people; and, when we take literally those sounding names which are given to the monarch and his empire, we are very apt to suppose that the arrogance and impiety are borne out by the testimony of the very language itself. But, before we can come to this conclusion, in anything like a philosophical manner, we must consider that the very writing of the Chinese belongs to a totally different class of subjects from our language, written as it is in alphabetical characters. Those characters are the signs of sounds only, and it but too frequently happens, that we take the combination of them which forms a word, only as the sign of a sound, to which sound we can attach no very definite feeling; and, therefore, when the Chinese style theirs the "Celestial Empire," and their emperor "The son of Heaven," we take their expressions as we ourselves would use them, and consequently do not understand them aright. But the written characters of the Chinese, in which the whole of their knowledge is embodied, are not, like ours, the mere signs of sounds; they are the signs of ideas, and, by whatever sounds the Chinese of different parts of that extensive empire, or the inhabitants of Japan, Corea, Loo-choo, or any other place, may express those charac-

ters in their speech, the idea which the same character brings home to the mind is exactly the same to them all.

In this, the Chinese, and those using the Chinese character, have among themselves a very great advantage over every nation that uses alphabetical characters; for, so that they can read the printed book, they are never in the slightest mistake or doubt as to its meaning, whereas, very many of our readers do not understand the half of what they read; and if a book is so contrived as to wrap up some profound meaning, under a very playful or grotesque mode of expression, it very often happens that a large portion of the readers altogether miss this obscure but most valuable portion of the work. As an instance we may mention Dean Swift's Gulliver's Travels, which is in reality the most biting satire upon politics and human nature generally that ever was written; but which most readers consider as a mere nursery tale interesting only for its wild and fantastic caricature.

When foreigners who read and understand in this manner have to deal with the Chinese language, the chance that they shall mistake the meaning is greater than that they shall understand it, and this is, perhaps, a main cause of all the disputes and quarrels which other nations, resorting to the country, not for purposes of war and plunder, have had with the Chinese. The case of the sounding names of the emperor and the empire is precisely of this nature; and when we think rightly of them, we fail not to perceive that much of the good of the Chinese government, and consequently much of the internal peace and stability of the empire, depend upon the ideas which those names involve. According to the political creed of the Chinese, the God of heaven is a God of goodness and beneficence; and it is as the admi-

nistrator of those qualities upon the earth that the emperor is styled the son of heaven; and again it is because, by successive delegations of power from the emperor to the humblest officer, this imitation of heaven, or accordance with the will of the God of heaven, is understood to descend, that the empire is styled "Celestial." Of course the ignorant and the crafty among the Chinese, will graft superstitions upon this political creed, in the same manner and for the same reasons that superstitions have been engrafted upon all religious creeds,—not excepting Christianity itself, even in what are regarded as the purest of its forms. But the perversions which ignorant and designing men may make of any doctrine, are no arguments against even the purity or the propriety of that doctrine itself, and this one idea, we must bear carefully in mind, if we are to judge correctly of any institutions or law, or general practice, or custom of such a people as the Chinese.

By giving this religious or theistical foundation to the state, and extending it through every ramification, the Chinese are enabled to keep that state clear of any state religion, which has a hierarchy, or government of its own apart from the civil government. Where this is the case, the whole government becomes mixed, and its components are not such as that they can, upon every occasion, work harmoniously and pleasantly together. Not only this; but, a religious system, patronized and supported by the government, has a tendency to breed strong animosities between it and those who dissent from it; and the page of history furnishes but too conclusive evidence of the suffering and misery which have been produced by this cause. Religion, as between man and his Maker, of whatever denomination it may be, never

can be viewed by the whole of a great nation, especially of a nation like China, containing between 150, and 160 millions of inhabitants. But the political creed of that people, being simple theism, enables them to give toleration to all religions; and as, excepting the national worship or veneration offered to Confucius, no one of those enjoys any state advantage more than another, there can be no jealousy of one against another upon this account; and while the law itself prevents one sect from persecuting within the Chinese territory, the government has no disposition to undertake crusades, or carry on wars, for the promotion of any one religious faith.

This peculiarity of the government, do doubt, contributes greatly to the stability as well as to the internal tranquillity of the country. The other general point is a little more difficult to manage, at least according to European notions of society. It is a remnant of barbarity certainly, but of barbarity in a very particular form. It consists in the small influence which females have upon society in China, compared with that which they exercise in the western world, and have exercised in every European country, in proportion as it has been civilized. The Asiatic system generally, tends to degrade and keep in a state of degradation the whole of the female race, though this to different degrees, and for different purposes, in different states, and under different forms of government. 'In so far as the female character has a tendency to refine and elevate the whole of society, and there is no doubt, when properly exercised, its influence in this respect is very great,—in so far as it thus operates, there is no doubt that Asiatic society suffers in many essential points; and

this is at least one of the reasons why, with all its long duration and its internal peace, and we may add, its ingenuity and industry, the population of China is far behind that of the more civilized population of Europe in energy and enterprise. But though, when rightly directed, female influence is, like all other powerful principles, a great means of good; the perversion of it becomes a great means of evil; just as in the case with religion and all other systems and subjects which take a powerful hold on the hearts and feelings of men. The Chinese philosophers who, whether upon the throne or not, appear to have been the modellers of the Chinese system of government and manners, seem to have entertained pretty nearly the same notions of female influence as of state religion. For this reason females are not only excluded from all concern in the government, throughout the whole of its degrees and departments, and regarded as a sort of property which parents may sell and husbands purchase; but a fashion has been introduced by which they are all but confined to the dwellings of their purchasers. It is the established opinion both of men and women, and it has been so long established that the absurdity of it is not perceived, that the smaller the female foot can be rendered by artificial means, the more does it add to the handsomeness and the attractions of its possessor. In consequence of this, the feet of females begin to be strongly compressed by artificial means at a very early period of life, and on this account they have not, when the female grows up, half the size which is necessary for a symmetrical and useful foot.

The consequence is that there is no spring or elasticity in the deformed bones and compressed tendons; and a Chinese lady, even of the highest rank, can neither dance

nor walk gracefully, but shuffles and totters along as if she walked on pegs and not on feet. This incapacity of females to move about with ease and grace, renders them unfit for appearing in public places, except as helpless dependents upon the other sex.

Thus they are cut off from that arena upon which females appear in their most captivating attitude in other countries; and, the simple fact of crippling the feet of the women, deprives them of that empire which they hold in western countries,—though in the latter, they often exercise too much authority, and, which is worse, they exercise it indiscriminately, and thus not only injure themselves, but impair the character of society, and shatter, and sometimes break down the entire framework of states. In making these remarks, we have no intention of bringing any general charge against the female character; for we are well convinced from all that we have studied, that highly educated, and well-trained and regulated females are indispensable to a lofty degree of moral and intellectual tone in any people; and, further, we have the evidence of history to convince us that where females work individual or national injury, they are at first led into error by men; but still, the page of history is too full of tales of dissension, war, and national calamity, and overthrow, that have been brought about by the intrigues of females, and their influence over weak and wicked rulers, for allowing us to come to any other conclusion than that the position in which women is placed in China, is a means of internal peace and stability to the government, whatever effect it may have upon the moral character, or intellectual energy of the Chinese as a nation. We do not say that women teach men to intrigue; but we do say, or rather we quote

from history which cannot be questioned, that the intrigues of men, for the sake of women, if not at their instigation, have, in every age and country in the least degree civilized, been most fertile sources of mischief, and too often the means of absolute ruin. Whether the Chinese, or those of them who legislated for the great body of the people, and for their decorous and peaceful management, may, or may not, have been aware of this, and have acted upon their experimental knowledge, we have no means of ascertaining; but the result seems as though they had so known and so acted, and whatever it may have done in other respects, the result of this species of knowledge and action has been decidedly favourable to the nation,—at least, in as far as domestic tranquillity and perfect freedom of every man to conduct his own business in all matters, save where the laws of the empire are concerned, in any way which to himself appears the best. There may be, and there probably are, disadvantages arising from this perfect detachment of religion, throughout all China, from political power, or its depositories, and also from the restriction of females to certain quiet modes of subservient life; but we must never lose sight of the fact, that the Chinese have flourished under the influence of their present political system, and maintained their power with an evenness and stability quite unknown to any other nation, how superior soever that nation may be in any point or points of its general character.

We have mentioned as preliminary, those two grand points of distinction between the system of the Chinese nation, and that of every other civilized people on the surface of the globe, because it is necessary for the reader to bear them in mind, in coming to a right understanding

upon every point connected with China. There are many circumstances on which we shall afterwards see that the Chinese differ greatly from every other nation, and those circumstances are so numerous, so essential to the stability of the country, and so closely incorporated with all its institutions, that they ought to be held sacred by every other nation which wishes to stand upon a friendly footing, and carry on a quiet, respectful, and advantageous commerce with this very extraordinary people. The laws, the manners, the customs, and even the apparent morals of the Chinese, may be ever so different from those of Europeans, or ever so repugnant to European feelings; but we are aware of no law of nations which gives a stranger a right to interfere with the internal government of an independent state in any single iota. Strangers do not visit the port of Canton, or resort to China by any other channel or means, with the slightest view of benefiting the Chinese. They go thither for their own advantage; and, therefore, if they do not choose to conform to the regulations of the country, whether those regulations may or may not be agreeable to them, then the law which all ows its own government to every sovereign and independent state, says expressly that they ought to desist from going there. If the Chinese were to resort to other countries, and insist upon breaking the laws of those countries there, then the Chinese would be justly and fully obnoxious to the punishment of those laws which they had wantonly offended in a land where they had no right to legislate. But the international law which applies to other countries must, in justice and equity apply to China; and we know of no title which any one nation on the face of the earth has to interfere with the regula-

tions of China, however contrary they may be to those of that nation, or however erroneous or even absurd they may appear in the eyes of the people of that nation, provided they are the regulations which the Chinese see meet to adopt for themselves. The common principle of nationality, which after all is often little better than a cuckoo song, leads every people to prefer their own institutions and regulations to those of any other country; but it does not follow from this, that the said institutions and regulations are, on the abstract principle, one tittle better for this preference given to them by the people with whom they originate. It is true that, in most cases, if not in all, we make ourselves the standard of perfection; but this arises from self-love, and not from philosophy. Our love of country, however praiseworthy it may seem, is nothing after all but self-love upon a greater scale, disguised by being extended to the many, but not on that account changed in its nature.

We have deemed it necessary to offer these few preliminary remarks, and slight inferences from them, before entering upon the very peculiar and highly interesting subject of China; because, in bringing one's mind to bear fairly upon a clime and people which differ so much from any to be met with in Britain—or in Europe, some caution is necessary; and having thus entered our caveat, we may now proceed to that which forms the groundwork, or tablet on which to delineate the picture of any country or any people.

SECTION II.

NAME, GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION, AND EXTENT.

THE native Chinese term their country, according to the French pronounciation, *Tchong-Kouĕ*, by the English, *Chung-kwŏ*, which means the central kingdom, a designation bestowed on that kingdom, which maintained the Imperial cause when China was divided into many states, it has no reference to foreign governments. Cathay is the name given to it by the western Tartars, that is, by the tribes which inhabit Central Asia, between the extreme western frontier of the Chinese dominions, and the eastern shore of the Caspian; and this is the name by which it was first known and described in Europe,—the country of the Tartars being at that time the only route by which China was approachable, in as far as geographical knowledge had then extended. The common name Tsin or Chin, is understood to be derived from the short-lived dynasty of Tsin, whose founder is reported to have pushed the Chinese dominion westward, beyond the limits of the Celestial Empire, properly so called. It was during his time, that the three states that had waged war for years, were again united under one monarchy. He is further said to have completed the great wall by which the Chinese attempted to keep out the northern Tartars, and to have so vanquished the Huns, as to make them begin that western migration, which ended in their overrunning and devastating great part of Europe.

This happened, if the annals, which are in part traditional, are to be trusted, about two hundred years before the commencement of the Christian era; and it may be possible that the advancement of the Roman arms into south western Asia, together with the extension of Chinese conquest westward, may have contributed to that north-westerly movement of the Asiatic hordes which brought them into Europe by the northward of the Black Sea, whence they spread southward and westward, exterminating or driving before them the more ancient inhabitants. As matter of general history, this is not a little curious; because it shows that while the Romans were extending their conquests eastward to the south of the Black Sea and the Caspian, in the time of their strength, they were by that very means giving a westward movement to those people who overthrew the Roman power in the days of luxury and decline.

With regard to China, though the fact is not so well established, it shows that, at a very early period, the Chinese evinced a disposition to extend their dominion, if not the laws and manners of the empire, to that boundary, which nature has drawn so decidedly between it and all the other rich districts of Asia. At the same time it shows that the Chinese in acting thus, sought for security rather than for conquest; and of this disposition to be safe within their own land only, and not to extend their conquests unto very remote parts, is proved by the building of the great wall, one of the most laborious works ever constructed by man. As this wall now lies wholly within the Chinese territory, it is of no use, and nothing more than a monument of vast labour. Indeed, it never could have been of much use except as a means of repelling the predatory attacks of a wandering people,

such as the Tartars; for no nation upon earth could man for defence against regular attacks, a wall fifteen hundred miles in length. The same plan was, however, adopted in Britain, to restrain the predatory incursions of the mountaineers, both of the south and the west, and probably with about the same success as in China. Nor is it unworthy of notice that similar causes have operated in China and in Britain, in reducing those ancient fortifications to the condition of mere monuments. In Britain, one dominion has been extended to the natural boundary—the sea; and in China, one dominion has been extended to the natural boundary—the most lofty ridges of the mountains, or to speak more correctly, the crowns of the outward escarpments of the great Table Land of Central Asia.

When, however, we speak of China, strictly as such, that is, as governed by one uniform system of laws, and following one uniform mode of customs, that is, when we speak of China Proper, as it is called, we do not include the whole, or nearly the whole of what lies within those mountain boundaries. A very considerable portion of this, inclosing China Proper upon all sides, except where it is bounded by the sea, is known by the general name of Chinese Tartary. This is made up of many different soils and climates, and peopled by many races, some stationary, and some wandering; and though these are all under the influence of the Chinese government, their real value to China does not consist in any tribute or revenue which they yield, or generally speaking from any commercial transactions which the Chinese have with them, but merely as the great breadth of this marginal country, so to speak, is a far more secure barrier against foreign invasion, than if the Celestial Empire

were surrounded on all sides by the sea. This marginal country indeed, has some resemblance to a natural fortification. It is a sort of rampart, though a very broad one; and the lofty ridges of mountains toward which it ascends from the great and fertile plain of China, serves as a natural parapet surrounding the whole.

Still, leaving out this mighty border of the Chinese Empire, China Proper is the largest compact country in the world; and it possesses very considerable advantages from the latitude in which it is situated, as well as from physical circumstances, afterwards to be noticed. Taking its utmost extent, the extreme south is in about 18° north latitude, and its extreme south in about 41°. Thus, while the southern portion, which however, is of no great breadth, is within the tropic, the northern portion is near the middle of the quadrant; and if, to this vast range in latitude, we add the great altitude of some of the neighbouring mountains, and some other physical characters, we may say with truth, that few countries embrace a greater range in climate than China Proper—to say nothing of Chinese Tartary and the modern extension southward, along the western shore of the gulf of Tonquin. Indeed, this great range of climate, and the corresponding variety of productions, hold a prominent place among the circumstances which enable the Chinese to be so united and so independent of other nations, because they afford the materials of an inland trade, which is of vast extent, and has been long established.

The eastern extremity where China borders with the peninsula of Corea is in about 124° east longitude; and if we take only the compact part of the empire, the

western boundary is in about 98°; but, if we take the long and narrow projection on the north-west along the northern side of which the wall extends, its longitude is about 85° east, which gives a total range of 39° in longitude, the range in latitude being 23°. The longest line which can be drawn over and in the empire is from the projection alluded to, in the direction of the harbour of Amoy, opposite the island of Formosa; and this line falls little short of two thousand miles. The average length from the peninsula, opposite the island of Hainan, to the great wall near Pekin, is about fourteen hundred miles, and the average breadth about eleven hundred and eighty. The product of these gives an area of 1,292,400 square miles. This is rather less than the estimate given by Sir George Staunton, which is 1,297,999; but these do not differ much, and if the islands, and the projection on the north-west be added, it may be regarded as near enough the truth for ordinary purposes to say that the entire Chinese empire contains 1,300,000 square miles, or 732—in round numbers 700 millions of English acres.

Though only one side of China is washed by the sea, yet its extent of sea-coast is very considerable, and this coast contains many small bays, inlets and estuaries studded with innumerable islands. There are a sort of four sections of this sea, though they are all, of course, portions of the north Pacific. The portion of sea between Tonquin which is subject to China, and the island of Hainan and the proximate peninsula, forms the gulf of Tonquin; and the strait between the island and the peninsula, affords a passage for junks and other small craft; but, like most of the channels and estuaries

on the Chinese coast, it abounds in shoals, banks, and small islands, which render the navigation both tedious and dangerous.

To the eastward of this passage, and as far as the island of Formosa, the coast is washed by the Chinese sea. This sea, though an extensive one, and inclosed only by islands on the east and south has many of the characters of an inland sea, there being no entrance to it but through straits or channels between the islands. In consequence of this, the navigation of it is somewhat tedious during the tranquil seasons of the year and highly dangerous, or not at all practicable, at the changes of the monsoons. Toward the northern part this sea is connected with the main expanse of the north Pacific by the Fo-hien channel—betwee nthat island and the main land of China, and by the strait of Formosa between the south end of the island, and the proximate part of the Phillippines. The latter passage is of considerable breadth, but there are many groups of small islands in it.

Among the Philippines there are many channels and passages; the most southerly of which leads to the sea of Sooloo, which has the Philippines on the north, Borneo on the west, and Celebes on the south; and the passages there are those which lead to the Moluccas, or Spice Islands, which, in their vegetable productions, are considered the gardens of the world. From the sea of Sooloo southward to the sea of Java, there is the strait or channel of Macassar, and the same sea is entered by the strait of Billiton farther to the westward, which last separates Borneo from the island of Sumatra, the largest and most westerly of the long chain of the Sunda isles. Between Sumatra and the Malay peninsula—or

extreme south of the Asiatic mainland, there is the strait of Malacca, which connects the Chinese sea with the Bay of Bengal, and thus opens the shortest and most direct navigation between China and India, or indeed with the northern ramifications of the Indian ocean, as far as Bassora at the termination of the Persian gulf, and Suez at that of the Red sea. The communication between the latter and the Mediterranean is very short, and that from the former, though across rather an unpleasant country, is not very long. Thus, these passages formed the only roots of sea communication between the eastern world and the western, until the discovery of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope. The easterly passages between the Sunda isles, lead directly to the Indian ocean, and the sea of Java extends eastward, which merges in the sea of Banda, between the large island of New Guinea on the east, the Moluccas on the north, Celebes on the north-west, and Timor on the south. The sea of Sooloo, and also all the channels north of it among the Philippine islands, lead directly eastward into the Pacific, though there are various groups of small islands spotted over that part of the ocean.

If we take all these passages, their ramifications, and the places to which they lead, we cannot fail to perceive that, from mere position alone, and without any regard to the productions of the earth, or the character of the inhabitants, those numerous and varied islands and portions of the continent, present a most extraordinary navigation; and when it is borne in mind that all the islands south of the middle latitude of Formosa, and also the main land of Asia south of the same parallel, are within the northern traffic, we may infer, without entering into the physical characters of this singular portion

of the globe, that the productions of those countries must be both peculiar and valuable. The consideration of this, may, at first sight, see mforeign to the subject of China; but it is not so in reality. Though the Chinese are less given to foreign trade, more especially to very long voyages, than any other maritime people enjoying the same extent of coast, yet they do trade to a very considerable extent with the southward isles, either in their own junks, or by means of the Malays who, generally speaking, inhabit the coasts of those islands, and live a much more maritime and enterprising life than even those Chinese which dwell, not only on the shore of the sea, but actually on the surface of the waters, for the whole term of their lives.

If we now direct our attention to the third section of the sea which bounds the Chinese coast, we have a long extent of coast exposed directly to the north Pacific, or, at least, the islands are fewer in number and farther from the main land than they are on the south, and the passages between them are more open. The general outline of the coast, all the way from the bottom of the gulf of Tonquin to the mouth of the Yellow river—nearly on the same parallel with the southern extremity of Corea, is a regular convex curve, approaching to a circular are in its form; but from the mouth of the Yellow river northward, the coast trends north-east and approaches Corea, the one being separated from the other by the Yellow sea. The Bay thus formed extends still further to the north and turns westward, where it is termed the Imperial sea, or gulf of Pe-che-le, the latter from the name of the province which lies around its north-western light, and the former from Pekin, the Imperial city, being situated within that province. Where Pe-che-le

terminates China Proper also terminates, and the farther extension of the sea ceases to be Imperial, though it is bounded to its extremity by the dominions of China. It is called the gulf of Leao Tong, from the province on its northern extremity; and Corea on the east is also a province of Chinese Tartary. The fact that little was known of the Corean coast, or the islands which form the archipelago on the south-west of it, until they were visited, surveyed, described, and delineated by British navigators, is a striking proof of the great indifference of the Chinese government to naval matters, even where they concern places of its own dominion which are within a very moderate distance of the Imperial city.

The strait of Corea separates the south part of that peninsula from the highly interesting islands of Japan, which form the most powerful state next to China in all Eastern Asia, which are also highly productive, and maintain a numerous and active population. Amid all the varied isles of the south, there are none which are of the same real importance as Japan; but, like the Chinese, the inhabitants of those islands are jealous of the visits of strangers.

From Formosa to Japan, a chain of islands may be traced, the chief of which are the Madjicosemah, and the Loo-choo groups; but, taken altogether, these do not occupy any great extent of the passage. Between the Japan isles on the east, and the coast of Corea on the west, the sea of Japan is situated. The southern entrance to this sea is narrow, and forms the strait of Corea; but it expands in the middle, though it again narrows northward, and forms the channel of Tartary, between the island of Sagalin and Chinese Tartary; and the extreme boundary of the Chinese territory in these

parts, is at the mouth of the river Amour, which is on the west side of this channel, near its northern termination.

This termination is in about 53° north latitude; and, as the Chinese dependencies extend to about 15° at the southern part, the empire and its dependencies have an extent of coast stretching over about 38°, or 2,260 miles on the meridian, while taking all the flexuries of the coast, it cannot be less than 4,000 miles, if the Chinese islands are included in the estimate. This is equal to about one sixth of the circumference of the globe; and thus China has ample communication with the sea, if that communication were turned to proper account. But the jealousy of government and the people, and the restriction imposed upon foreigners to resort to the single river of Canton, and to no other part of the Chinese shores, with the vexatious nature of the Chinese regulations, or rather the great difference between them and most trading nations, greatly reduce the value of this ample command of the sea. The positions of the Chinese seas, and of the numerous islands with which those seas are spotted, all the way from the coast of Siberia to that of Australia, contain and even point out the means of obviating the difficulty occasioned by the Chinese policy, and thus might be made the means of turning all the vast and peculiar resources of this mighty country, and the adjacent regions and islets, to most profitable account, as well for the benefit of the Chinese themselves, as of the nations trading with them, or of any people whatever whom the stimulus of this trade either way, might arouse to fresh exertions, and new desires and discoveries. In liberal policy, that policy which is warped by no

system, and has no particular end to serve, it is a maxim, that the more that all the world can work together, the greater is the benefit to every part of it. This maxim the Chinese do not understand, or at all events, it is directly contrary to their system; and it is not only a maxim with them, but the fundamental principle upon which their government through all its institutions is founded, that they will not be schooled by any people on the face of the earth. Out of this determination they cannot be reasoned; and, therefore, as we know of neither justice nor possibility whereby even liberal principles can be forced upon even an individual, far less a great nation, by coercive measures, the soundest policy for other nations to pursue, as well for their own good as for that of the Chinese, is to leave them alone in the possession of their system, however absurd it may appear, or however insulting it may be felt to those whose policy is grounded upon principles diametrically opposite.

As we shall see at greater length in a future section, the earliest European visitors who resorted to the Chinese seas for the purposes of trade, traded most profitably, and traded in peace; and that it was only in consequence of direct attempts to disobey the law, or undermine the government, that foreigners were ever treated with contumely or harshness by the Chinese. The wound was given at a very early period of the intercourse; for, half a century had scarcely elapsed, from the time when the keel of De Gama first divided the waters of the Indian ocean, before measures began to be laid for subjecting the Chinese nation to the dictates of western Europe, by the sword of the warrior and the faggot of the priest. As might have been anticipated,

those attempts were frustrated the instant they were known, without in the least injuring the Chinese, or disturbing the dull but uniform government of the Celestial Empire; for what could a few men, nay, what could any armament sent from Europe, do against a hundred and fifty millions of men, occupying a million and a third square miles of united and compact country, approachable only by one side, and there only at a few points?

If this had been attempted by only one nation, and that nation of one particular faith—for the attempt was made under the cloak of religion, the Chinese might have forgiven and forgotten it, and they did so to all appearance; but it has been repeated, and reiterated under different forms; and, therefore, it now becomes a question whether the Chinese will ever again trust Europeans, or deal with them on those terms of equality and friendship which they evinced at the first. This is an important question to all commercial nations, and more especially to the British; but it rests upon historical data, and these must be briefly enumerated in a future section. Meantime we may return to the mouth of the river Amour, and just glance along the boundaries of that extensive territory which forms the inland border and protection of China Proper.

The mouth of the Amour is in about 140° east longitude; and the extreme west of what is considered Chinese Tartary, though a country little known to us, is in about 70°, making the extreme range from east to west upon the parallel 70°, or upwards of 4000 miles. The northern boundary is irregular; but it averages nearly 50° of latitude, that is, it is on the same parallel with the southmost part of England. Along this boun-

dary, the Chinese territory nowhere extends northward of the main ridge or ridges of mountains which separate it from Siberia; but the Russian territory does extend southward of these at two places, though more decidedly at the one than at the other. The great ridges here are the eastern continuation of the Altaian chain, known by different names in different longitudes, and containing some passes through which the rivers of Siberia find their way from the table land to that country. The Stanovoy Yablonny mountains form the eastern part of this mountain barrier, and while the principal chain extends northeast, and passes into Siberia, a southern spur, lies south eastward toward the mouth of the Amour. From the extremity of this spur to 120° east longitude, that is, for a length of 20° on the parallel, there is no stream of consequence which flows into Chinese Tartary into Siberia, or out of Siberia into Chinese Tartary, but beyond that parallel westward, for about 10°, the Russian frontier lies nearly two hundred miles southward of the main summit.

The province of Nerschensk is partly situated here, and this part is watered by several branches of the Amour, so that Chinese Tartary is open to it on the east, though a ridge of mountains, a spur of the main chain forms a barrier on the south. About 105° east longitude, various branches of the river Selenga unite, and flow to Lake Baikal, through a gorge of the mountains; and this is another passage into Chinese Tartary. This passage, however, does not lead to so favourable an entrance for invasion, as that further to the east, inasmuch as the great desert of Shamoo lies immediately to the south of it, and the highest ridge of the Altaian mountains to the south-west. The desert alluded to,

as compared with many other deserts, occupies a very elevated situation, as may be judged of from the great length of the rivers which rise on its northern margin and flow toward the arctic ocean, over an extent of not less than 25° of latitude, without including the windings by which the length of their courses, and consequently, the extent of the slopes which they flood, are increased.

This desert of Shamoo, and the region to the west of it, as far as the summit of the central mountains which connect the great southern and northern regions of Asia, and with them form the escarpments of the table land which occupies the western and north-western regions of Chinese Tartary, and of which the desert forms a part, are but imperfectly known, and their character is consequently little understood. They appear to form a part of that great zone of desert which, with various fertile spots and interruptions, extends from the extreme west of Africa, to nearly the longitude of Pekin. When, however, we speak of such deserts as these, we must not be carried away by the notion that they are in their whole surfaces, and at all seasons, regions of absolute sterility, like the few sandy tracks which occur on limited portions of the sea-coast in such a country as Britain, where rains occur at short intervals all the year round, and maintain some sort of perennial vegetation, upon every description of soil at all fit for its support. These deserts all lie in seasonal countries, where the rains. where they do fall, fall during a short portion of the year, as compared with the season of drought; and it depends much upon the situation of any portion of such deserts, and on the characters of the adjoining surfaces, especially those which lie in the direction of the monsoons or alternating seasonal winds, whe-

ther that particular portion shall approximate more to the character of a fertile land or a desert waste. If the rains come abundantly, and come with each turn of the monsoon, then the general character of the country must be fertility; and if those rains are in great abundance, swamps will be formed in the hollows. On the other hand, if the rains are light, and uncertain in the time of their coming, the general character will lean towards sterility; and instead of swamps in the hollows, the heights will be arid wastes. We shall afterwards see that, owing to locality, combined with physical causes, the country by which China Proper is margined on the land sides, partakes of both extremes of these characters, and of every intermediate degree.

The western boundary of Chinese Tartary which, as we have said, lies nearly on the meridian of 70° east, occupies ten or twelve degrees of latitude, from about the 36° northward; and, although it is not fully established, it is generally believed that a mountain ridge, or mountain ridges, of very considerable elevation, extend the whole way, sending several lateral branches eastward in the direction of China, but not being crossed by a river in any direction. There do appear to be rivers in various places of this almost unknown region, but they either empty their waters into lakes which have no connexion with the sea, are evaporated by the heat in the day season, or absorbed by the sandy and porous strata. Like the vegetation of the surfaces across which they flow, they are to a great extent seasonal, being flooded when the snow melts, or the rains fall, and becoming dry at other times of the year.

The southern boundary of the Chinese dependencies, is the great ridge of the Himalaya, the loftiest, and in

all its continuations the longest upon the surface of the globe; and it forms the boundary of the Chinese dependencies of Little Thibet and Great Thibet, in a south-easterly direction across full twenty-five degrees of latitude. Its eastern termination, or rather the point at which it begins to subside into lower hills, and ceases to be a perfect barrier, not only between the countries and the north and south, but between their climates, preventing that free intercourse of atmospheric influence over the surface, which makes the transition from climate to climate in uniformly-surfaced countries so gradual that it is not perceived until a considerable range of latitude has been passed over;—the point at which this takes place is in about 28° north latitude, and 96° east longitude; and here the boundary approaches very near the confines of China Proper. From this point south eastward to the final limit of the Chinese territories on the sea-coast, there is no continuous or very definite natural boundary, the line passing over hills, valleys, and swamps or tangled forests, as may happen. Such are the locality, the extent, and the boundaries, of the Chinese dominions, and a right understanding of them, is the first and simplest element in the knowledge of China. But there are many other elements, some of them of difficult investigation, and almost all of them uncertain in the data from which they are deduced, which must be brought into notice, and carefully compared the one with the other before we can be in a fit condition for coming to a right understanding on the subject of China and the Chinese, or for judging with impartiality of any dispute between them and any European nation.

SECTION III.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE SURFACE.

If we had sufficient knowledge of the geology and other great branches of the natural history of China; the mere features would be better if taken along with these, because they would throw mutual light upon each other; but, as we are in ignorance of the greater number of these, we must be contented to use the more definite characters of the surface simply as points of reference; and even in this respect, the correctness of the map is but little to be depended upon. This is what might naturally be expected; for, unless where triangulation has been applied to its whole surface in the most careful manner, and the leading points verified by celestial observation, there is no possibility of obtaining a near approximation to a correct map, even of a country of limited extent. No such method of survey has been applied even to China Proper; and, as for the dependencies, their extent and character are such as to put an operation of this kind entirely out of the question. Therefore, we have no alternative but taking the map just as we find it; and where one map differs from another, it is not easy to say which of them is most correct. This is mentioned in order to caution the reader against receiving representations or accounts of geographical features and topographical details of China, with the same confidence as he would receive those of

England or France, or any other country which has been accurately surveyed, and is thoroughly known.

The characters of the boundaries of China and its dependencies, which are briefly traced in the preceding section, give us a general ground of inference as to what must be the prevailing slopes and other grand features of the surface. From the north-eastern boundary, round by the north, the west, and the south, as far as the eastern termination of the Himalaya, the territory is bounded by mountains, in many places, mountains of great elevation; and on the eastern side it is bounded by the sea. The general slope of the country must therefore be toward the east, and the enquiry—for which unfortunately we have not sufficient data—is, in what manner this very extensive slope is divided, by spurs from the surrounding mountains, or detached ridges of mountains or hills, and how it is watered by rivers.

Now, there is reason to believe, that the western part of the dominions is separated into three divisions, by ridges of mountains branching out from the ones forming the boundaries. These two ridges branch off from the west at nearly the same point, that is, where the meridian of 70° east, and the parallel of 40° north intersect each other. From this point they diverge, and follow nearly the directions of the boundary mountains. The most northerly one stretches along between the parallels of 40° and 50°, and merges in the desert at about at 100° east longitude. The southern one inclines to the south-east, forming the northern boundary of the country called Little Thibet, and it approaches and inosculates with the Himalaya ridge, about longitude 80°. Hence it forms a greater bend to the north, inclosing Great Thibet, and terminating on the confines of

China, opposite, and not very distant from, the eastern termination of the Himalaya. The northern ridge which merges in the lofty desert, again appears as a mountain ridge about longitude 105°, and after a north-easterly direction of about 15 degrees of longitude, it makes an angle, and returns to the south-west, approaching the Chinese wall at some distance north-westward of Pekin. These are not of course the only mountain ridges in a country so extensive and so diversified; but they are the principal summits; and if they are attended to, they will serve as guides to the great natural divisions, and helps to the remembrance of them.

Between the Altaian and other mountains on the south of Siberia, and the most northerly of the chains in the Chinese dependencies, the extensive district of Mongolio is situated. This is understood to be the father-land of the Chinese, and all the other races which have the yellow colour, the oblique eyes, and the other characteristics of the Mongols; and which, it is generally understood, modified by change of climate, extended over many parts of Asia, and passed into America as far as Mexico. From this, we would naturally conclude, that the district had once been one of considerable fertility, and some parts of it are still fertile; but we may also conclude, that it has been a seasonal country, and its inhabitants nomadic; for rude tribes, inhabiting lands where they can find subsistence all the year round, seldom migrate, and as seldom make much progress towards civilization. The summit level of this country in the cross direction, is opposite the desert, or somewhere about 90° east longitude. To the westward of this, the rivers have no outlets, but fall into lakes, the chief of which are near the western and northern moun-

tains, and some of them are described as being of very considerable dimensions, at least at certain seasons of the year.

The smaller streams are absorbed by the soil, or dried up by the sun. The eastern position consists of the valley of the Amour, which is a river of considerable magnitude and perennial both in its main stream and its principal branches, the chief of which come from the south, between the south-westerly bend of the mountains, and the mountain chain on the coast which extends from Corea northward to the embouchure of the river.

In the portion between the two inland ridges, which merges in the great desert on the south and east, the summit level is by no means so definite, or, at all events, it has not been so much explored. The north-west of it resembles the western portion of the northern division only the slope of it, at least according to the information we have, is toward the east. Like the other, it contains streams of water, and one of these, the river of Cashgar, is described as having an easterly course of more than 15° of longitude, and terminating in a lake. It should seem, however, that this country is altogether on a high level, and exceedingly dry and barren during the warm season.

The portion on the south-east of the desert extends immediately to the borders of China Proper, and includes the mountains and hills between China and the desert, until the mountains north-west of Pekin are arrived at. From the information afforded by the maps,—and it is almost the only information that we have, it should seem that a considerable portion at the least, of this great desert, is a depression, below the altitude of the mountains by which it is surrounded; for, besides

the large river, which we have mentioned as flowing eastward, there are smaller streams, which flow from the north, the east, and the south, and are lost in little lakes; but the probability is, that the greater number of these are merely seasonal.

From these indications, one is induced to infer that this extensive tract of country, though now desert and unprofitable, may, at some former period, have been fertile and well inhabited. We know the extent to which the desert in Africa, and in south western Asia, has, within the period of recorded history, invaded lands which were once in the highest degree fertile, and were the first abodes of civilization, at least in the longitudes wherein they are situated; we infer from geologic facts: and a glimmer of tradition, if not of history, comes to strengthen the inference, that the same has happened in the steppes of Siberia, and in various regions of Central Asia, both northward and southward of the Hindoo Cosh; and with this evidence, and this inference, we can very fairly conclude, that the desert of Shamoo may have once been a dawning-place of civilisation and science. We may add that there are other inducements to strengthen us in this conclusion.

There is every reason to believe that the Hindoo population of India came from this country, driving the Malays before them, in like manner as those Malays had previously driven the Oriental negroes; and we have, in the *Bija Ganita* as well as in other writings, and many practices of the learned among the Hindoos, fragments of a system of science of former times, small fragments indeed, and corrupted by time, but still retaining enough to show that, at some period long gone by, there must have been men in these parts of Asia,

whose minds were tutored to a high degree of eminence in intellectual science. The notice of this is only incidental to the description of China; but still it is important as showing the progress of physical nature and the movements of man; and the present state of this country as a desert, must exert a very different influence upon the climate of China, from what it exerted when it was clothed with vegetation, and redolent of perennial streams. This, however, is a physical point, and the consideration of it must be left to another section.

If we suppose a line drawn from the most northerly point of the northern mountains of Thibet, in about longitude 90° north eastward, to approach but not to touch, the long and narrow projection on the north-west of China Proper, we have the summit-level; and it is probable that this summit level might be traced onward to the northern mountains which lie southward of the lake of Baikal; and this being the case, a line drawn from the most elevated summits of the Himalaya, where the waters of the Indus and Ganges are parted, and continue this line along the mountains of Thibet, to the commencement of that which we have just noticed, we shall have the grand summit level of the Chinese dominions, as parting the whole of them into an eastern and a western slope. In the centre of Thibet there is a detached cluster of mountains which give that country something the form of an oval valley; and all the rivers which water that valley find their exit by the comparatively narrow gorge between the Himalaya and the opposite mountains. The Tsanpoo, or principal river in the southern part of Thibet, is usually represented in the maps as being the longest branch of the Brahmapootra; but this seems doubtful, inasmuch as the Brah-

ma-pootra, forks into a number of branches among the hills to the north-east of Assam; and those branches appear to be, for the most part, seasonal streams, which are dry, for a portion of the year. This, however, is a very rainy country; and toward the Chinese frontier, it has been but little explored, so that it is not well ascertained into which river of the eastern peninsula the waters of the Tsanpoo are discharged. There is a choice of three, the Irrawaddy, which falls into the gulf of Martaban, and the rivers which fall into the gulfs of Siam and Camboja; but until actual examination has connected our knowledge of the upper country with that of the under, it would answer little purpose to attempt a solution of this problem. The many conjectures respecting the termination of the Niger in Africa, all of which turned out to be wrong, ought to teach us caution in geographical speculations.

The great northern river of Thibet is the Blue river of China, which has a very long course, along the curve of the northern mountains, but there are some other rivers to the south of this one, the terminations of which are not known, as they also pass through that district, of which we are so ignorant, but of which the knowledge is highly desirable on account of the number of large streams which are here brought near to each other, and the consequent fertility of which the district must be possessed, whether cultivated or in a state of wild nature.

When we cross the northern mountains of Thibet north-eastward, and follow the summit level already pointed out, as being on or near the margin of the desert, we have the line which divides the slope of China from the slope of Chinese Tartary; only, Thibet itself, or at

least the portion of it north of the central mountains, belongs to China in respect of natural slope, though they are, for the greater part of the boundary, separated by mountains, and the chief passage is by that gorge of the mountains through which the very winding stream of the Blue River finds its way to the territory of China, properly so called.

Thus, when we omit the Chinese dependencies and confine our attention to the empire, we find that it consists of a great basin, having an irregular line of heights on the north-west, west and south-west, and, if we omit the north-western projection, the slope of which is the other way, this land boundary is not very different in length from the sea boundary, and the form of the country has some resemblance to an irregular oval, half the circumference of which is heights of considerable elevation, and the other half the sea, or the mean level of the earth's surface. Within this circumference, there is much diversity of surface, consisting of hills and valleys of different scales of magnitude, level plains, marshes, rocky grounds, and deserts. The spurs of the western mountains advance a considerable way into the country, and their continuations are broken into hills, which, with their intervening valleys and streams and lakes, often form delightful scenery, but there are also many tracks which are of a thin sandy soil, and others which are absolutely barren. Taking all these circumstances together, though the climate of China is more tropical than that of England, and the cultivation of the soil is carried on with a very high degree of industry and frugality, though not so scientifically as that of England, and though in all likelihood, men are more easily supported in China, and, on that

accouut, less able to do the same quantity of hard work, yet we can hardly suppose that the land of China, taking breadth for breadth, is capable of affording subsistence to the same number of human beings as the average of England. The rude estimate, which in the absence of an authenticated census we have given of the population, is in accordance with this; and, for that reason, we may conclude that it is not very wide of the truth.

China is a remarkably well-watered country, and the rivers are of large size, probably discharging more water than any others in Asia, or in any part of the world except America, the principal rivers are three in number, the Yang-tse-kiang, or 'Son of the Sea,' which is by much the largest river in the empire, and occupying a central position; the Hwang-ho to the north of the former, which is also a large river, though inferior in size to the first mentioned; and the river of Canton, which is inferior in size to both the others, and farther to the south.

The Son of the Sea, also termed the Blue River, because its waters are not so much tinged with mud as those of the other great river north of it, which is styled the Yellow River, traverses almost the whole extent of the eastern slope of the country, where that extends farthest in a westerly direction. As already mentioned it rises in the north-west part of Great Thibet, follows the line of the mountains, until, by a very bold flexure northward, it enters China Proper, which it divides very nearly into two equal parts. In the latter part of its course, it is comparatively a slow-running river, but of great breadth, and also of considerable depth. Its length has not been measured, but it must exceed two thousand miles; and the island of Tsung-ming, which

is sixty miles in length and eighteen in breadth, and situated opposite to its mouth, is supposed to be formed of the debris brought down by this majestic river, and returned toward the river waters by the set of the tide. At about a hundred miles' distance from the sea, it is fully three miles in width, and at between four hundred and five hundred miles, it is not less than a mile and a half. The action of its waters, and the quantity of matter they waft along, occasion the formation and removal of numerous islands; and, though the reeds which grow upon these yield an abundant supply of fuel to the people who inhabit its banks, yet the shifting of the islands with every flood, and also the rapidity of the current, render the navigation of it highly dangerous. It flows down the slope of the greatest valley, or rather the most extensive plain; but, though there is not any cascade upon it in so far as is known, it sweeps along with dangerous power. The river which it resembles the most is the Mississippi in North America; but it does not appear that its channel is so much encumbered by trees as that of the American river. Occupying the middle latitude of China; and having its course through extensive and fertile plains, the banks of this river are thickly studded with mansions, villages, and houses; and, though the scenery along it is not, in so far as is known, very picturesque, it is in many places exceedingly beautiful. The valley of this Blue river is the widest in China; and the principal branches, which are numerous, and some of them large, come in from the south. They have their sources in a range of mountains or hills, which stretch in a curve nearly parallel to the sea-coast on the south-east; and though this ridge does not appear to be of great elevation, it forms a very definite water-

shed between the coast country, and the southern part of the valley of the Blue river. In this valley there are many lakes, some of them of considerable magnitude, and a good deal of the ground near the rivers, and on their margins, is of a swampy nature; and, from its southern latitude, well adapted for the growth of rice.

The Hwang-ho, or Yellow River, is inferior in magnitude to the great central river; but still it is a noble stream. Its remotest source is in Chinese Tartary, to the northward of the mountains of Thibet, but it is not so far to the westward as to the source of the Blue river. Like that, it has a very winding course; but its most remarkable flexure is to the north where it passes for many miles into Tartary beyond the great wall. When it again enters China its course is almost directly south for nearly four hundred miles, a little to the eastward of the meridian of 110°. Near latitude 45°, it makes a sharp turn to the eastward and flows onward to the sea, in nearly a regular curve, slightly convex to the south. From the angular flexures of this river, it may be said to be both an east and west and north and south river; and it passes through countries of very different characters, approaching the desert in one place, and flowing across low and fertile plains in other places, its current is exceedingly rapid, and it is subject to frequent floods, against which the inhabitants have to protect their fields by embankments and dykes. Those dykes are of great length in many places; and they are formed of clay, bonded together by numerous layers of straw. Notwithstanding their strength, the floods sometimes break through them; and the cities upon the low grounds are enclosed by strong ramparts of mud faced with turf, to prevent the flood from sweeping away the houses, many

of which are formed of slight materials. Taking all its bendings, the length of this river is not much less than that of the Blue River, and it probably discharges nearly as much water; for, though it is not so deep, its current is more swift. In many places it is broad; but, except when flooded, it is in great part so shallow, as to be of but little use for the purposes of navigation; and the rapid current makes it unsafe to descend, and impracticable to ascend during the floods. From its tortuous course it can scarcely be said to have any definite valley, unless in that part of its length where it runs southward. There, there are mountains, or at least hills of considerable elevation stretching along its left bank; and there are also hills on the right, but they are more distant, near the sharp angle which it makes, there are hills to the southward, which may be traced all the way to the mountains of Thibet; but those mountains subside at the distance of more than four hundred miles from the sea; and, during the remainder of its course, the river flows over a level plain, or, at least, over ground, broken only by gentle swells and depressions.

This great plain of China is one of the most extensive, and also one of the most fertile in the world. It extends from the mountains south of the Blue river, nearly as far to the northward as Pekin, which is a stretch of between six hundred and seven hundred miles; and, when we consider that along the whole of this extent, its average breadth is between three hundred and four hundred miles, we can see one of the causes why China, the soil of which is in many places poor, and in some absolutely barren, can maintain so numerous a population. Though nothing is known with certainty respecting the geology of China, yet it should seem that no

inconsiderable portion of this plain is alluvial; and, in part at least formed of the debris brought down by the two great rivers which cross it. These rivers still bring down vast quantities of clay, and sand, and other matters; and, it is from its being tinged with these that the Yellow River gets its name.

All along the coast opposite the mouths of the rivers, and in the space between them, there are islands or sand-banks; and the portion between the rivers is a fen or marsh for many miles inland. This marsh is divided into compartments by dykes and drains, and the surface of it is exceedingly fertile. On the south of the mouth of the Blue River, and between that and the Bay of Hang-chow-foo, there is the large lake of Tai. This lake is about two hundred and sixty miles in circumference, and of an oval shape. The country around this lake is highly interesting, for there are excellent rice-grounds between it and the sea, fields well adapted for the growth of cotton on the north, and the China clay, silk-worm, and green tea districts to the south-west, extending toward the hills. As the soil best adapted for the growth of the tea plant contains a large proportion of silica—not less than 75 per cent, according to the analysis, and, as the china or porcelain clay is in the near vicinity, it is by no means improbable that an extensive decomposition of granite has taken place upon those hills during the lapse of a long period of years. Indeed, there must have been a very extensive decomposition of rock over many parts of China and the countries in which the great Chinese rivers have their sources; because there is a great deal of alluvial soil in the country, and that alluvial soil contains much sand and clay. We may mention other two

great lakes which are on the south or right bank of the Blue River, and which are immediately connected with that stream, and so regulate the quantity of its water, that, during the rains, it does not flood the country to such an extent as the Yellow River, although, from it current being less rapid, it would flood more were it not for this regulation, which is produced by the seasonal accumulation of the river flood in these great lakes. The most easterly of these, is the recipient of the Kan-kiang, which is one of the largest branches of the Blue River. It flows from the hills on the south-west, its sources being very near those of the principal eastern branches of the Canton river. In its course, and especially during its floods, this river brings down a vast quantity of alluvial matter; and its delta projects far into the lake, and consists of many islands. The name of the lake is Po-yang; and it is reported to be nearly three hundred miles in length, during high floods of the many streams which flow into it. It is in fact, a sort of cesspool, which receives the debris and the overflow of many rivers; and the result is, that a considerable portion of country all round it consists of sand, marsh, and sludge. The most extensive portion of this marsh is on the north-east, in the bight formed by the eastern shore of the lake and the south bank of the Blue River. In all probability this bank has been in great part formed by the materials thrown into the lake. It, and the other swampy margins of the lake present none of that exuberance of vegetation which one would naturally look in a country so near the tropical climates. There are no mangroves advancing into the waters, and turning the immediate banks of the lake into living fences. There are not even reeds, which grow abun-

dantly on very many of the low shores and islands of the Blue River. There is not even a bush, or a human habitation, save wretched hovels spotted here and there for the accommodation of the fishermen. The surface of the lake is also agitated by violent storms, during which, as fresh water is specifically lighter than salt-water, the waves roll higher than those of the sea. This lake is about four hundred miles from the entrance of the Blue River; and, as the situation of the lake is low, the river between it and the sea has very little fall.

The other great lake is also on the south bank of the river; but it is about two hundred and fifty miles further up. This lake is called Tung-ting-how; and, like the preceding, it is the receptacle of many streams, though these do not bring down so much mud, and, consequently, the banks of the lake are not so barren and desolate. Between these lakes the course of the river is very slow, and there are numerous lakes of inferior dimensions on both sides; a large river the Han-kiang, comes in from the north-west, and joins the main stream nearly mid-way between the lakes. The whole country here is remarkably well-watered, and consequently fertile.

The Canton River, though of inferior size, is one of much importance, in consequence of its estuary being the only one on the imperial shores, which stronger vessels are allowed to approach. The estuary will receive a separate notice afterwards, so that we shall only mention here, that it is the centre of a large basin, the sides of which gradually rise into hills. The estuary contains a vast number of islands, which are in general

low and fertile, and rivers flow into it from the west and north, and from the north-east. The great westerly branch, the Kan-kiang-ho is remarkable for a cascade called She-pa-pan, or the eighteen cataracts — the fall being divided into that number of parts by ledges of rock. The Pei-kiang-ho, or northern branch is the real Canton River, that is, the one upon which that city is situated; and the entrance to it is the well-known *Bocca Tigris*, or Tiger's Mouth, of European navigators. The Tong-kiang, or Eastern River is of inferior magnitude to the other two.

The low grounds around the common estuary of these three rivers are exceedingly rich, and vast quantities of rice are grown upon them; and, when the rivers, especially the Canton River, are ascended to a considerable height, the scenery is remarkably fine. This is the case, more especially about the falls already attended to; and, as waterfalls are not very common in China, the Chinese regard these ones as being dangerous in a very high degree. It is stated, that each of them singly is only a few feet in height, and that they are not absolute cataracts, but only rapids, which Canadian boatmen would feel no danger and little difficulty in passing; but the inland navigators of China are timid in such matters. The great road from Canton, northward into the interior lies near the bank of this river; and, at about a hundred and fifty miles above the city, there is an unknown extent of coal formation. The road alluded to passes the summit, and descends by the side of the opposite river, passing the lake of Po-yang, at some distance from the west.

The character of these rivers, and more especially of

the Canton river, is different from that of most of the central ones; for, until the low grounds are reached, the water is perfectly transparent.

Besides those which have been noticed, there are many other rivers in China, which would be accounted very large in European countries, although they are but as brooks compared with the mighty tides of the Blue and Yellow Rivers, when these are in full flood. The city of Pekin is situated on a small river, which is termed the Pei-ho, the banks of which are very low and sandy. A western branch of this, much larger than that which passes Pekin, rises a considerable way to the west, and its course lies not very distant from the great wall. It is termed the Yung-leang-ho, which means the river along which grain is carried, and also the Ju-ho, or the precious river. The climate of this part of the country is remarkably well suited to the growth of wheat, which is carried to the capital and the other cities by their rivers, which, though they make but little figure in the map, are, in this part of China, more serviceable for water carriage than the great rivers in the middle latitudes of the empire.

All the low country of China is, indeed, thickly seamed with rivers, which are, in very many instances, efficient for water carriage; and thus the produce of the fields and all other commodities, are brought to market at moderate expense. Besides the natural rivers, there are numerous canals; but as they are not natural features of the country, the description of them belongs to another section.

Such are the leading features of China Proper, so far as our information extends; and, the quantity of water and its general distribution by such a number of streams

as there are in China, would prevent the country from becoming a desert under any arrangement or any neglect. But, so far from being neglected, the surface of China, excepting the desert spots and the irreclaimable swamps and marshes, is every where in a high state of cultivation, and has been so for a great length of time. Therefore, there is very little of it which can be said to be in a state of nature; and, if we confine our description within the limits of the empire, there is no contrast of barren mountain and cultivated plain, or extended forest and land under crop, such as is to be met with in all the more extensive countries of Europe. This does not imply that China is deficient in vegetation, or destitute of trees; for, wherever there is sufficient soil, plants are luxuriant, and trees grow on the very tops of many of the hills. While the low grounds are under crop of some description or other. As the distribution of the vegetables is, however, to a very great extent, artificial, the notice of it properly comes under the head of the domestic economy and industry of the population, therefore, in the present section, we have only to add a very brief generalization of the leading particulars which we have detailed. There are the following natural sections of country:—

First: the south-eastern slope toward the gulf of Tonquin, the Chinese sea, and the eastern sea, nearly to the mouth of the Blue River, or rather the bay of Hang-chow-foo. This country has a general slope toward the sea, and consists of the basin of the Canton rivers, and that of some others further to the eastward. This country has a warm climate, though a very healthy one; and the low and swampy grounds are every where under rice cultivation, while the tea plant grows naturally, or is cultivated on the hills, and the intermediate grounds are

planted with cotton-trees or mulberries for feeding the silkworms.

Second: the district, extending from the sources of the western branch of the Canton rivers, westward to the confines of the Birman empire. Though not a very lofty country, this is a sort of summit level, the streams of which flow partly by the gulf of Tonquin, and partly along the whole eastern peninsula of India, while a few small ones fall into the Blue River. So far as is known of this natural division, it appears to have a very diversified surface; and its situation leads to the inference that it is highly fertile, and thickly covered with wood in all the swampy and other uncultivated places. The range of hills, the slopes of which consist of the soil most favourable for the tea plants, may be traced here, only, at the passages of the rivers they are divided into ridges having a northerly and southerly direction; and though this is no very great departure from the form of every long ridge of mountains or hills, yet it prevents the continuity from being represented on a map. In mountain ridges, the individual parts of which the whole chain is composed, always lie across the spine or axis of the ridge, with depressions or passes between; and, therefore, the outlet of a river through the ridge, is only a pass of greater depth. This part of China is not nearly so populous in proportion to its extent, as some of the other provinces, especially those that lie to the south-east of the Yellow River, and therefore we may conclude that the soil is not so generally cultivated, and consequently that it abounds more in natural forests. This and the former natural division make up the southern slope of China.

Third: the valley of the Blue river. This extends

across the whole breadth where it is greatest; and, in some places it is not less than 700 miles in breadth, in the upper part of it there are some chains of mountains, and in the extreme west, some are said to be of such elevation as to be covered with snow, at least part of the year; as one descends the river, these mountains gradually subside, and at last they disappear on the western verge of the great plain already mentioned. Many parts of this great valley are exceedingly populous; but the upper portion is less so in proportion to its extent, than almost any other part of China Proper.

Fourth: the valley of the Hwang-ho. This is so irregular in the position of its several parts, that they do not admit of generalization. If we take the river from its estuary, to the great bend, the lower part is in the plain, and the upper part in a sort of valley of no great breadth, on the south-side of the river, but having an extent northward to the borders of Tartary At the bend, the Hwei-ho, a large branch comes in from the west, in the direction of the main stream below; and this branch rises near the western frontier between the mountains of Pe-ling on the south, and those of Lung on the north. The lower part of the course of this river is, like the other parts of the plain, exceedingly fertile and populous; but the portion toward the western frontier is much less so in consequence of the number of hills and sandy tracks which it contains.

Fifth: the district on the coast northward of the portion which may be considered as belonging to the lower valley of the Yellow River. This extends round the shores of the Imperial Sea, and stretches inland as far as the sources of those rivers which flow toward the east. On the sea-coast, this division is low and flat,

sandy in many places, but, generally speaking, fertile, while in the north and the west, it rises into mountains, or hills of considerable elevation.

Such are the general features of China, in as far as they are known to Europeans; but information is too scanty for enabling us to represent them with the same accuracy as we could do those of countries which have been surveyed by European observers, since geology and physical geography were elevated to the rank of sciences. The Jesuit missionaries, while they resided in the country had great facilities for acquiring an accurate knowledge of these particulars; but the period at which they visited China was too early for their being able to do justice to the subject.

SECTION IV.

POLITICAL DIVISIONS.

In order that we may, in fewer words, and with more effect, give a short notice of those physical circumstances which have made, and will continue to make China a rich and fertile country, though in the close vicinity of deserts, which are becoming less and less fertile, it may be convenient to glance at the positions of the several provinces; because they will afford us another class of references as to position, which is necessary in order to form even a vague estimate of the climate of so extensive a region.

Like all other parts of Chinese regulation, the political divisions of the surface are remarkably systematic; and each division, whether large or small, is connected, in some way or other, with a city or town. Altogether, the cities in China are exceedingly numerous, amounting in the whole to 4,402; and besides these there are 489 castles along the coast, which are well fortified, and have nearly 3,000 towns attached to them. The inland cities are, for the most part, enclosed with walls, and some of them are considered as civil, and others as military. They are divided into three classes, Foo, Chow, and Heen which, and their governors, take precedency in the order which we have stated. In matters of regulation, a portion of the land, corresponding to the rank of each city, is allotted to it, and thus the whole country is in its

fiscal management, under the government and control of the towns. This is in strict accordance with the whole system of government; for, as the emperor has sovereign control over the whole of China, so the different governors, in the order of their rank, have sovereign control as delegated from the emperor over the ones under them, down to the very lowest officer. Such being the case, it will be necessary just to notice the number of the cities in the several provinces, together with the extent of surface so far as that is known, and the number of inhabitants, according to the Chinese accounts. Neither of these is, however, very definite; for, though we may approximate the area by measuring the map, the map is almost as unsafe a guide as the census, both being derived from the same source. The principal use of stating the number and class of the cities is, that these are indexes to the subdivisions of the provinces.

Altogether, Chinese Proper consists of Eighteen Provinces, which we shall take in their order; but it must be understood that this enumeration is only general. It must also be understood, that upon this or any other occasion, when it becomes necessary to use Chinese names or other expressions, the orthography of them, as given in our alphabetical characters, must be in a great measure arbitrary, for the sound and the written character in Chinese, do not always correspond among the Chinese themselves; and, consequently, our characters, which are mere signs of sounds, cannot express them accurately.

1. *Pe-che-le.* This is the most northerly province of the empire, and its present boundaries lie northward of the great wall about the middle of its longitude. It extends from 38° to 40½° north latitude; and its principal

length is from north to south. Its boundaries are, the Imperial Sea and Shan-tung on the east, Honan on the south-west, Shan-se on the west, and Chinese Tartary on the north. Besides Pekin, the capital, it contains nine cities of the first class, 40 of the second, and 108 of the third. Its surface is estimated at 58,763 square miles, and its population at nearly twenty-eight millions, its surface consists of the northern portion of the great plain; and the soil is, in most places, sandy. There are very few mountains; and great part of the land is only two or three feet above the level of high water in the tidal rivers. The tide on this part of the shore being a bay tide, and one which is much retarded by islands, does not give a rise of more than ten feet in the gulf. The consequence is, that the rivers are navigable for long distances in comparison with their magnitude. The Pei-ho, for instance, is a tidal river for 110 miles inland of the bay. The district, across which it flows, is a very peculiar one. It is wholly a dead level, composed of light sandy soil, containing a portion of clay and vegetable mould, blended together, and containing shining particles of mica. There is no rock to be observed, neither is there any stone, pebble, or gravel; for the whole consists of this disintegrated matter, in a state of very minute division. The banks of this river are almost the only part of this portion of the plain of which we have knowledge from European observation, but it is probable, that the same character extends over great part of it, and that the alluvial lands of China are all the products of a slow and long-continued deposit. Nowithstanding the comparatively small size of their rivers, and the little height of the tide, these rivers overflow the country during the rains, and that to a very considerable extent. Notwith-

standing this, the province is by no means unhealthy, but the reverse—more so, indeed, than the provinces farther south, although, taken all together, China is, perhaps, the most healthy country in Asia, or in any part of the world having the same latitude. The plague never makes its appearance, and epidemical diseases are very rare. The salubrity of the climate tells upon the constitution of the inhabitants; for they are much more robust, hardy, and warlike, than the southern Chinese, though inferior to them in intellectual aptitude; and when these circumstances and their numbers are taken into account, even supposing the statement we have given to be a little exaggerated, the subjugation or even the chastisement of them by a foreign power living on the opposite side of the globe, would be rather a hopeless matter, to say nothing of that of all China. The range of temperature is considerable. During the day in summer, the common thermometer is generally about 80, while, in winter, it sinks below the freezing point, and often as low as zero. The winter frosts are often so intense, that the rivers are frozen thickly enough for bearing horses and wagons for nearly four months; and when the ice begins to dissolve, the process is very slow and there is no "fresh" to carry it out to sea. But, notwithstanding this slow melting of the ice, the cold, during the process, is by no means so intense, nor is the air so raw and disagreeable as in places where the ice melts rapidly. The reason of this will be easily understood when we consider that the degree of cold produced is in proportion to the quantity of ice melted, and not for the time required for that operation. The water which falls upon, sinks into, and moistens the soil of so level a country, is the cause of the winter's cold, and not

the proximity of the northern mountains, as has sometimes been supposed. These observations will apply, in part, to the rest of the plain of China, though less and less, as its situation is farther to the south.

2. *Shan-se*, though one of the smallest provinces in China, is one of the most important, from being considered as the original locality of the Chinese, or at least of that portion of them which united and organized the empire. Its extent is not given in the returns, but its population is estimated at fourteen millions. It is an oblong lozenge, having Pe-che-le on the east, Ho-nan on the south and south-east, Shen-se on the west, and Tartary on the north. Its northern, western, and southern boundaries, are all well defined, the north by the Chinese wall, and the west and south by the Yellow River, the eastern boundary is also tolerably well defined, being nearly the summit level between the rivers of Pe-che-le and those which flow into the Yellow River. It contains five first class cities, sixteen second class, and seventy third class. Ta-yuen-foo, the capital of the province, contains a large space within its walls. It was the first seat of the Chinese emperor, and the capital of what was called the central kingdom; but since it ceased to be the habitation of the imperial family, its early greatness has faded away; and we may remark that the change of the imperial residence is almost the only cause of great rise or great fall in the cities of China, which cities have otherwise as little changed, as the general state of things in the empire. The former palaces of this city are now in ruins; and the tombs of the monarchs, in a neighbouring mountain, are their only memorial. Numerous statues, triumphal arches, and other ornaments, in marble or other stone, point out how splendid the imperial

habitation here must once have been, and the environs, which are here planted with cypress groves, accord well with the fallen glories of the city. But still, the soil is fertile, and the people active and industrious. The climate of the whole province is healthful, though the temperature in winter is very low—the thermometer being below zero for weeks. The men are considered the most robust in the whole empire. Several of the other cities are magnificent, and the districts attached to them large; so that, all together, this is an important province. The northern parts of it contain many hills and rocks which furnish minerals of no inconsiderable beauty and value.

3. *Shen-se* is one of the largest provinces of the empire, and is divided into an eastern and a western part. Its area is estimated at 107,700 square miles, and its population about ten millions. It has the great wall on the north, Shan-se and Ho-nan on the east—Sze-chuen on the south, and Kan-sŭh on the west. It contains eight cities of the first class, twenty-two of the second, and eighty-four of the third. Sin-gan-foo is one of the largest cities in China, and, like Pekin, consists of a Chinese city, and a Tartar one. This, though not so populous as some of the others, is an exceedingly rich province, and the surface is much diversified and highly beautiful. It is not adapted for rice, but wheat and millet are grown in vast quantities: it is also rich in minerals, among which gold is plentiful, but it is obtained by washing the sands of the rivers, not by working the mines. Native cinnaber, which is the beautiful and durable vermilion of the Chinese, is obtained in abundance, and the coal fields are quite inexhaustible. The people have the same character as the rest of the northern Chinese, with the addition, as is said, of more talent, and greater affability.

This corroborates a fact respecting the influence of climate upon man, which may be observed in other countries, namely, that the inhabitants of flat plains of uniform surface, are always more dull and unintellectual than such as inhabit a land of hill and dale.

4. The modern province of *Kan-sŭh* is the western portion of that last described, and contains about fifteen millions of inhabitants, which, with the ten millions in the former province, make up twenty-five. Its extent is not given, and it is, indeed, indefinite, from the extension of it westward into Tartary. The former province bounds it on the east, Sze-chuen on the south, Tartary on the west, and the great wall on the north. The Yellow River flows northward across it; and the surface possesses nearly the same characters as the province formerly described, of which it used to be the western part. The capital of this province is a fine city, and once contained an imperial palace, as was the case with the capitals of many other provinces in the northern and western parts of the empire. This is one of the proofs that the Chinese are Moguls, and that their progress has been toward the south and south-east, but we are ignorant as to what race of people they draw before them.

The four provinces which have been enumerated, comprise the whole of the northern frontier of China; they extend along the whole length of the great wall which forms the northern boundary throughout the entire range, except in that portion directly north of Peki:., where part of Pe-che-le lies beyond the wall.

5. *Sze-chuen* lies immediately south of the two provinces, or two parts of the ancient province, which we have last noticed, it is bounded on the west by Thibet, or rather by a narrow tongue of Chinese Tar-

tary, which advances southward by the east side of the mountains of Thibet, on the south by Yun-nan, and on the east by Ho-nan and Hoo-pĭh. It is the largest of all the Chinese provinces, having 175,000 square miles of surface, and a population of about twenty-one millions. The Blue River forms a part of its south-western boundary, and then winds through the province, leaving it near the north-east. There are many large branches of this river in the province, the general slope of which is toward the river. The surface is barren in some places, but these are neither numerous nor extensive, and, upon the whole, it is well watered and much diversified. Though it borders upon the northern provinces, its general climate is considerably warmer than that of these. This is owing partly to its lower latitude, partly to its southern slope, and partly to its being nearer the range of the monsoon which sets from the Indian ocean into the Bay of Bengal. It contains ten cities of the first class, sixteen of the second, and seventy-two of the third; and the forts and strongholds are more numerous than in most of the other inland provinces. These were erected as defences against the incursions of the Tartars, who often assailed this province, and in 1646, almost entirely destroyed Ching-too-foo, the capital. Previous to that destruction, this was one of the finest cities in China, and contained an imperial palace upon the most magnificent scale. It still contains many memorials of its former greatness, in bridges, temples, and other structures, in the style of architecture, peculiar to the country. Some of the other cities are very fine; and and the inhabitants of one or two of them are hereditary soldiers, who were at first established for the purpose of repelling the predatory inroads of the Tartars. Horse-

men were necessary in the wars of these invaders; and, though such wars are not at an end, the superiority of the breed of horses is still kept up. The plains and valleys are fertile; and sugar-canes, silk-worms, and rhubarb are extensively cultivated. The musk animal is found in the forests, and the mountains and some of the alluvial soils are rich in minerals. Iron, tin, lead, and that species of iron we term loadstone or natural magnet, are the chief metallic products; but lapis lazuli is also found, and the salt mines are productive and worked to a great extent. In some of the alluvial soils, amber is found in considerable quantity. The climate on the high grounds is not so keen as it is in the more northerly provinces, but the air is very salubrious, and on the land and shallow grounds the climate begins to assume some degree of the tropical character.

6. *Yun-nan*, which lies to the south of the last mentioned province, is the most south-westerly in China Proper, and of course, its character is still more tropical than any which have been yet noticed. A small portion of the north-west is bounded by Thibet, and the western side by the Birman empire,—to which it approximates in character, in consequence both of geographical position, and of physical circumstance. Kwang-se and Hoonan bound it on the east, and complete its boundary. Its surface is estimated at about 57,000 square miles, and its population at about 7,000,000. Compared with the northern and eastern provinces, or at least with the more valuable of them, this is a smaller population in proportion to the extent than they possess; and this is in part accounted for by the fact that a very considerable part of the surface is covered by thick forests, in which elephants are met with; and there are also marshy

grounds during the rains. The Blue River passes through a small portion of the north of the province, but most of the rivers discharge their waters into either the Bay of Bengal or the Gulf of Tonquin. The province contains twenty-one cities of the first class, twenty-five of the second, and thirty of the third. It abounds in metals; and, as is testified by the forests upon the unoccupied grounds, the soil is exceedingly rich and fertile. Its trade is great, and consists chiefly of the productions of its surface or its mines. Among the former may be mentioned silk, valuable gums, the secretion of the musk animal, horses, and elephants; and, among the latter, gold, copper, tin, precious stones, and amber. It is represented as being in proportion to its population, one of the richest provinces in China; and Yun-nan-foo, its capital, is described as being splendidly embellished by some of the finest ornamental works in China. The people are said to be equally celebrated for their bravery and their mental capacity, and its artisans fabricate some of the finest productions of Chinese art, especially those of the loom, as is the case with the last-named province. The riches of this once strongly tempted the rapacity of the Tartars, but now the inhabitants are left at peace, and, of course, pursue their peaceful labours with more assiduity. The acquisition of that country, which lies to the northward of the mountains of Thibet, has been a very efficient means of tranquillity to those south-western provinces of China Proper, because it was along the stripe of comparatively fertile ground, near the foot of those mountains, and not across the desert of Shamoo, that the predatory incursions of the Tartars were made.

If we take the three provinces which lie along the western frontier of China, in their order from north to

south, we find a much greater diversity of climate than in the provinces on the northern frontier. The differences which take place in the fertility and productions of the latter, arise chiefly from differences in the nature of the soil, and the form of the surface, but, on the western frontier differences are produced both by latitude and by the nature of the countries to the north and south; and the result is, that in these latter, there is a transition from a temperate to a tropical climate,—from a land of wheat to a land of elephants.

7. *Kwang-se.* This province lies immediately to the east of Yun-nan. It contains an estimated surface of about 87,000 square miles, and has a population of seven millions, which is smaller in proportion to its extent than almost any other province. There are in it twelve cities of the first class, 25 of the second, and 173 of the third. A good deal of it is low and swampy; but the northern parts are elevated, extending to the Nanling mountains, which are part of the southern ridge that divides the coast country from the great valley of the Blue River. In the west it does not reach quite to the summit, and there it is met by Kwei-chow. On the north-west it is bounded by Hoo-nan; and the boundary between them is very irregular, as it follows in most places the summit of the mountains. The eastern and southern sides are bounded by Kwang-tung, and the south-west by Tonquin. The south part of it approaches very near to the sea, but it has not any sea-coast. The flat grounds which are so productive of rice, are in the southern and central parts of the province, and they are less healthy than the average of China. The rivers are of course sluggish in their currents; and, on this account, they answer well for irrigating the rice-grounds while the plants are in progress,

and for conveying the produce to market when it comes to maturity. The supply which these grounds afford is considerable, and a good deal of it is sent to the adjoining provinces. Toward the mountains, the surface becomes more varied, the courses of the rivers more rapid, and the scenery of a more bold and imposing character. Kwei-ling-foo, the capital is situated near the mountains, on the banks of a rapid river. It is a handsome city; and the environs and adjoining district are celebrated for the richness of their ornithology, and the beauty of their scenery. Besides the rice which it exports, this province has, in the elevated tracts, mines of gold, silver, copper, and tin. The sago palm thrives in some places; and the rhinoceros occurs in the jungles of reeds and tall grasses near the swamps. The wildest parts of the mountains in this province and the adjoining one of Kwei-chow are inhabited by independent tribes of rude men, little elevated above the savage state; but it does not appear that they make inroads upon the Chinese, or that the Chinese evince any disposition to disturb or dislodge them.

8. *Kwang-tung*, or Canton. This province stretches along the south coast from the middle of the northern shore of the gulf of Tonquin, to nearly opposite the island of Formosa. It is thus a province of great length; but its breadth is irregular, and, in some places not very great. Toward the west, a narrow stripe of it extends westward between Kwang-se and the bay of Tonquin; and it is also narrow toward the eastern part, the widest part is that watered by the Canton River, along which the road crosses the Mei-ling mountains to the interior. The island of Hai-nan belongs to it, and there are very many smaller islands and shoals

along the coast. It is an extensive province, but not so populous in proportion to its extent as some of the others. The surface is estimated at about 90,000 square miles, and the population at rather more than nineteen millions; so that the ratio of the number of people to the surface is nearly the same as in Kwang-se. Indeed, the two provinces resemble each other not a little in their general characters; the southern parts of both being low in the southern part; but finely diversified by hills in the interior and toward the mountains. The soil is in general very fertile, especially that of the great plain in the vicinity of the capital, the productiveness of which is not equalled by that of any other region of the world. This plain is nearly one hundred miles in length, and of considerable breadth, the whole of it in a state of the highest cultivation. There are many canals originating at Canton, and ramified through all the neighbouring provinces,—but we shall afterwards speak more particularly of these canals, as well as of the city of Canton, and its bay or river, the last of which deserves a separate notice, in consequence of its being the only authorized place of resort for strangers. Besides the capital, the province contains nine first class cities, and those of the lower ranks, especially the third one, are almost innumerable. The low grounds and slopes of the hills are rich in every vegetable production of such a country, especially fine fruits, various choice woods, and tea—though of inferior quality, upon the slope of the hills, mulberry trees for silk-worms a little lower down, and rice, sugar, indigo, and various other products. The mountains are also famed for their mineral wealth, furnishing gold, copper, tin, lead, mercury, and various precious stones. Domestic fowls and ducks are very abundant, and

the inhabitants have long practised the art of hatching eggs by artificial means. In a place where there are so many waters, especially tidal ones, the ducks find extensive pastures; and the Chinese have the art of bringing them into a kind of discipline. They float them down the small streams to the shore in little boats, and, while they are on the passage, the birds show no disposition to get into the water; but, when they reach the feeding ground, they disperse and pick up the Mollusca, and other small animals with which the banks along such shores abound. When it is time to return a gong is beaten, and the ducks immediately collect, every one to its own bank, with the same unerring certainty as every rook returns to its own rookery at those seasons of the year, when there are general assemblages on the feeding grounds. Though the rice and sugar grounds of this province are low and flat, they are far from being unhealthy; and though the heat is great in summer, the air is remarkably fresh and pure. In winter, the cold is more severe than might be expected in a country just verging on the northern tropic, and there is ice formed during the winter. From the very irregular outline of the coast, and the numerous bogs and little islands, fish, and also mollusca, crustacea, tortoises, and other products of the sea, and the fresh waters, are obtained in vast numbers. Throughout all China indeed, in the most inland provinces, as well as the maritime ones, the waters are proportionally as fertile as the land, and the inhabitants derive from them a large share of their subsistence. We omitted to mention that the inland boundaries of Kwang-tung, taken in their order from west to east, are formed by the provinces of Kwei-chow, Hoo-nan, Kwang-se, and Fŭh-keen.

9. *Fŭh-keen.* This province is situated along the coast, immediately to the north-eastward of Kwang-tung, and it is bounded north-eastward by Che-keang, and north-westward by Keang-se. This province has an estimated surface of about 57,000 square miles, and an estimated population of more than 14 millions. It is much diversified by hills and valleys; and the scenery is exceedingly beautiful, the temperature warm, and the air healthy. The hills, for they can scarcely be called mountains, though of considerable elevation, are beautifully wooded to their very summits; or else they are cut into a succession of terraces, which are well cultivated. This province is the especial, but not the exclusive black tea district, which is cultivated upon both the northern and the southern slopes of the hills. The quality of the tea varies with the soil and situation, and perhaps also with slight varieties in the plant itself, produced by different modes of culture. But the tea plant, and the means of growing and preparing it will be noticed, when we come to speak of the industry and trade of the people of this great empire. Fŭh-keen contains nine cities of the first class, and sixty-three of the third. Fŭh-chow-foo the capital, is finely situated upon a navigable river, the Min, which is the principal one in the province. The situation of the city is very beautiful, and the harbour excellent. The bridges are on a grand scale; and the city is famed as the abode of men of taste and learning. Tseun-chow-foo, situated westward of the former, is also a fine city, with a most commodious harbour, and many ornamental buildings, as well as useful ones. Among the latter, there is a bridge of very singular construction, which may be considered as the Stonehenge of bridges. It is represented

as being formed of a number of stone pillars, over which, instead of arches, there are five stones of equal size, laid from each pillar to the next; and, some of the authorities say that each of these stones is eighteen yards, or fifty-four feet in length. If this be correct, the bridge is one of the most wonderful structures ever erected by man. This bridge is decorated with fantastic ornaments of the same dark-coloured stone as that which forms the roadway; and there is a fortified castle in the middle of it. There are many good creeks and natural harbours along the coast, one of the best of which is that at the small island of Amoy, which was the first station for the Europeans trading to China. This harbour is ample, costly, made safe, and has depth of water for vessels of great burden; and the island of Formosa lies, like a great breakwater, a defence for the coast. The province of Fŭh-keen is a very commercial one, at least in so far as a Chinese province can be so considered; its native products are abundant and valuable, and the number and excellence of its harbours would tempt any nation to maritime affairs. The mineral productions are iron, or iron made into steel, copper, tin, mercury, and various descriptions of valuable stones. There are also mines of gold and silver, but, according to the general policy of the Chinese, these are not allowed to be worked. Black teas are grown in abundance; and many of the manufactures are of superior quality. Ships are numerous, and the trade of the province extends through all the eastern islands from Java to Japan. In the form of its surface, Fŭh-keen is in a great measure detached from the rest of China by ridges of hills on all sides. The scenery among these hills, from the fertility of the soil and the fineness of the climate, is very

beautiful; and it is rendered picturesque by the slopes being cultivated in terraces, and studded with habitations. At one time, it was a government distinct from the empire; and the people still speak a number of dialects, though there are not among the hills here, any of the Meaou-tse, or mountaineers, which are found further to the west, where the southern ridge of elevations is higher.

10. *Che-keang.* This province lies along the sea-shore to the northward of the former, and is bounded on the north by the province of Keang-soo, and on the west by the provinces of Gan-hwuy and Keang-se. The surface of it is estimated at about 57,000 square miles, and the population at more than twenty-six millions. This province, and those immediately to the north of it, are certainly very thickly inhabited, both on the land and on some of the waters,—where many families live and cultivate little gardens in their barges; but the accounts which have been given of the number of people in this, and, indeed, all the other provinces, must be greatly exaggerated; and therefore they must be taken as expressions for the ratios of the population of the different districts, rather than as real numbers to which the population answers. After, however, every allowance is made, the population of this part of the Chinese empire is immense; and rich as the land is in every useful production, and abundant as fish are in all the waters, the people must have recourse to every art, in order to obtain even that moderate quantity of food which is sufficient for the people in so warm a country. There are within the province eleven cities of the first class, and seventy-two of the third; and besides these, there are eighteen fortresses, chiefly along the coast, which might be regarded as cities of very considerable size. The bay

of Hang-chow-foo stretches inland for nearly one hundred miles; and, as it is sheltered from the main ocean by numerous islands, it is commodious and safe. It is named from the capital of the province, which is large, beautiful, and very populous, and accounted by the Chinese the paradise of their country. It is situated on the left or north-bank of the narrow part of the estuary, and is the point at which the imperial canal, (which is carried northward till it joins rivers navigable to Peking,) commences in the south. Hang-chow-foo is thus admirably situated both for external and internal commerce, more especially for the latter, which is the most valuable in every large and populous country, and, beyond all comparison, by far the most valuable in China. For this description of commerce, the produce of the south is collected at this city, and sent to the north by the canal; and the produce of the north is brought back in return, and distributed from this city over the southern provinces. Now, the difference between them is nearly the same as if the wheat districts of Europe were carrying on intercourse with India; for the northern Chinese obtain their luxuries from the south, and those of the southern Chinese come from the north, by means of the canal which terminates there. The circumference of Hang-chow-foo is estimated at about twelve miles, independently of the suburbs without the walls, which latter are extensive. The population of the city has been stated at one million; and, therefore, suburbs and all, it may be regarded, as containing, probably, the same number of inhabitants as London and its circumjacent boroughs. This extent is in no way connected with the imperial residence, or with any other circumstance liable to be changed, but upon the physical re-

sources of China, and the industry of a vast number of the Chinese population. All accounts concur in describing Hang-chow-foo as a delightful city in its situation, its buildings, and its ornamental structures. The shops are represented as being magnificent, often with more than a dozen of attendants in a single shop. Not only is the native produce of all parts of the empire abundant here, for local consumption and general distribution, but there is also an ample supply of British merchandise, which is largely sent to all parts of the empire, more especially to the cold countries to the north, where English cloths are in very general use, especially during the winter. There are many triumphal arches and other ornamental structures, and the figures and other decorations of these, are formed of very durable stucco. The small lake Sze-ho, which lies immediately west of the city, is a fine sheet of water, and it is rendered ornamental, as a pleasure resort for the inhabitants. Its waters are as transparent as crystal, and it abounds with fish, which are seen gliding along as the inhabitants enjoy the fresh air over it in their pleasure-boats. The banks, too, are one parterre of the choicest flowers and shrubs, which render the surface all beauty to the eye, and the air, as it plays gently between the land and water, all essence to the smell; nor are the ornamental buildings inferior to the rest, though to European eyes, the style of them seems peculiar. Besides the commerce, there are various manufactures; and that of silk is said to employ more than a thousand hands. The surrounding country is much diversified with hill and dale, except toward the north, where there is a plain 150 miles in extent, of a strong clayey soil, upon a sub-

stratum of potters' clay. The hills, which may be regarded as the termination of the southern range, subside into this plain in the immediate vicinity of the city. The woods and groves with which those hills abound, in great part, consist of camphor-trees, tallow-trees, and the Chinese *arbor vitæ*, which is so much admired as an ornamental shrub in this country. A delightful contrast of colour is produced by the bright green of the camphor, the purple of the tallow-tree, and the deep green of the *arbor vitæ*. The green tree district lies partly in this province, although there is more of it in the province to the north-west. Silk-worms are bred in great numbers; and the sugar-cane abounds in some districts, and the orange in others. Altogether, the province is in a high state of cultivation, and its vegetable productions are varied, numerous, and valuable. No river of large size flows through it; but there are many of sufficient magnitude for inland navigation, and the canals are numerous and kept in excellent order. There are many islands along the coast, and the line of it is broken by numerous bays. Upon the whole, this is as delightful a country as can well be imagined.

11. *Keang-se* is the eastern section of the ancient province of Keang-nan—called Nanking by Europeans; and when that province was undivided, it contained, according to the accounts furnished by the Chinese, a surface of more than 81,000 square miles, and a population of seventy millions; thus, being in itself equal to a mighty kingdom, both in extent and population,—containing, in fact, ten millions more of inhabitants than the whole Russian empire, extensive as is its surface. Such a population was evidently too great for being under the go-

vernment of a single viceroy, and for this reason it has been divided into Keang-soo and the eastern province now under consideration.

This eastern province occupies about three-fifths of the ancient one, and it has a population of upwards of thirty-seven millions, so that, although rather a small province in respect to surface, it is still the most populous in China. In point of situation, it possesses great advantages with regard both to foreign and to inland trade. The imperial canal traverses the whole length of it from north to south, and the Blue and Yellow Rivers cross it from east to west. Of these, the former of which is said to be three miles in breadth where the sections which it makes of the canal abut on its banks, and the latter, though of inferior breadth, is still a magnificent river.

The whole of the ancient province contained fourteen cities of the first class, and ninety-three of the second and third, besides an immense number of villages. It is still in so far considered as one province, though there are two governors, one for the eastern division, and another for the western. In fact, the provinces of China appear to have been divided much more in accordance with natural geography than those of the majority of European countries, in which very little attention has been paid to the natural division into districts. We shall, therefore, in the few particulars which we have room to state, and there are not very many known, take the ancient extent, and then we shall have merely to name the western or inland province in its proper place. Much of the surface is low and level, intersected by many streams, and abounding with lakes, some of them of large dimensions. These are chiefly in Keang-soo, near the canal already alluded to; and the principal ones are: Tae lake in the south of the pro-

vince, Kao-yaou between the Blue and Yellow Rivers, and Hong-tse, which communicates immediately with the latter. The whole surface is level, except to the south of the Blue River, where a spur of the southern mountains extend to near the Tae lake, and another spur of the same stretches westward into the western division or province Gan-hwuy, about the parallel of 30° north. These mountains are the principal green tea districts, and the plants are cultivated, not on the very summits, but on the slopes. It should seem that green tea requires rather a colder climate than black; and, though the plants producing them have often been described as species, they are, probably, only climatal varieties. It is well known that the very same plant will afford products of different flavours, from the climate in which it is grown, even though the soil should be exactly the same in both. If the stimulus of too great heat forces it into a very rapid and powerful vegetation, its flavour is rank; but, on the other hand, if the climate is cold, and the vegetation partially checked, the flavour is much finer. This is illustrated in what is known of the barley of the Scotch highlands, the Scotch lowlands, and the rich valleys of England. When a spirituous liquor is distilled from the first, it is always of excellent quality, how imperfect soever the process of distillation may be. If distilled from the second, careful distillation makes a tolerably good spirit; but spirit distilled from the third is intolerable, how carefully soever the process may be performed; and it is unpalateable and unwholesome, until all the natural flavour is removed by rectification, and an artificial flavour imparted to it. It seems to be much the same with the tea plant, when grown in different soils. In the hedge-rows of the low and hot districts in

the south of China, the infusion of it has very little flavour, and the leaves are not used even by the humblest classes of the people. In situations a little more elevated and cold we have bohea and other inferior teas. In those a little colder still, we have the better black teas, and in the coldest, we have the green teas, which naturally run smaller both in the plant and the leaf, than any other of the varieties. The Chinese are, however, so very dexterous in the management of trees, that they can contrive to make almost any species arrive at apparent, or even real maturity, at almost any height they please. A good deal must, however, depend on the soil, and not a little on the method of treating the plants. These tea districts, whether they are on the range of hills continued from the south-west, or on the Kew-wan hills which extend from the former westward to the Blue River, near its connexion with Po-yang lake, are confined to the southern portion of the old province. Toward Tae lake the country is well adapted for the growth of cotton; and much of the south-east of Kung-se is an excellent rice country. With the exception of the mountains or hills in the south-west, most of the province is level or nearly so, and very fertile. In consequence of this, the Blue River irrigates not a little of it during the rainy season; the other streams do the same; and it is altogether well suited for artificial irrigation. Along the sea-shore much of the surface would be a marsh, were it not for the sandy character of the soil; but in consequence of this, it is not miry, neither is the air over it unhealthy. This low ground is intersected in all directions by dykes and water-courses, and the soil itself is so much impregnated with saline matter, that a great deal of culinary salt is obtained from it. There are also sal-

terns, in which advantage is taken of the heat of the sun to evaporate the water to a strong brine before it is finally boiled down. There are a great many banks along the coast, but not so many islands as on those farther to the south. The principal island is Tsung-ming, in the estuary of the Blue River, which is at least sixty miles wide at the entrance. This island is obviously a bank formed by the sand, brought down by the river and returned back into the estuary by the tide; and, for a long time, it was little better than a barren sand, and made use of as a retreat, or sea-girt prison, for banished criminals. In time, however, these, with some poor Chinese, who resorted to the island, applied themselves to its cultivation; and it is now comparatively fertile, and supports a numerous population. Its inhabitants manufacture great quantities of salt, which is their chief article of export, they make this salt from a kind of grey earth, which, probably, derives part of its colour from saline impregnation. It is first collected into slopes in such a manner as that water shall not remain upon the surface, and the heat of the sun dries it, and, apparently, forms the salt into small crystal during the progress of the evaporation. It is then laid in heaps, and pulverized by being beaten with wooden mallets. After this, it is spread out upon sloping tables, and water is allowed to trickle slowly over it, by which means the salt is dissolved and carried off by the water. The brine thus obtained is then boiled down to crystallization by the ordinary process of salt-making. The earth which has been divested of its salt is not thrown away as useless, but pulverized, and spread over the same surface from which it was originally taken; and then, after a short time, it is again fit for salt-making. This island is about sixty

miles long, and seventeen or eighteen broad, and it contains one third class city and many villages. The mainland adjoining the island and to the south of the river, contains rich vegetable mould, but all the rest of the province is light and sandy soil, though rendered very productive by irrigation and skilful culture. The western part is mostly a strong clay; and this clay passes into porcelain earth at the eastern extremity of the hills, while the soil on those hills upon which the tea plant is cultivated, contains, as has been already remarked, a very large proportion of silica or sand.

From the vast population of these two provinces, it will readily be understood that the cities must be immensely populous. Nanking, formerly the capital of the whole, and now the capital of the eastern division, was, perhaps, formerly, while it was the residence of the emperors, the most populous, and according to the taste of the people, the most splendid, or, at all events, the most gorgeous city in the world. The name Nanking means the southern capital, just as Peking means the northern one, that is, the termination *king* means that the place is the seat of the emperor and his court, since the imperial residence was fixed at Peking, this city has fallen off in all those attributes of splendour which depended immediately upon the court; but there are elements of stability founded upon local causes, which the presence or the absence of a court cannot affect; and in virtue of these Nanking is still the most populous city in China, and, probably, not exceeded in this respect by any one on the surface of the globe. There is no very great safety in believing the reports of all the Chinese, because their language is very hyperbolical; but they assert, that in the meridian of its splendour, the

circuit of the city was more than sixty miles, and, consequently, that the average diameter was not much less than twenty miles, so that it must have been a tolerably good day's work for a pedestrian to cross from one side to the other in the course of a whole day; and the report by the natives states that, if two horsemen had issued from one gate of Nanking in the dawn of the morning, and one turning to his right and the other to his left, had rode round the city walls, twilight would have begun to close in upon them before they had met each other. These are, in all probability, exaggerations, but they are exaggerations which tend to show how very magnificent the city of Nanking must have been in the day of its pride, as the imperial city of China. In as far as the magnificence of Nanking depended upon its being the seat of the government, it has of course decayed; but still its local advantages are such as to give it permanence as a great city. Though the court has gone, the learning for which Nanking has long been famous, remains; and, in this respect, it is, probably, superior to the present capital. The environs are exceedingly beautiful, being finely laid out in gardens; but as the Chinese invariably study economy in their horticulture, those gardens are so contrived as to be still more useful than they are beautiful. Besides Nanking there are some of the other cities very fine; and, altogether, this is a very interesting portion of China.

12. *Gan-hwuy*. This is the western division of the old province of Nanking; and the proportion of its surface to that of the eastern portion, is very nearly in the ratio of three to two. It is wholly an inland province; and, with the exception of the southern hills already mentioned, as having the green tea districts on their

slopes, the greater part of it is level with a strong but very fertile clay soil. The Blue River passes through it near the south; and the northern part is watered by numerous branches of the Hwang-ho, which rises in the province of Ho-nan to the westward, and, after traversing the province under notice, expands into the large lake of Hung-tse, which communicates with the Yellow River near the spot where that intersects the imperial canal.

13. *Shan-tung.* This province lies immediately north of Keang-se; and the borders with Pe-che-le on the west and north-west, while a small portion of the south-west is bounded by Ho-nan. This province stretches out in a long peninsula, toward Corea, dividing the Yellow Sea from the gulf of Pe-che-le. The surface of this province is estimated at about 56,000 square miles, and the population at about twenty-eight millions. It is thus very similar to Pe-che-le in its extent and population, and does not differ greatly from the level of that country in its general characters. It contains six first class cities, and sixty-eight of the other two classes. Tse-nan-foo the capital, is a large city, and held in much estimation as having once been a royal residence, and the tombs of its rulers are still shown on a neighbouring hill. Lee-chow-foo, situated on the imperial canal, is a place of very considerable trade. Kea-foo, is held in special estimation by the Chinese, in consequence of Confucius, their great philosopher, having been born in it. This province contains a number of lakes, and some hills; but, generally speaking, it is a level country. The soil upon the level grounds very much resembles that of the level of Pe-che-le, but its colour and composition seem to be a little different. It is ashen grey, and resembles

fine sand or ashes blended and united with a sort of slimy matter; but, not having much, or even any resemblance to the ordinary clay soils. There are some sterile tracts within the province; and some are also said to be extensive peat-bogs; but, by far the greater portion is fertile; and it is a corn country, growing rice, wheat, or millet, according to the nature of the soil. Less rain is said to fall on this province than on any of the others, except the adjacent portions of them which resemble it in surface; but this is rather favourable to the cultivation of wheat and millet; and where there are rice-grounds, these are irrigated from the streams. From their proximity of this province to the sea, and the peninsula form of a portion of it, one would, at first sight, conclude that its climate would be rainy; but, flat surfaces so situated are always comparatively dry, as is exemplified in the small quantity of rain which falls upon the flat counties of England, between the Thames and the Wash, and the hilly countries which are situated more inland. The imperial canal, and two of the great roads cross this province from south to north; and the different parts of it have free communication with each other. Besides grain, it furnishes a large supply of fish, a considerable portion of which, as well as of the fish from Canton, is sent fresh to Peking, and covered with ice in the boats. Preserving fresh fish for a time in ice, has long been practised in China; although when salmon was first sent from Scotland to the London market preserved in this manner, it was looked upon as a new and important discovery. Shan-tung completes the enumeration of the border provinces of China, which it will be seen are twelve in number, of which six have sea-coast, and other six have none; but the inland border is surrounded by

territories subject to the Chinese, excepting the west and south-west of Yun-nan; and there is no great danger of invasion from that quarter, the Birmese power being very inferior to that of China. It is thus, only from the sea, that China is at all vulnerable; and though a naval array there might annoy and injure the towns and cities on the coast, and hurt or suspend the coasting trade for a time, yet such an armament could make but very little impression on the empire itself,—nor is there anything in the law of civilized nations, which would justify such an outrage against a people who never interfere with other nations, or send one ambassador to a foreign court. Even on the land side, though the dependencies of China extend, as has been remarked, to the summits of the grand mountain ridges, these countries cannot be said to have been conquered by the Chinese from the ordinary motives of desiring an increase of territory. The object appears invariably to have been to put an end to those predatory inroads of the hordes of the desert by which the Chinese were so frequently disturbed and plundered, so long as they had not a control over these hordes. This is proved by the fact, that in all their conquests of Tartary, the Chinese left the people in possession of their own laws and customs, and imposed restraint upon them no further than was necessary for keeping them at peace, It may seem that Thibet is an exception to this, but such in reality is not the case; for, though the inhabitants of Thibet had not much facility or disposition for making inroads upon the Chinese provinces; yet the Chinese, being naturally jealous of foreigners, probably from the continual inroads of the Tartars, and having that jealousy strongly excited by the spread of the British power in India, and

especially by the humbling of Nepâl and Birmah, were no doubt apprehensive that in time this British power would find its way to the western frontiers of the empire; and, by armies there, and fleets on the coast, the celestial empire would be gradually overturned, and a government by British viceroys substituted in its stead. This inference very naturally follows from the circumstances of the case; and the precaution of the Chinese in getting hold of the whole frontier territory, must be regarded as an act of great foresight and prudence on the part of a people whose general policy it is to live quietly in the possession of their own without invading their neighbours, for the purpose either of civil and military rule, or religious conversion. Having slightly traced all the frontier provinces of the empire, both seaward and landward, and pointed out some of the leading characters of each, we shall now proceed to those provinces which do not reach the frontier either way. There are in all, six such provinces, but we have already noticed that one of them which forms the western part of the whole province of Nanking, so that only five remain to be noticed. These we shall take in order from the north.

14. *Ho-nan.* This province lies immediately south of Pe-che-le and Shan-se, and has Gan-hwuy on the east, Hoo-pĭh on the south; and Shen-se on the west, The Yellow River partly forms the northern boundary, and partly intersects the province, but the greater portion of the surface is on the south. The estimated extent is sixty-two thousand square miles, and the population twenty-three millions. It contains eight cities of the first class, more than one hundred of the inferior classes, and many natural strongholds and fortified

castles. Kae-fung-foo, the capital of the province, is situated on the south bank of the Yellow River, and upon ground which is lower than the water on that river, especially when it is flooded. In consequence of this, it has strong dykes around it, by which the flood is restrained. The main bulwark against the river is a strong embankment of nearly one hundred miles in length. In any other country this dyke would be looked upon as a stupendous work of art, but in China it is excelled by others. We may mention that, when the city was besieged by rebels in 1641, the commander of the imperial army sent to relieve it, ordered a breach to be made in the dyke for the purpose of drowning the besiegers. The breach was made, and the 100,000 besiegers destroyed; but the flood came in desolation upon the city, demolished it, and drowned 300,000 of those within the walls. As it is a point of convergence for several of the lines of road that intersect the country, this city was rebuilt, but on an inferior scale, and it will probably never attain its former magnitude and splendour. Ho-nan-foo, which is situated westward of the former city, and on the same side of the river, occupies a very different locality. It is among craggy mountains, and near it there is an ancient tower, which, according to the Chinese annals, was the observatory of Chow-kung, an astronomer, and supposed inventor of the mariner's compass, a thousand years before the commencement of the Christian era. All this may be true, but it is not very probable. The air of this province is exceedingly mild and balmy, the soil very fertile, and the produce in grain and fruits very abundant. The eastern parts of the province are nearly level, and present one uninterrupted surface in the highest state of cultivation,

but the western part swells into hills, the slopes and summits of which are in many instances, covered with wood. The inhabitants, pleased with their fine air, and the abundant produce of their fields, are not so active and enterprising as those of most of the other provinces; but still, besides grain and fruits they rear silk-worms, and manufacture silk of beautiful gloss; and various minerals are found in the hills.

15. *Hoo-pĭh.* This province, together with Hoo-nan, which lies immediately to the south of it, are two divisions, into which the ancient province of Hoo-kwang has been arranged, in consequence of its great extent and numerous population. The inhabitants of Hoo-pĭh are estimated at twenty-seven millions, though the province is not a very extensive one. It has Sze-chuen on the west, Shen-se on the north-west, Gan-hwuy on the east, Keang-se on the south-east, and Hoo-nan on the south. It is situated in the valley of the Blue River, but chiefly on the north side of it, and the Han-keang, one of the principal branches of the Blue River, and itself a river of no mean magnitude, enters it near the north-west, and joins the Blue River towards the east of the province. The boundaries, except at the points where rivers enter, are mostly defined by natural summit-levels; and the central part of the province is low, and abounds with lakes, in consequence of the magnitude of the Blue River, and of the number of streams, lakes, and artificial water conveyances, this province, the most central in the whole of China Proper, has even greater advantages than if one side of it were washed by the sea. Woo-chang-foo, the capital, which is situated on the Blue River, near the confluence of the Han-kiang, is a great resort for Chinese merchants; and, from the vast number of vessels which

frequent its harbour, it has much the appearance of a sea-port. These vessels, though inferior in size, and not fitted for so long voyages, are sometimes even more numerous than those in the Thames at London; for the river is wider than the Thames, and six miles in length of it are sometimes completely covered with vessels. These vessels fetch and carry on their way to and from all parts of the empire, the different descriptions of its native produce and manufacture, together with articles brought from foreign parts. To possess a port, even for domestic trade, almost in the very centre of its land, is an incalculable advantage, and it is an advantage which scarcely any country but China possesses. Taking the windings of the river, this port is between 500 and 600 miles inland; and therefore it is completely out of the reach of any invading fleet, the conductors of which were, as they would be, ignorant of the shoals and other dangers of the navigation; and when it is considered through how dense a population such a fleet would have to pass, the very idea of reaching the Woo-chang-foo, is an absurdity. This city, far more than any place on the imperial canal, is regarded as the great granary of the empire, and it is a place of, perhaps, more important trade to the nation than any of the cities on the coast. From its level surface the abundance of its waters, and its favourable climate, this province itself furnishes a great deal of grain; but far more from other provinces are brought to its markets; and, indeed, for facility of intercourse with all the provinces, it has few equals in China, and, as we may say, none in any other part of the world.

16. *Hoo-nan.* This, which is the southern division of the old province, is rather larger than Hoo-pĭh; but it is

less populous, the number of inhabitants being estimated at something more than eighteen millions. It is a very compact province, except toward the south, where the boundary, following the line of the summit level, is very irregular. Its boundaries are summit-levels all the way round, except toward the north-east, where the large lake Tung-ting-ho empties its waters into the Blue River, at a point where that stream takes a very remarkable bend to the south. All the rivers which water the province, flow into this lake; and thus the surface is a circular basin or shell, though the hills, which mark its boundaries, are not of very great elevation. It is flat with a very fertile soil, and produces vast quantities of rice on the low grounds, and cotton on those which are more elevated. The mountains, like almost every mountain ridge in China are rich in minerals. Indeed, it is the character of the whole empire, that where it rises into elevations too lofty for being well adapted for surface culture, these elevations contain mineral wealth; and not only this, for there are scarcely to be found within the limits of China Proper any summits so high and bleak as to be unfit for the growth of timber of some description or other. Chang-chow-foo, the capital, is situated on the bank of one of the rivers which empty themselves into the lake; but it is not a city of first-rate importance.

17. *Keang-se.* This province lies immediately to the eastward of that last described, and resembles it very much both in the slopes of its surface and in its productions. Its extent is estimated at 27,000 square miles, and its population at more than thirty millions. The soil is in general clayey and of a rich alluvial character near the Po-yang lake,—only, as already noticed, the

immediate banks of that great and stormy lake are muddy and sterile for a considerable extent; but surround this sterile portion, their produce is described as being of very superior quality. It consists of sugar, and numerous other vegetables; while the mountains contain various descriptions of metals. The centre of the province is watered by the main stream of the Kan-keang, which must not be confounded with the river of the same name in Hoo-pŭh. The great road from Canton passes along the bank of this river; and the navigation of the river, as soon as it begins to be available, is employed for the conveyance of merchandise, which last is borne down the Blue River, and so, by the imperial canal, to the navigation of the rivers in Pe-che-le, along which it is borne to Peking. This navigation is interrupted by a portage between the Canton River and the main stream of this province; but, excepting this, there is water-carriage across the whole empire from south to north. Nan-chang-foo, the capital, is situated on the river; and is not only an entrepot in the carrying trade, but a place of great domestic commerce. None of the produce of the soil, excepting rice, is exported; for, on the contrary, the people require economy in order to find subsistence for themselves out of what the province furnishes. Porcelain is the chief manufacture; and there is a large market for it at the capital, and others in different parts of the province. The village of King-te-ching to the eastward of the Po-yang lake, and on a navigable river, which empties its waters into that lake, is the principal seat of fine porcelain manufacture in the province. Though only a village in point of rank, this is a great city in population. Such is the quantity manufactured, and the demand for it, that the river, for two

or three miles, has often a triple row of barges along the bank where the village is situated. Porcelain is also manufactured in various other places; and the blue ware, known by the name of Nanking china, is manufactured a good deal further up the province. By means of the rivers and the lake, this commodity can be conveyed to all parts of the interior, or it may be sent to the coast, down the Blue River to Nanking, southward to Canton, or south-eastward by the road or portage to Foo-chou-foo in Fŭh-keen. The inhabitants of this province are remarkably industrious; and in order that the females may be able to take their share in the labour, especially the labour of the field, they are said to be exempted from that cramping and distortion of the feet which is so general in China. In consequence of this, the females of the other parts look upon them as deformed frights; but the farmers are every where anxious to purchase wives in Keang-se, because they find them useful; and it is worthy of remark, though the remark is nothing but what might naturally be expected, that these ladies with feet of the natural size, are much more robust and healthy than those who have them deformed. The fact that the females in the province of Keang-se do not distort their feet, and are yet found no fault with by the authorities, shows that this habit is a fashion which has been induced by the people themselves, and not commanded by any mandate of the government. When we take into consideration the position of this province, the extent of its manufactures, and the severe labour to which its inhabitants are subjected, we cannot help looking upon it as one of the most interesting, and, in the energy and spirit of its people, one of the most powerful in the whole empire.

18. *Kwei-chow.* This province, which is the last in the enumeration, has Yun-nan on the south-west, Kwang-se on the south, Hoo-nan on the east, and Sze-chuen on the remaining sides. This province is one of the least populous in the whole empire; the number of inhabitants, even according to the native statements being little more than five millions. It contains, however, ten cities of the first class, and thirty-eight of the second and third. Kwei-yang-foo, the capital, is situated nearly in the centre of the province, and upon the great road which leads from the Birmese territory to the navigation of the Ho-keang, and so by the lake of Tang-ting-foo to the Blue River, and by that to the eastern sea. It is understood that, in ancient times, this city was the seat of a government, and, probably, one of the imperial residences, and this is corroborated by the fact of there being remains of palaces and other indications of regal pomp in the city or its neighbourhood. There are some beautiful and fertile valleys within the province; but, taken as a whole, it is inferior to most other parts of China. It is a summit-level country, from nearly the centre of which rivers descend both to the north and to the south, and, indeed, in all directions, except due west. Great part of it is either an absolute desert, or covered by tangled forests. These desert and mountainous parts are still occupied by the Sing-maou-tse, to whom we made a slight allusion when noticing the province of Canton. These are mountaineers, of very hardy character, and, in some places, they make inroads for the sake of plundering the Chinese. They are governed by their own princes; and the men are almost all armed, very dexterous in the use of the bow and spear, and excellent horsemen. They are found in the wilds of all

the south-western provinces of the empire; and appear to have been the inhabitants of those parts before the better lands were taken possession of by the Chinese. With these they do not associate; but still the quiet and industrious character of the Chinese appears, in many instances, to have induced them to advance a little in civilisation and the arts. Perhaps they are more civilised in this province than in any other place; and certainly more so than on the boundary between this province and that of Canton. It does not appear that the Chinese have made any direct attempt to civilise them, or even to eject them from those wild places which they occupy, and probably, this may be one reason why they have made some advances in civilisation; for, it is in accordance with human nature, that any people shall be sooner led to imitate the example of a people more civilised, by example simply than by force. This is in strict accordance with a well established general principle. In proportion as mankind are savage and ignorant, they are suspicious; and for this very reason, it is doubtful whether every attempt to coerce or even lecture them into different modes of action and belief, no matter how much better than their own, does not tend to make them more stubborn or to teach them hypocrisy for the love of gain, which gain, if they do not receive, they will look upon their gratuitous coercers or lecturers as impostors, and detest both them and their doctrines.

In writing thus, we mean no offence to any party; but we cannot help feeling that there is on the part of many who profess to be well-meaning, and who probably are so in reality, a zeal without knowledge which defeats its own purpose, and does evil while influenced by a very honest intention of doing good. In this matter,

we may take a lesson from the Chinese, who, in all their conquests, have never waged war against the opinions of the people whom they have subjugated, nor sought to extend the boundaries of the empire, as subjected to their own peculiar regulations. On the contrary, whether their efforts have been directed against hordes external of the empire, or against those mountaineers in the south-western part of the empire itself, they have merely sought their own safety and tranquillity, and have made no direct inroad upon the people whose lawless aggressions they have sought to repress, but have contented themselves with such measures as tended to their own safety, and to that only. We may add, that the foundation of all the misunderstandings that have taken place between the Chinese and European nations have arisen from attempts on the part of the latter to force their own systems upon the people of China in such a way as to undermine the Chinese government and institutions; or at all events, to compel the Chinese people to take part in, and be governed by, international law, such as it exists in Europe. In the judgment of reason this is manifest and palpable injustice; for, as the Chinese have never come into any European country and demanded the alteration or the suspension, of one title of the government or the institutions of that country, we know of no principle of justice or equity that can warrant any European nation in going to China, and demanding that any one tittle of the laws, the customs, or the practices of China should be altered, upon their account, for their benefit. The subject which we have now broached is by no means confined to China; for it applies equally to every people on the face of the earth wherever they may be situated, and whatever may be the

degree of their civilisation or their savagism, in the opinion of Britons or of any other nation. Our religion, our laws, and our observances, may be better than those of any other people on the face of the earth, and whether they are so or not, it tends greatly to the tranquillity and happiness of our country to think that they are so. But, while we claim this to ourselves, and profit by the claim, justice demands that we should allow the same to every other people, wherever they may reside, or by what name soever they may be called. This is a point worthy of the most careful consideration, and it is one which is deeply involved in all the misunderstandings we have had with the Chinese, and we may add, in all the misunderstandings which nation has had with nation throughout the whole period of history.

Such is a very brief outline of the situation, appearance, and population of the Eighteen Provinces composing the Chinese empire, though the number of inhabitants is a point upon which absolute reliance cannot be placed. Notwithstanding the regular system of the Chinese government, the actual numbering of so great a population, must be a very difficult matter. Even in small countries, the census is not always to be depended on, because it is not possible to get all the inferior men employed in the details of such a work to do their duty properly, and it is obvious that those of higher rank must be guided by the returns made by those under them. But still, after every allowance is made for unnecessary or supposed exaggeration on the part of the Chinese themselves, of which exaggeration they have been accused without any very obvious reason,—we are warranted to conclude, from even the slightest topographical survey which can be taken, that the Chinese are

the most numerous nation, and China the finest country on the face of the earth. Not only this, for if we take the collected annals of China, which are continuous for nearly 3000 years, and if we bear in mind that from the beginning the Chinese have been not only a writing but a printing people, and a people printing not in symbols of sound, which are mutable in every alphabetical language,—we must see that there are elements of veracity in the annals of China, which are not found in those of any other country;—if we take those annals, we find that, though there have been changes of dynasty, and unions and separations of provinces in China, though proportionally fewer than in any other country, yet the country itself, and the people in the essential parts of their characters have been one and the same during this very long period.

Now, this is so different from what has taken place in the western world, or indeed any where, save in China, that the reason of it is an enquiry of great interest. In other lands there is a constant tendency to wearing out, and passing into desert; and other kingdoms and states have had their nonage, their maturity, and their decline. We believe that the decline of the people has generally preceded the conversion of a country into a waste or a wilderness, although in the American states bordering on the Atlantic in Canada, and in some other places, the wearing out of the land, short as is the time it has been peopled and cultivated, is driving the population into the back country.

From these facts it is evident, that there must be the co-operation of two causes in maintaining that wonderful stability, and freedom from change of every description, which forms the leading character of China and its

people. One of these must be physical, dependent on, or rather consisting in, the natural circumstances of the country; and the other must be social or moral, depending on the structure of society, from the supreme government down to the mind and manners of the individual. We shall take a glance at these in their order, although the physical data are very incomplete; and in doing so, we must bear in mind that any land and its inhabitants, mutually act and reach upon each other, so that the improvement of the people improves the land, and the improvement of the land improves the people.

SECTION IV.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERS OF CHINA.

In enumerating the physical characters of any country, it is best to begin with some notice of its atmosphere, because that is the most general element both of health and of fertility. In noticing the provinces, we adverted to the fact that China is, throughout, a very healthy country, and, with few exceptions, a very fertile one. Now. one would scarcely be prepared to expect this, at least from a slight consideration of the situation of China with regard to the countries around it. Much of the land to the west and north-west is desert; and, on the south-west, between China and the Bay of Bengal, the atmosphere is at all times unhealthy, and, at some seasons, absolutely pestilent.

Why should China be an exception? Why should it have more of the sterility of Shamoo, or of the pestilence of the exuberant forests and direful swamps of Birmah and the other countries on the north-east of the Bay of Bengal, and between the termination of the Himalaya mountains and the narrow portion of the eastern peninsula? Strange as it may seem, the desert on the west, and the pestilent country on the south, are among the chief elements of the salubrity and fertilizing action of the Chinese atmosphere.

China lies on the same parallel as the desert of Sahara in Africa; but it has 130° degrees in breadth of the

north Pacific to the eastward of it, whereas, a line drawn from Sahara to Shamoo, passes over deserts, or, at all events, very arid countries, throughout its whole length. China is, in the tropical half of the quadrant, that is, in the latitude where the surface current toward the parallel where the sun is vertical, appears a trade-wind blowing from the north-east upon the oceans, and there is a similar atmospheric movement over the land, though upon a varied surface that is disturbed by local causes. Over Sahara, this atmospheric current, which prevails the whole year, only shifting with the declination of the sun, is a dry and parching wind, while over China, it is a moist and refreshing wind from the sea. During the dry season, this current from the north Pacific is augmented by the arid countries to the west; as they become strongly heated, and the air over them, expands and ascends upwards, in the same manner as it does at the parallel where the sun is vertical. This current from the ocean is a constant source both of healthful and fertilizing effect to the atmosphere of China; because it brings moisture and prevents stagnation. At the same time its motion, though constant — except shifting northward and southward with the seasons, is so gentle, that it does not hinder that local action—that surface change between places of different characters, which is so essential to the fertility of any country.

This general movement of the amosphere over China, is somewhat analogous in its effects, to the general current about the British islands, only it moves in the contrary way. It is doubtful whether this contrary direction is not an advantage to China, by preventing that continual dripping of the atmosphere which is felt on the west-coasts of Britain, especially those of Scotland and the

north of England. The Atlantic current, coming from lower latitudes, is warmer than the average temperature of the places at which it arrives, and the consequence is, that it descends and condenses, has thus less capacity for moisture, and the least contrary current produced by local circumstances, is sufficient to bring rain out of it. The current from the Pacific, again, comes from the north-east, out of colder latitudes, and thus, as it passes over the surface of China, its general tendency is to ascend and expand. Greater surface action, as between place and place, is therefore required in order to bring rain out of it, and therefore the rains in China are much more seasonal than they are in Britain.

Siberia and the desert have also considerable influence upon the climate of China; and it is owing, in no small degree, to the desert, that all the southern countries of Asia are more or less affected by a monsoon or seasonal wind alternating between the two hemispheres. But this monsoon is, to a considerable extent, exhausted before it reaches the Chinese frontier, by passing over the damp and wooded country between China and the Bay of Bengal. In consequence of this, though Yun-nan is more wooded than many other parts of China, especially than the great plain, it has not the same tangled and swampy character as the Birmese territory and the country all along the lower slope of the south side of the Himalaya.

During the winter months, the desert becomes excessively cold; and, at that time, the motion of the surface atmosphere is from those countries toward China. These north winds prevail from November to March, while during the rest of the year, the wind blows from the south and south-west. It is not to be understood how-

ever, that either wind blows constantly from the same point—for the north winds blow from all points north of the west and east, and the south winds from all the remaining points; but north-east winds are prevalent in the one case, and south-west winds in the other; the northern winds blow most strongly, and they are, generally speaking dry winds. The south-west winds are gentle and moist. The north-east are the most violent of any, because the current from the Pacific, and that from the cold countries toward Behring's strait, co-operates with each other. In the early season, that is in April and May, the winds are at east and south-east, or from the sea; and during that time the air is temperate and highly favourable to vegetation. In June and July, the winds shift gradually to the south-west, and get more westerly as the summer advances. These winds come from the Himalaya, and the other elevated and snow-clad mountains, and they blow gently; but the weather is at the same time very sultry. In winter, again the atmosphere is very cold, and ice forms even at Canton, while at Nanking, it is so common, that it is used in preserving fish, as already hinted. The months of November, December, and January, are the cold months; and July, August, and September, the warm months. During these warm months which precede the shifting of the wind to the northward, there are frequent and violent gusts, and comparatively calm weather, which gusts shift to all points of the compass, and that at very short intervals; they are usually accompanied by heavy showers; and the individual gust generally ceases when it breaks in lightning and thunder; but the succession of them may continue at short intervals for eighteen or twenty hours. These short, but

violent storms are called Tae-fung by the Chinese, and Tiffoons or Typhons by European navigators; and during the season of their blowing, the navigation of the Chinese seas is exceedingly dangerous.

By means of the variable winds, to which allusion has been made, a sufficiency of moisture falls upon the elevated ridges in China for giving rise to the innumerable brooks and streams which have their origin in these ridges; and the currents of all the rivers, and most of the streams are so slow, so much of the lands is flat, and there are so many lakes and pools, that the water which does fall in rain upon China, remains more beneficially upon its surface than upon that of any other country of nearly the same extent. Thus the atmospheric currents, and the surface together, conspire in giving to China greater permanence in fertility and in salubrity, than any other great breadth of country possesses. The rains never come with overwhelming and destructive violence as they do in monsoon countries, neither does the water stagnate, as it does in those jungly countries which are subject to monsoons. The rain comes to fertilize, not to destroy—to purify the atmophere, and not to poison it.

There is one other general physical circumstance to which we may allude, although in it art is in so far blended with the operations of nature:—China has, not only for centuries past, but for thousands of years, had its surface adapted to its climate by the most laborious and well-directed cultivation. We do not say that the mode of culture has been applied according to any general plan previously laid down for that purpose, nor do we say that the Chinese themselves are acquainted with the physical principles according to which that cultivation

is conducted. Cultivators do not appear in any country to have framed their earlier modes of operation upon scientific principles; but, upon the old method of trial and error; and the small success which frequently attends those who profess to be very scientific this way, renders it highly probable that the mode of proceeding by experience gained by degrees is not only the best one, but the only one which is at all likely to meet with general success. China is so very peculiar a country, that it demands a mode of culture as peculiar, in order that the greatest possible advantage may be derived from it; and this appears to have been done at a period so very early, that no alteration or improvement has been required for many centuries. Such being the case, it would be unwise to tamper with the cultivation of China, by the introduction of the mode practised in any other country, how advantageous soever it may have been found there

There is not the least doubt that this working of the cultivated surface of China, in perfect accordance with the physical nature of its atmosphere and its soil, is one of the grand elements of that unchangeable character which it has maintained for so long a period. If the surface of a country is worked unnaturally, that is, not in accordance with its soil, its seasons, and its climate, then it is obvious that the cultivator and the land are at variance with each other; and, consequently, if the hand of the former shall be in the least degree slackened, the latter will gain the mastery of him. This has been proved in all countries which human skill and labour have forced into what may be called an unnatural state; and if civil war or any general calamity lay hold of such a country, then it very speedily reverts to a state of

nature, and becomes a tangled wilderness or an arid waste, according to circumstances. Accordingly, we find the wild wood, the jungle, or the desert, overspreading lands which were once highly cultivated and thickly inhabited; and this not only after the lapse of long periods of time, but after times comparatively short. Thus during the Maharatta, and other destructive wars, by which the Dukhun of India was so long wasted, the once cultivated fields, together with the village and towns, were covered with jungles; and the former habitations of men converted into the dens of wild beasts.

During the inroads of the Tartars, and until the inhabitants of the whole country within the boundary mountains were subjected by the Chinese government, many of the towns in the frontier provinces were spoiled; and there are few of them which do not bear traces of the ruin which then came upon them; but it does not appear that the cultivated or cultivable soil even of these provinces was at all permanently affected.

Those which we have enumerated are the grand physical causes of the stability of China; and, when we consider how well they have worked together, and for how long a period of time, we must give some credit to that part of the system, whereby the Chinese have been enabled to cultivate, and generally to work their land in strict accordance with its physical circumstances, and therefore, to their own best advantage, in rendering it susceptible of supplying all the necessaries, and many of the luxuries of life to a far greater number of human beings than are to be met with in any other country of the same extent, upon the surface of the globe. Many of their modes of dealing with their country, are different from the most esteemed ones of Europe; and, on that

account, we are apt to consider them as inferior. But this is not a philosophical way of viewing them: for, all the physical characters of their country are different from those of any European one; and, therefore, it is unwise to reason by analogy from the one to the other. There is a remarkable difference between China and the best cultivated and most prosperous of the European countries, of which we must be careful not to lose sight. China appears to be perfectly stationary, and seems to have been so for a long period; and, if there is not a progress of improvement, as little is there any deterioration and decline. Now, of this we have no example in the western world. There, some states are making advances, and rapid advances, while a few are obviously on the decline. Spain, Portugal, and Turkey, are perhaps, the only ones in which decline is palpable; and the rest are all in a state of improvement, some more rapidly, and others less so; but, in no one case of the present time, or of any time, well established by authentic history, have we a single instance of a western country remaining stationary for centuries, far less for thousands of years, as has been the case with China. There is, perhaps, more of social and moral foundation in this than there is of physical, but still they go together. Cultivation in the west appears to be, in some way or other, less in accordance with physical nature than it is in China; and society is more influenced by impulses, both in its advancement and in its decline, though the nature of those impulses is but imperfectly understood. From the evidence of past history, we find that, by the exercise of talent, ambition, and many other principles or supposed principles, nations have made great advances in the sciences, the arts, and all the means of rendering

human enjoyment more extensive and varied; but we fail not to observe that, in as far as the government at least have been concerned, the acquirements of science, art, and enjoyment, have always been attended by at least the desire of an acquisition of territory, which desire has occasioned a great deal of bloodshed, and much misery to all parties. The Chinese on the other hand have evinced no desire for acquisition of territory, unless in cases where it is easy to show that the said desire was founded on a wish to preserve the peace and tranquillity of the empire itself; and, such being the case, we can in part perceive why so great a nation have remained for such a length of time, without any material alteration.

Again, it has frequently happened in western countries, that when the desire of greatness and grandeur, had apparently brought them to the very pinnacle, they have become luxurious, vicious, and effeminate, to such a degree as that the very accomplishment of their grand projects appears to have been the primary cause of their decline and fall. These, it must be admitted, are moral or political considerations, not connected with the physical differences of the eastern and western parts of the continent; but they have a remote connexion with these.

We have said that little is known of the geology of this great empire; and from the jealousy which the Chinese have of foreigners, and their comparative indifference to every thing which does not contribute directly to utility, or to the gratification of the senses, it is probable that we shall be for a long time left in comparative ignorance upon this subject. From the mineral productions which we know the Chinese obtain, from the general distribution of these over almost every pro-

vince, in some of their species, and from the few spots which have been seen and examined by Europeans, we are led to infer that the strata in China must be very diversified, and consequently the knowledge of them highly desirable. The great plain, and all the low levels of the country are deposits, many of them alluvial, and obviously formed posterior to any violent disturbance of the strata; but from the peculiar nature of the seaward part of the plain along the banks of the Pe-ho, almost the only place where a section of it has been examined, and also from the number of shells contained in it, it is highly probable that this part may have been formed under water, though it is so level, and so free of pebbles, or any other matters except those in a state of minute disintegration, that it must have been formed by an exeeedingly slow and quiet process.

The hills to the northward of Peking appear to be the most elevated near the frontiers of China Proper, though their highest summits are without the frontiers. Their southern escarpment rises immediately from the Chinese plain, and up to a considerable elevation it is gradual. The summits in Tartary attain an altitude of 15,000 feet in some instances, and they are granite, and often rifted into bold and angular peaks, just as is the case with granitic mountains in our own country. This granite is overlaid by a thick stratum of indurated clay or shale, variously coloured by iron. Above that, there is a stratum of mountain limestone, and over that again, red-sand stone, containing more or less of alumina, which appears to be the newest formation on the escarpment of these hills. In some instances, the granite appears to pass into syenite, or even into gneiss—the foundations of the towers in the Great Wall, where it passes the moun-

tains consisting chiefly of the one or the other of these; but the granite is intersected by veins of quartz, in which the more esteemed metals are understood to be deposited. The alluvial matter of the neighbouring plain seems to consist of the disintegrated parts of all the rocks above the granite; but quartz predominates, and gives that porous consistency to the soil, which prevents the water from settling on its surface, which would be the case if that surface were more clayey and rententive. From what has been stated, it is obvious that the mountains on the north of China have been elevated by the upheaving of the granitic rocks from below; and that these have broken through the superincumbent strata in the middle of the elevation, but it does not appear that there is in this part of the empire, any trace of volcanic action.

Of the geological structure of the mountains in the western parts of the empire, little or nothing is known with certainty; but from the similarity of much of the debris brought down by their rivers to that brought down by the streams farther to the north, it is probable that the composition may be nearly the same; and we know that in some parts of them the mountain limestone has the colour and consistency of good marble. The southern ridge which, under various names, and with various interruptions, extends from a little south of the mouth of the Blue River, until it joins the elevations between China and the Bay of Bengal, has been crossed and partially examined. The southern ascent from the city of Nanking consists in part, at least, of compact limestone, which is used as building-stone for the walls and other strong erections in the city. Above this there is a formation of micucious sand; and farther up still, there are beds of breccia and gravel, with granite, quartz, and

mica; and on the more lofty parts, it appears that limestones, the coal measures, and others, have been upheaved by the granite. In the more westerly portions of this ridge, there are said to be traces of volcanic action; and in that part of the country there are also mentioned what are called "wells of fire," that is, subterranean portions of naphtha or other combustible matter, in a state of ignition, and discharging flame through holes and fissures of the earth. In the islands and other elevations in the Bay of Canton, there are said to be some indications of volcanic action; and some of the rocks are of a very fantastic appearance, especially those about the Bocca Tigris, which is named from the fancied resemblance of one of those rocky masses to the outline of a tiger. In the southern mountains, the granite is, in general, covered by large masses of limestone and sand-stone, which often present fantastic appearances, and the northern descent presents compact schistus overlaid by red-stone. Slate also occurs in the valley of the Kan-keang, the bed of which has cut the strata to a very considerable depth, and offers good sections in many places. We formerly mentioned the richness of this valley, and the industry of its inhabitants; and we may now observe, that it is highly picturesque in many parts of its scenery. The heights by the sides of the road, which is often cut to a very considerable depth, afford very agreeable prospects, from the alternation of hill and rock, and grove and meadow; and these places lose nothing by being studded with temples and pagodas. Still however, too little is known of even this district, along which our embassies have passed to Peking, for, allowing us to present any thing like an outline of its topography, we can only say that, from the vast quantity

of decomposed rock, more or less incorporated with vegetable mould, which is found in the plains and slopes of China, and the vast proportion which this kind of soil bears to that which consists of disintegrated rock, presenting itself *in situ* at the surface. China appears to be as much an old country in its geology and the nature of its soil, as it is in the manners, customs, and laws of its inhabitants, the peculiar action of the Chinese atmosphere, the intense cold of the winter and the great heat of the summer, together with the little tendency that there is to remove the decomposed matter from the slopes, points out China as a land in which the elements pulverise the rocks into one component part of the soil; and then the decomposed vegetable matter supplies the other, while the two give a mixture well suited for the reception of a great variety of plants, and for the admission of water to their roots, without much danger that it shall stagnate there, so as to impair their growth, or injure their quality.

From what has been said of the soil, the surface, and the climate of China, and of the immense number of its waters, and the strong contrast of its seasons, which stimulate but hurt not, it follows, as matter of course, that it must be an exceedingly favourable country for the superior kinds of plants. Unfortunately there is not enough known of its botany for enabling us to come to any general conclusion respecting it; but the inference from all that is known is, that it is as peculiar in this respect as in any other. From the form of the surface, and other circumstances which have been detailed, the flowerless plants, such as the lichens, the mosses, and the other analogous tribes, which thrive best in situations that are cold and damp, cannot be very numerous in China;

and as the forests are upon the tops and slopes of the mountains, and not upon the plains and by the banks of the rivers, as they are in neglected countries of tropical character, or character approaching to it, the splendid *epiphæteæ* which gives so much beauty and fragrance to the tangled forests in such countries, cannot be so abundant as if the country were neglected. Such plants, however, are not unknown to the Chinese, and those of the more wealthy classes make large use of them in adorning, and at the same time perfuming, their apartments. Besides, so much of the surface is under culture for useful purposes, though not to the neglect of the native style of ornament, that the plants, like the country itself, have been greatly modified by the labours of the people. Of this, however, we shall speak when we come to notice the occupations and economy of the Chinese as a people.

It is true that there are many accounts of Chinese plants, some by competent parties, and others not; but there is nothing upon which to found a general system. Besides this, there is another source of misunderstanding. The plants which the Chinese bring down to Canton, or convey to the vessels in the outer seas, are brought as mere articles of merchandise, without any explanation as to the soils and situations for which they are best adapted, or even whether they are in a state of nature, or have been changed by cultivation; and the changing of the characters of plants by cultivation is an art in which the Chinese have, in some particulars at least, arrived at greater perfection than even the scientific horticulturists of the west. To enumerate the species, or even the genera of Chinese plants, both herbaceous and wooded, would far exceed the limits this section must be

restricted; and therefore we shall only mention that almost all the plants which they cultivate are natives of their own soil; and that, therefore, every deviation which is made from the natural appearance of those plants is the result of art. Farther than this we can only notice a few of the more conspicuous.

One of these is the Chinese water-lily (*Nelumbium*) with which the abundant waters of the country are covered, in all the shallow and stilly places. This is both an interesting and a useful plant, with large round leaves, some of them floating on the surface, and others rising majestically over it. The root is massy and creeping, about as thick as the arm, and attached to the bottom by numerous rootlets or filaments. The flower resembles that of a half-blown tulip, and makes a handsome appearance. Its powers of reproduction or multiplication are very great; for it not only puts out numerous shoots from the creeping root, but sheds its seeds with the new plant ready formed in the centre, so that when those seeds drop into the water, they very speedily put forth young plants. The petals are of various colours, as white, yellow, and different shades of red, and these are often blended together in the same flower. This water-lily is common over all the latitudes of China Proper, though it is with great difficulty that it can be preserved in other countries which have the same average temperature. It is a useful plant as well as an ornamented one, for the seeds are eaten by the Chinese in the same manner as hazel-nuts are in this country, the stem is also used as an article of food; and the leaves are used in packing for the market, the fishes of the water in which the plant grows.

China is remarkably prolific in medicinal plants, and

in gums and odoriferous drugs; and, though the natives probably ascribe to these many virtues which they do not possess—as was the case with our own herbalists, yet not a few of them are highly valuable. At the head of these must be placed the officinal rhubard, which is understood to be of better quality in China than in any other part of the world. The middle province on the western frontier is understood to supply the best rhubarb, and the heaviest, and darkest, and most variegated in the colour is preferred. Gensing is another plant, more highly esteemed in the Chinese pharmacopeia than any other. It is styled "the queen of plants," it is not a native of China Proper, or, at least, it is not very abundant or very superior there. It grows in the eastern part of Tartary to the northward of the mountains; and even there it is guarded with the utmost solicitude by command of the emperor. No one is allowed to gather it without his authority, nor even without being appointed expressly by himself. It grows in the forests, where the trees are tall, and not encumbered with brushwood. Those who gather it, are sent to the forests of not the most pleasant country in the world, and they have to remain there for nearly half a year without tent or bed, and their only provisions consist of wasted millet. They are appointed in squads of one hundred and sections of ten; and these have each their allotted portion of the forest in which they carry on their avocations with all that diligence and regularity which characterise the Chinese, though, probably, with less energy than people who would not go so very systematically to the work.

The forest trees, or shrubs, are numerous and peculiar. One is the wax-tree, of which there is one variety on the light lands, and another on those which are richer. The

wax obtained from these trees, is not a product of the trees themselves, but of certain insects of small size, which are artificially placed upon them, and there make little cells of a white and transparent wax. This wax is gathered early in the autumn; and so excellent is its quality, that a single ounce of it mixed with one pound of oil, is said to produce a compound not inferior to the very best wax obtained from the cells of the common bee. In China it is principally used medicinally, as an application to wounds, and also internally as a stimulant. From the kernels of the fruit of another tree, resembling the walnut, the Chinese obtain an oil, which may be advantageously burned in the lamp, and also prepared as a varnish. The proper varnish-tree of China (the Choo-choo), is a tree of another description, and far more esteemed in its usefulness. It is not unlike an ash-tree, only it never attains any great size. The gum from which the varnish is made is of a reddish colour, and it is so extremely acrid, that they who obtain it from the trees are obliged to protect themselves against its effects. This acridity is, however, one of its most valuable properties as a varnish; for, besides having a fine gloss, wood covered with it is proof against the attacks of any insect, and damp, which causes many varnishes to swell into blisters, has no effect whatever upon it. The Chinese rose-wood—quite different, however, from the wood known by that name in Europe, and which is a *robinia* is also highly valued. The wood of it is of a blackish red colour, and has a fragrant smell, so that though it is never varnished, which would destroy this fragrance, articles made of it are held in great esteem. This tree is called Tse-tan. The camphor-tree (Te-hung) is also a tree which is greatly esteemed, though not so much on

account of its timber, as of the substance obtained from it, which is much used in medicine as a stimulant. This camphor, of which all parts of the tree smell much more strongly than those of a pine do of turpentine, is obtained, not from the large boles of the trees, but from the young shoots, which are steeped, boiled, and strained; and the drug when obtained is purified between layers of earth.

In most provinces of China there is a deficiency of timber, both for the purposes of the carpenter and for fuel. This arises chiefly from the necessity the people are under of having every possible foot of the surface devoted to the growth of some description of human food. For the same reason there are few or no meadows, parks, pleasure-grounds, or even gardens. Many of the low grounds, however, which are not fit for cultivation, are covered with bamboos; and these are turned to a vast number of useful purposes, such as the making of furniture, fences, trellises, screens, and a great number of other things. As timber is planted only on places which are too high and steep for admitting of cultivation, pines of some species or other, are the principal ones that are planted. They are different from the pines of northern Europe and Asia, and the timber which they furnish is of inferior quality. This deficiency of timber is one of the greatest inconveniences to which the Chinese are subject; and it, together with the very local distribution of coal in so extensive a country, renders the obtaining of even the most economical supply of fuel, a very laborious task. There may be coal in many parts of the empire where it has not yet been found; but the spirit of the Chinese government is against the working of mines of all descriptions, lest it should draw the atten-

tion of the people from the cultivation of the land, which is looked upon as their proper and most honourable occupation. Mines of gold and silver are understood to be abundant and productive; but the working of them to any extent is expressly prohibited; and, not only foreigners, but the natives themselves, are kept in ignorance of the places where they are situated. A considerable quantity of gold, found somewhere within the empire, is obtained by the emperor for the circulation in bars; but where it comes from, none know, excepting the imperial officers, and they keep the secret. The native, or Sy-cee silver is more abundant; and it is understood to contain a small portion of gold, and to be otherwise of superior quality to the silver of any other country. Thus, whatever may be the mineral wealth of the empire, its extent is not investigated, neither is it turned to proper account. This is obviously an evil to the inhabitants, because it forces them to toil more severely in the cultivation of the fields, and fare more scantily than they would otherwise require to do,—and besides this, it represses the spirit of enterprise. We must not, however, in the least wonder at the continuation of restrictions which have this tendency, because the repression of enterprise is one of the fundamental objects of the Chinese government, and one which, carried into effect as it is, tends to make the people bear the yoke of mental slavery, without feeling its weight, and this is, as we shall see, one of the grand causes of the long-continued stability of the Chinese empire.

The zoology of China is, like its geology and botany, known to Europeans only by a few detached scraps, which cannot be worked into any thing like a system. From all the accounts it should seem that predatory

mammalia, or indeed wild mammalia of any kind, are not very numerous; and the same is the case with domesticated animals. The tiger, panther, and bear, are found, though only in the wild tracks, and they are not very numerous even there. There are a few elephants in the woods of Yun-nun, near the Birmese frontier, but they do not extend to the northward of the southern range of heights. In Chinese Tartary and in Thibet, there are various wild ruminants; but the highly cultivated state of China Proper prevents them from having sufficient range of pasture there. The domesticated ruminants are few, inferior in size and quality, and held in little estimation. The Chinese do not eat the flesh of these animals, neither are they partial to milk and butter, and therefore the buffaloes of the south and the oxen of the north are few in number, and almost exclusively employed in agricultural labours. The mammalia most used for food are hogs and dogs. The former are a valuable breed, well known in this country, and they are the milk animals, where that article is sold; and in the streets of Macao, a foreigner can purchase a cup of hog's milk, cup and all, for one *cash*, which is not the value of our half-penny. The dogs, which are fatted for the market, are a peculiar breed not very large, but their flesh is attainable only as a dainty by the rich. The musk animal is found in some places near the western frontier, but it is not very abundant. Some of the monkeys common to the Indian Archipelago are found in the southern provinces; but they are far from numerous. From the absence of forests, China is not indeed a suitable place for the quadrumana, or for any of forest animals. Birds do not appear to be very abundant in tribes and species. The wild ones, which are most

common, are magpies, crows, and sparrows, all of which are very universal associates of man; and the magpie is regarded by the reigning dynasty as a sacred bird, and, as such, allowed to practise its impudence in all places with perfect impunity. Aquatic birds are much more numerous and valuable, we have already alluded to the mode of treating the tame ducks in the rivers; and the large tame goose, with the knob on the bill, is well known from specimens in this country. Of all the duck tribe of China, the mandarin duck is the species most prized by Europeans; and they are found in great numbers about the Po-yang and other large lakes. They associate in large coveys, and are shy when in a wild state, but they are easily tamed, and the pairs are much attached to each other. Such as have been brought to Europe have been much esteemed and attained high prices. Wild ducks and geese are very abundant in the winter months; but they retire northward out of China during the summer. The teal migrates within the country, resorting to the southern shores in winter, and retiring to the northern waters during the summer. It is found in great numbers about Canton, and much esteemed as an article of food. Quails are very plentiful in the north of China; and the Chinese make them fight, as some of the rude part of our own population do with game-cocks; for which reason they are in great demand, and fetch high prices. We must not wonder at the Chinese for taking large bets on the battles of quails; for, in some islands of the Oriental Archipelago, a man will stake his whole possessions, wife, and family, upon the issue of a combat between two black beetles, which doughty cuirassiers are made to perform their duels in a chip box;—but the proceedings of gamblers are ano-

malous to reason and common sense all over the world.

Some of the *gallinidæ* of China are remarkable for their beauty, of which we have specimens in the golden and silvery pheasants, which are among the gems of the aviary. The splendid argus pheasant is also said to be found in China; but it is rare, and confined to a few wooded spots in the southern hills. The golden hen of the western provinces is described as being still more gorgeous in its plumage than the golden pheasant. In a country which is so agricultural, and consequently so open, the skylark is a very common bird, and it is almost the only bird of song; for, as there are few groves for them to sing in, there can be but few songsters of the groves. The white rice bird abounds in all the marshy places which are under crop of that species of grain. Fishes, as already mentioned, are very numerous, and vast numbers of them are used for food. The golden perch has been introduced into Europe from China. It is the male fish only which is golden, the female being silvery. Land reptiles, especially the venemous ones, are not numerous; but there are many insects, some of them annoying, others destructive, and others highly valuable. The most annoying is the mosquito, and the most destructive are the locust in the western provinces, and the white ant in the southern. The locusts come from the desert, and come only occasionally; and when they do come, the military are called out, and march against them to the sound of gongs and drums, but with just as little effect as when the gong is used upon other occasions to lay the spirits of the waters when these become turbulent. A better defence against the white ant is obtained from the Chinese varnish, which is a little too much even

for their very general taste. The value of the little wax insect has been already hinted at; but it is nothing to that of the silkworm, which employs vast multitudes, finds clothing for a large proportion of the wealthier people, and yet leaves a large surplus for exportation.

Such, in brief outline, are the physical characters and resources of China—the material elements, as it were, upon which the industry and the ingenuity of the vast population of this empire are called upon to work; and which, they are taught to believe, are sufficient to find subsistence for the reputed 360 millions of inhabitants, without the stimulus or the aid of any intercourse with foreigners. In the introductory section we gave the computed estimate of the population, and the sum now quoted is that returned to the emperor, or to the statistical board at Peking. The method of taking this census has the appearance of minuteness and accuracy; because every inferior officer has only ten families to number, and the purpose of numbering these is to assess the revenue for the local and general government; but still, notwithstanding the extent and fertility of China, and the spare living of the poorer portion, this looks a very exaggerated statement; and the number of inhabitants in the different provinces, even where they are almost exclusively cultivators, are not in the ratio either of the extent or the fertility. This is an anomaly in a country which is understood to be and to have been peopled up to the very utmost that it can support, and until this anomaly is explained, no official return of the population can be confidently relied upon. This 360 millions of their own showing is the maximum; and the 150 millions, which we formerly stated, is the minimum, between which the reader may take his average, as best suits his

own views on the subject. Even the smallest number is population enough to make the most powerful compact empire, at least in so far as numbers are the basis of power; and what we have gleaned of the physical characters of the country, taken into conjunction with this number, will show us what China has the physical, and might have the intellectual capacity for doing, in maintaining herself upon her own ground, against the aggressions of every nation upon earth.

This is one side of the grand China question, and we shall devote the remaining sections to a short examination of the other side, namely, the government, regulations, customs, arts, occupations, and learning and language of the country; and while we glance at these, we shall have opportunities of enquiring how they operate upon the intellectual energy and moral courage of the people, because it is on these, after all, that the real power of every nation must depend, when they come to be weighed in the balance of a fair and determined contest.

SECTION VI.

OUTLINE OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT.

No adequate idea can be formed of the Chinese as a nation, unless the first step toward that idea be the imperial government. In other nations, the people act upon the sovereign power, or the two act and re-act mutually upon each other; but in China, the people are, by long-established, and now absolutely confirmed practice, in the hands of the emperor, as clay in the hands of the potter, to be moulded as he lists. This system descends through the whole machinery of the government, extensive and complicated as that is; for, throughout all its grades, the inferior is passive to his immediate superior without remonstrance or power of applying to any other quarter; and the emperor may alter the law as much and as often as he pleases, of his own sovereign authority, and without advice from, or consultation with, any other being upon earth. In fact, his practical exercise of absolute power over his subjects, is in strict accordance with the title which he assumes, and the assumption of which is recognised by every edict and mandate of any part of the government, whether high or low. He is the earthly representative of Almighty power; that is, he is appointed to enforce the laws and govern the people as heaven's representative. But,

though every Chinese emperor is a despot, none or few of them have been absolutely tyrants. Not merely the possessions, but the very lives of his subjects, are understood to be the property of the emperor; and, according to our own western adage, he "may do with his own what he pleases." No man can either live or be put to death without the consent of the emperor, except in cases of murder and piracy. When his commands go forth, they are instantly executed, without power of complaint on the part of those to whom they apply, in case they are of a penal nature. The Mandarins, in all their gradations, though understood to be selected solely on account of their merit, are still as much under the influence of the emperor as the humblest peasants of the country. He can call to office, or dismiss from office whomsoever he pleases, and he is responsible to none but that Almighty Being whom he is understood to represent upon earth, and, according to whose pleasure, he is always supposed to govern the empire in all its parts.

This is the grand secret of the stability of China as an empire, and of the unchangeable manners of the Chinese as a people. Except the emperor sees meet to call a man to office, all Chinese subjects are equal in his sight, and in that of the law. There is no noble, and no dependant; for, whatever may be the differences of possession or acquirement, all the Chinese are on a footing of perfect equality in so far as they are regarded by the emperor, and by those laws over which he has complete control. Therefore, there is no party or political feeling in China, and no scope for ambition, in any other way than by obtaining office according to the established mode, or wealth by the exertion of skill and industry.

Under such a state of things, the people are kept free from many matters which occupy, and that sometimes very unprofitably, the attention and time of people in the west. They have no political squabbling, no public opinion, no wasting of their time over newspapers; and, in short, none of those interferences with matters not individually their own, or in any way conducive to their individual interest and happiness, which are the real causes of that suffering whereof such a nation as the English complain.

Thus there is what may be called a perfect tranquillity of the people in China—a perfect absolvement from every consideration connected with government, whether general or local,—from all the wrangling and turbulence of the foam of our political sea, from parish business at the one end to parliamentary business at the other. As Lord Thurlow said, they have "nothing to do with the laws but to obey them;" and thus far they can devote the whole of their minds uninterruptedly, each to his particular calling, and therefore turn that calling relatively to more effect than the inhabitants of countries where politics, or public matters of any kind, engross a large share of the people's attention.

What has now been stated is the good of the thorough despotism of China; but this good is not unaccompanied by evil; and when we consider the nature and extent of the evil which does accompany it, we find it difficult to say whether, upon the whole, the tranquillity of China, or the political turbulence of other nations, has the advantage This evil may be summed up in one general expression—the total inability of any individual, of his own power or merit, to give himself distinction in the eyes of his fellows. Wealth will command a sort of dis-

tinction, in China, as well as in other countries; because it is an inseparable adjunct of human nature, for the man who has not to pay court and reverence to the man who has; but even this power is paralized, and the distinction resulting from it, is in a great measure, lost, by there being no public opinion, nothing to extend the name of even the wealthiest man in China beyond the circle of those who participate, or hope to participate, in the benefits of his wealth. In societies differently constructed, where there is a race of glory which every man may run if he lists, there are three grand elements of distinction,—the distinction of knowledge—or talent as it is called,—the distinction of wealth,—and the distinction of rank. In China, knowledge, or learning—which is presumed to be the embodiment of knowledge, is engrossed by the government; and the Mandarins are understood to be appointed, and promoted from lower appointments to higher, in consequence of their acquirements in this way. We have already stated the limits of the power of wealth; and, as for hereditary dignity, there is none absolute, not even in the imperial family, for the throne has not always been possessed by the legitimate heir. The emperor being the representative of heaven, he can select which of his sons shall succeed him. History affords many examples of ladies of the court, as well as statesmen, having been sufficiently powerful to put the younger brother over the elder, but such acts has always been considered a violation of the principles of the government, and calculated to call down the displeasure of heaven. According to this modification, posthumous fame, and posthumous obloquy are the greatest good and greatest evil of man; and this notion, interwoven with the extreme veneration which the Chinese have for their an-

cestors, it has a strong tendency to keep the bad passions of the reigning emperor in check. That a Chinese, of whatever rank, shall be execrated after he is dead, is considered far more bitter than any punishment during life, or even than death by the hand of the executioner.

This operates as strongly upon the rulers as the ruled, and thus far it tends to make the emperor what the theory of the government considers him, a patriarchal despot, who lives and rules for good, and to the very nature of whose office evil is a contradiction. Still, however, this restraining of the imperial power has no tendency to call forth the energies of the people; and therefore, unless in mere matters of labour, or merchandize, or the absurd and often fabulous learning and science of the country, or of sensual pleasure, the minds of the Chinese have little to excite them. Hence, there is no invention among them, nothing that can be called a demonstration of refined intellect, or scientific analysis. Their labour is merely labour of the hands, often ingenious enough, but still wanting in science; and all their enjoyments are sensual and voluptuous, and not a few of them gross and revolting. The stability of China, in fact, depends in a great measure upon the dwarfing or extinguishment of all the higher powers of the human mind; and though they are, comparatively speaking, a peaceable people, their peaceableness is a sort of intellectual lethargy or stupor. In matters of personal occupation, they are probably superior to most nations, at least in as far as they have knowledge and experience to guide them; because they can devote their whole faculties to these; but then, even here the result is paralized, because the mind is stunted in some of its best elements. It has been said that, during many years, there have been symptoms of

awakening from this mental stupor, in the existence of a sort of seditious societies, who designate themselves by the epithet of "Heaven and Earth" thereby implying that they have minds of their own. The members of these societies are said to be very numerous; but they are under the necessity of keeping their opinions profoundly secret, in consequence of the summary mode in which opposition to the imperial will is sure to be punished. They, however, have signs, something similar to those of our freemasons, whereby they can recognise each other, without being recognised by those not in the secret.

Subordinate to the emperor, there is a council, and six supreme tribunals; but the members of these, after deliberation, refer their decisions to the emperor. The imperial council consists of the ministers of state chosen by the emperor from the highest class of mandarins, or the presidents of the supreme councils, and of their assessors and secretaries. There are six boards or tribunals, called Lŭh-poo, to whom all the affairs of the state are referred, each board superintending its particular department, when the president has to lay their decisions before the great ministers of the state and the emperor.

First, Le-poo, (appointments to office). It is the business of this tribunal to supply and superintend the mandarins; one branch of it chooses officers; another watches and registers their conduct; a third affixes the seals to public acts, and regulates what seals shall be used by each mandarin; and a fourth takes account of the merits of princes of the blood, and other great men. Secondly, Hoo-poo (finance). This court has charge of the revenue of the empire, both in its collection and in its appropriation; and

for purposes of this kind, it has a number of branches in the provinces. Thirdly, Lee-poo (of ceremonies). This tribunal watches over the ancient ceremonies and religious rites, occasionally ordering grants for repairing the national temples, (not those belonging to Taou or Budha) and sees that the different sects conduct themselves properly. It also examines the schools, and has cognisance in all matters of etiquette, inculding those very formal ones which strangers must observe when seeking to approach the imperial presence. Fourthly, Ping-poo (of arms). This superintends the whole military establishment of the empire; but is itself composed entirely of civil Mandarins. Fifthly, Hing-poo (of justice). This tribunal, with its local delegations, takes cognisance of crime, throughout the empire. Sixthly, Kung-poo (of public works). This superintends the highways, bridges, canals, mines, manufactures, and all matters of art which are considered as public. In each of these tribunals, there are two presidents and twenty-four members, one half of whom are native Chinese and the other half Tartars; but in order that the conduct of each tribunal may be properly watched, the decrees of none of them can be carried into effect without the sanction of the others, the intention of which seems to be that one part of the executive government shall not do wrong to any of the other parts; and it must be admitted that this is a good regulation, at least in theory. Its practical goodness may, however, be paralized by the emperor, who, though he cannot abolish these tribunals, may change their members as often as he pleases.

Besides these there are two other tribunals which are of considerable importance: First, Too-chă-yun (public censors), who watch the conduct of all the other tri-

bunals; and have the power of sending an inspector to their meetings, who reports what takes place, but takes no personal share in it. Inspectors are also sent to the provinces to report how matters are executed; and they can send secret messengers or spies to every part of the empire, of whom both the people and the local authorities are in great dread; because, if an evil report is secretly sent, the first messenger who warns them of the fact may be the executioner with the scymitar or the bow-string. Secondly, Tsung-jin-foo (of the princes). This keeps a register of the number and conduct of all the royal family, and also of every one connected with the royal household; and it reports to the other tribunals what are the qualifications of the emperor's children, and whether any of them is fit for being his successor.

In theory, this constitution which is held in high veneration, appears admirably calculated for the government of an empire with justice and equity; but as, by the relation in which the emperor is supposed to stand to the Almighty, the whole of it might be completely paralyzed were it not for the general veneration for antiquity and ancestry, which accompanies or is founded upon it. The Chinese have love of country, as well as those nations which are in possession of something like civil and political liberty; but it is of a different kind: they do not love their country as it at present exists; they love the shade of its by-gone ages, and this is one of the main elements of their unchangeable state.

As we have already said, all religions have equal toleration in China, provided they do not interfere with state matters; but, in addition to this, there is a specific re-

ligion of the state, which is for the emperor, and those to whom he delegates his authority, and not for the people. Of this religion, which is in reality part and parcel of the state government, the emperor is the grand high-priest, and the governors and their subordinates form a series of priests, each descending in dignity below the others, until the very lowest is arrived at. But the fact, that the religious system which they administer—or rather the ceremonies which they perform, being wholly for state matters, in which the people are not participators, but merely lookers-on, makes this state religion totally different from the state religions of all other nations, for, in these, the rulers and the ruled are supposed equally to participate. This portion of government mummery has undergone many changes in opinion, but very little in reality, or in the rites which may be said to constitute the whole of it. The Lee-poo watch over it, and there are an immense number of deified subjects which comprise the mythology. Of these, Teen, "Heaven," Te, "the earth," are chief objects of worship, the one for protection, and the other for the bounties of nature; worship is also offered to the sun and moon, the ancestors of the reigning family, and to Confucius. The emperor can neither canonize or uncanonize any thing which ranks above him in the celestial scale; but he may do what he please, with all that are below. Accordingly, the whole of creation is full of genii or governing spirits; one of which is, appointed to each object, and these are worshipped by the people; so that in the practice of this form of religion, the number of gods and demi-gods is absolutely unlimited. This state-religion must be respected by all the people, in the same manner as the government

of the country, although, for their own individual purposes, each of them may have a religion of his own; and there are accordingly various denominations,—such as, Taouists, Budhists, Mahometans, Christians, and various others, and the grand obligation upon them is, that none of them shall attempt to substitute his religion, whatever it may be, for the religion of the state,—which religion the people must revere, though they need not believe and follow.

Besides the officers of state, the emperor has a household consisting of eunuchs, who have charge of the imperial seraglio, and of the different classes of women composing it. The emperor has three classes of wives: the first class being one individual—the empress; the second, two queens and their attendants; and the third, six queens and their retinue. In addition to these, he is allowed one hundred concubines, who are honoured by being appointed to such an extent, that the daughters of the wealthiest men of China seek for admission with greatest avidity. The children of each of these are accounted princes of the blood; and these princes are the only nobles in China.

Considered as nobility, their privileges are few and unimportant compared with those possessed by the nobles of our western climes. Those who descend in a direct line from the reigning family, have their names and the dates of their birth enrolled in a yellow book, and are allowed to wear a yellow girdle; but the collateral branches are enrolled in a red book, and wear red girdles. Beyond the third generation, the privileges of these imperial descendants are remarkably few, consisting of the right of being tried by their peers, and receiving from the royal treasury about thirty guineas when they marry,

being allowed the pay of a common soldier, and having their funeral expenses, and sometimes trifling pensions to their families, paid out of the imperial bounty. If, however, they are of remote degrees of consanguinity, they dare not marry without the emperor's permission; and, though it is death by the law to punish a prince of the blood when wearing his yellow girdle, if he appears abroad without it, any one may serve him as he would the humblest peasant. These circumstances imply, as, indeed, does every other, that there is no honourable distinction as between man and man in China, excepting what immediately emanates from, and depends upon, the will of the emperor. From veneration to Confucius. who was their greatest moralist, and who exerted himself in the service of the legitimate emperor, besides enforcing the relative duties of society, his descendants have had rank and land allotted them by all succeeding emperors.

Among official persons, there are marked distinctions in the dress. The emperor and his family wear bright yellow, while all the other princes and mandarins wear violet. The emperor and princes of the first rank have the Lung, or dragon with five claws, which is the national arms, embroidered on their robes; princes of the second rank have the same with four claws; and the third rank, including the Mandarins, have not the dragon, but an imaginary bird called Fung. The button, or central ornament of the cap, is an indication of rank, the emperor wears three golden dragons above each other, with four pearls on each, a pearl between, and a large one surmounting the whole. His robe of state has also an embroidered dragon on the breast, one on each shoulder, and one on the back; and he is the only one entitled to wear a pearl

necklace on state occasions, as do all the great ministers of state. The eldest son has three pearls less than the emperor, and a coral necklace. The younger sons have fewer pearls; and their rank is known by the number of pearls on their bonnets, and the character of their necklaces.

The same minuteness of system runs through the whole population, which consists of seven different classes,—Mandarins, Military, Literati, Priests, Husbandmen, Artisans, and Merchants. The Mandarins are persons who have acquired literary merit at the public examinations, and also by purchase of rank. They are either civil or military, according to their appointments. The Literati being candidates for office, learning is general throughout the empire. They are under the superintendence of the court of ceremonies, and appointed to vacant offices at the recommendation of that court. The priests are very numerous, and they profess to renounce the world, especially those of Budha. The Husbandmen, or cultivators of the soil, constitute the section of the people held in most esteem by the government, for, in that is considered the stability of the empire. They are, however, the least wealthy of the whole. The Artisans are perfectly free, and not obliged to follow the occupations of their fathers, as in India, and their ambition is to become merchants as soon as they accumulate sufficient wealth for that purpose. The Merchants rank next; those that are termed *Hong Merchants* are twelve persons appointed by the government to carry on the whole foreign trade, imports and exports, however extensive that may be, and are security to the government for all duties, and the good conduct of foreigners. Independently of their respectability, being the most ex-

tensive in the world, they have rank, and can punish summary in minor cases. It has been the policy of our representatives to decry these men, and seek to communicate with their superiors in office, the result is, we are cast off by both parties. Stage-players, prostitutes, and the conductors of the imperial barges, are held odious by Chinese law; and the descendants of the first cannot be recognised as citizens of even the very lowest clubs, until after the third generation.

Though each Mandarin, within the extent of his sway is a perfect despot to all under him, yet matters are so managed as that even the Mandarin governor of a province shall not acquire any local power which can be in the least degree dangerous to the stability of the empire. They are changed from one station to another every three years, and not one of them can hold office within about a hundred miles of the place of his birth, or where his relations reside, at least till the party himself is sixty years old. As little must they marry in the district which they govern, and they must quit it upon the demise of a direct ancestor. Those nearly related in blood cannot sit together in judgment; and there are various other restrictions, which so tie down the Mandarin, as that, however despotic may be his own authority, it is nothing more than the delegated authority of the emperor. They are also kept strictly to their duty; for, if the perpetrators of crimes are not discovered, the Mandarins of the locality are deprived of their officer, for they are the representatives of the emperor, they can be subjected to no sort of punishment, or in anywise called to account, until they have been deposed by superior power. The lower ones are responsible to the higher, and the higher are accountable to the emperor

for their conduct. Both classes of them are paid out of the revenues of the places under their charge; but their salaries are very moderate. They find means, however, of avoiding the law, and amassing considerable wealth from bribes and other wage of iniquity; so that a poor Mandarin is a prodigy in China, yet their history affords many noble examples; and the people generally look upon such as wolves. Still they are treated with no small respect by the people: the style in which they are addressed, is "Venerable Sir," or "Great Man," according to their rank. In their perambulations, they have large retinues, and they are followed by retainers with whips, chains, together with a vast number of other officers, indicating chiefly the power which these delegates of the emperor have over the people. It very often happens that much of this gorgeous train is in a very tattered condition; and the procession of a Mandarin is not very unlike the pilgrimage of strolling players in this country, who have nothing but their own persons on which to bear the tinsel of their craft. They are, however, always robed in violet colour; and their rank, whether civil or military, is distinguished by certain ornaments of their dress.

Of Mandarins generally there are nine distinctions, indicating as many ranks. The first have a ruby on the bonnet, a pelican on the back and front of their robe, and four agates with some rubies on the girdle, while the military of the same rank have the Ke-ling, an imaginary, animal, instead of the pelican. The second have a dull ruby on the bonnet, a golden hen on the robe, and four golden squares with rubies on the girdle; and their military have the lion instead of the golden hen. The third have a sapphire, or transparent blue button, on the

bonnet, a peacock on the robe, and four golden squares on the girdle; and their military have the panther instead of the peacock. The fourth have a dull blue button, with a crane on the robe, and four golden squares and a silver button on the girdle; and their military have the tiger in place of the crane. The fifth have the button transparent crystal, a silver pheasant on the robe, four plain golden squares and a silver button on the girdle, and their military have a bear instead of a pheasant. The sixth have a button of pearl-shell on the bonnet, a stork on their robe, four plates of shell, and a silver button on the girdle; and their military have a small tiger. The seventh have a small crystal on a button of plain gold, the partridge on their robe, and four round silver plates on the girdle. Their military have the rhinoceros on the robe. The eighth have a figured golden button, consisting of two parts one above the other, a quail on the robe, and four rams' horn plates, with a silver button on the girdle; and their military have the rhinoceros, so that they are distinguished from the last by their other insignia. The ninth have a silver button over a golden one, a sparrow on the robe, and four black horn plates with a silver button on the girdle; and their military have the sea-horse instead of the sparrow.

These are the distinctions of the Mandarins according to their ranks in the imperial establishment; but the scholars or candidates for office—for all Mandarins are understood to be employed in the exact ratio of their literary attainments, have also certain marks which indicate the degrees of their fitness for office. These are chiefly buttons on the bonnet, of which four orders are indicated by chased gold and plain gold, and chased silver and plain silver.

Of civil Mandarins there are no fewer than twenty-six degrees:—Tsung-tŭh, governor of one or more provinces; Foo-yuen, governor of one province only; Poo-ching-sze, treasurer or civil judge; Hoo-poo, collector of customs, of which there are only two, one for the province of Canton, and another for that of Fŭh-keen,—these being the only provinces to the ports of which foreigners are understood to resort; Găn-cha-sze, or criminal judge; Foo-yĭh, superintendant of two cities of the first order; Ching-shoo-kaou, president of examinations; Heŏ-yuen, inspector of schools; Yen-yuen, superintendant of salt-works; Chuen-too, superintendant of ports and shipping; Ping-pe-too, inspector of troops; Fun-taou, superintendant of highways; Ho-too, inspector of rivers; Gae-too, inspector of coasts; Che-foo, governor of a first class city; Che-choo, of a second class city; Che-heen, of a third class city; Urh-foo, sub-governor; Urh-ya, assessor or assistant; Nan-hae, chief of police; Shay-ko-tse, collector of shop duties; Sze-yu, governor of prisons; Shay-ta-shĕ, chief of custom-house; Koo-ta-sze, inspector of magazines; Yĭh-ching, inspector of city ports; and Heŏ-ching, inspector of city schools. This it will be admitted, is a very formidable array of civil officers, all placed in regular subordination, the one over the other, and each having absolute dominion over all that is below him, except in so far as that every one of them is constantly watched by the spies of the tribunal of police censors, and is therefore kept in continual fear of being deposed Outwardly, therefore, the Chinese government is a government of order; but inwardly, and in reality, it is a government of terror.

Each of those Mandarins has a council to assist him,

and the smaller towns and villages have also their governing Mandarins and councils, so that the total number of civil appointments in the empire may amount to about ten thousand, every one of whom is nominated by the emperor, that is by the Imperial authority, delegated to the proper courts.

The military establishments is equally formal—indeed more formal than formidable. In Peking, there are five military tribunals, or Woo-foo, under which all the Mandarins are arranged. These are: How-foo, the rear-guards; Tso-foo, the left wing; Yew-foo, the right wing; Chung-foo, the centre; and Tseen-foo, the advanced guard. Each of these classes has a president and two assessors, who are the officers most distinguished for talent; and the whole are under the Yung-ching-foo, which again is under the jurisdiction of the Ping-poo, or court of arms. The military consists in great part of Tartars, whose officers have peculiar names and ranks. Of these the principal are, Tsung-yuen, a general, or commander of 3,000, under whom there are Too-tung, lieutenant-generals; Koo-shan, colonels; Tsang-ling, lieutenant-colonels; Tang-yew, captains; Taou-ke-keaou, a lieutenant; and these Tartar bands compose in some respect, the standing army of the empire. Besides these, there are Chinese military Mandarins,—namely, Te-tŭh, the commander of a province, who generally has 4,000 troops; Ching-keun, lieutenant-general, in the centre of the army with 3,000; Tsung-ping, generals, with 3,000 troops; Foo-tsing, marshals of the camp; Tsang-tsing, brigadiers; Yew-ke, colonels; Shoor pei, lieutenant-colonels; Tseen-tsung, captains; Pa-tsung, lieutenants; Pĭh-tsung, commanders of a hundred. All these are Mandarins: and, their number greatly ex-

ceeds that of the civil Mandarins, though their influence, the estimation in which they are held, and the means they have of acquiring wealth by the perversion of their offices, are very inferior. China is, in fact, in all points of view in which it can be regarded, much more a civil country than a military one; and, although in many of the provinces there are numerous soldiers, and some of the cities are altogether military; their military are an inferior class of persons; and thus the warlike force of the empire bears a very low ratio to the number of its inhabitants. It is, no doubt, desirable that every country, should, if possible, do without any military array; but it does not appear consistent with human nature that such an array can be dispensed with; and, therefore the degradation of the military is a means both of weakness and wickedness to every state in which they are regarded as being inferior in rank to the civil authorities. This is well confirmed by the conduct of the Chinese soldiery, who are naturally pusillanimous in battle, but proverbially cruel in all cases when they obtain the mastery; and they are rapacious to such an extent, as that "the honour of a soldier" is an expression unknown to the Chinese language.

Such is a brief outline of the government, both civil and military. The details would far exceed our limits; but the vast number of official persons, and their perfect subordination to each other, and the subordination of the whole to the Emperor, show how very complete the despotism is, and consequently how trammelled must be the whole system of Chinese society. Each of these Mandarins, whether he be civil or military, and whatever may be his rank, is so strictly confined to the duties of his own office, and so restrained from intermeddling

with anything else, except in so far as he may have an opportunity of taking bribes, that there is nothing among them which bears the least resemblance to patriotism or public spirit; and, indeed, these are sentiments which are not felt by any branch of the Chinese population. Among them, the individuals who can afford it, are sunk in sensuality and indulgence, often of the most revolting character, while many of those who have to toil daily for their bread, are in a state of the most wretched destitution and misery. In consequence of this—if indeed this itself is not the consequence, the Chinese are perfectly passive to the acts of their governors; and this is certainly the main reason of the extraordinary stability and duration of Chinese society. As is well expressed by the proverb, "Those who run may stumble, but those who lie still cannot;" so the Chinese do not fall back as a people, precisely because they make no effort to advance forwards. To this stagnation of society, all their institutions are tempered and adapted; and we have it in the very language, for that is a tongue by no means calculated to address itself orally to the hearts of men, and awaken their feelings. The same may be said of their religion, in so far as it is a state religion, for there is nothing spiritual or inspiring about it; and the whole tendency of their establishments is to keep mankind as dull and quiescent as they probably can be. It may be that this, by leaving what intellect the, have perfectly free to be devoted to their individual pursuits, may enable them to manage their pursuits with more art and craft than men of higher minds; but with all the craft, there is an intellectual inferiority about them, and about every thing they do. There is no genuine taste in even their finest works of art; and,

though some of their literary productions are fair enough as far as they go, there is no soul, no loftiness of thought, and nothing of the genuine spirit either of philosophy or of eloquence to be found in them. All, are, in short, completely in the rut of their despotic government, and out of that rut they have apparently no power of delivering themselves, or any wish of so doing, even though they had the power. They stand apart as a people, and have no participation in that intellectual and moral progress which is so apparent in Europe, and which begins to be felt even by the Hindoos, trammelled as they are by the divisions into castes, and other restrictions, which are forced upon them by their religion; and therefore the conduct of the Chinese must not be judged of by analogy drawn from any other people on the face of the earth. As a nation they "stand alone," not "in their glory" certainly, but still they do stand alone, and foreigners must either hold intercourse with them in strict accordance with their own laws and customs, or overturn their whole system by the sword, which would be equally unjust and impracticable.

SECTION VII.

OUTLINE OF THE CHINESE CHARACTER, LANGUAGE, AND HISTORY.

STANDING apart as China does in every respect from all other countries in the world, we might be prepared to expect, that the character of its inhabitants, their language, their history, and also their literature, their sciences —such as they are, and their arts and operations, must also be different from those of every other people; and, when we examine the facts ever so slightly, we find this to be the case. The physical circumstances of the country, or rather the *cordon* which is drawn around its land boundaries, in those dependant countries which we have noticed, completely cut it off from the rest of the world, and therefore, in the geographical sense of the word, we might speak of "China, and all the world beside," as forming two distinct and separate sections of the habitable globe. Then this physical or geographical detachment from the rest of the world is seconded by the government, and that peculiar system of religion which is dependant upon the government, and has the emperor at its head. In consequence of these, every native of China who emigrates, from that moment loses his status as a subject of the celestial empire, and is in fact, an outcast on the face of the earth till he returns.

A good many Chinese have resorted to other countries, especially the isles of the Oriental archipelago, where they are a steady and industrious people; but, in case of these emigrants being severely oppressed, or even cruelly massacred, the Chinese authorities have refused to redress the injury, because the parties suffering it had left the temples and sepulchres of their fathers, and had gone into a strange land. Other nations have parties authorised to protect their subjects when in foreign parts; but there is no Chinese man of office without the empire and its dependencies; and, therefore, every Chinese without the pale of the empire, may be treated as the people about him choose, without any hope of protection from his own country. Among the commercial Chinese, who reside at the places frequented by other nations, the tendency which this has to keep the people at home, is, to a considerable extent, broken; but upon the great body of the people, its influence is absolute—so much so indeed, that it may be said, in a great measure, to model the national character. It is a well-established truth, that to travel is one of the great means of stimulating the human mind in respect both of individuals and of nations; and that, on the other hand, those who remain fixed on the same soil, generation after generation, without the example of a different people to excite them, remain stationary. This is proved by the whole tenor of history; for that shows, that stationary nations, whatever may have been their power, have, generally speaking, been overrun and vanquished by migratory tribes; and it is also true in cities and other local places, that the members of the most ancient families, are seldom, if ever, the most enlightened and enterprising.

In their appearance, and all their physical characters,

the Chinese accord with their geographical and political condition. In colour they are yellow; and though rather taller than the inhabitants of Tartary, they are not so strong and hardy. Their hands, like those of most Orientals, are very ready at manual operations, especially such as require neatness; and they can perform their work with very few and very simple tools; but, on the other hand, they have little or no power; and their very senses seem to partake of that quiescence and want of the spirit of improvement which are characteristic of their whole country and its system. In their dress, they are, at least in their more wealthy classes, gaudy; but they are not over cleanly either in it or their persons; and, though they are, generally speaking, mild, cheerful, and obliging, their feeling of morality and justice is exceedingly low. In consequence of this, their traders watch every opportunity of overreaching those with whom they deal; and their Mandarins, even of the highest rank, are extortioners and takers of bribes, whenever an opportunity offers. This moral degradation, is a natural result of the strict trammels of government surveillance and espionage, by which the whole nation are confined. Their hands are equally free and ready for work; the intellectual man is in fetters; and this is the reason why there is little or no science embodied in their arts, no grace in the forms of their structures, and no perspective in their pictorial delineations. The very same cause tells in another and more repulsive way upon them,—in the want of mental dignity, and the feeling that they are independant creatures, accountable first and pre-eminently to their Creator, and bound for their own interest as well as their own improvement and honour, to obey his laws in preference

to, and, if necessary, in violation of any imperial, or other power that can be assumed by man. Hence, many of their practices are exceedingly gross; and their vices have generally, if not invariably, something mean and disgusting about them.

From all the accounts which we have, it would seem that virtue, in our sense of the term, has no principle in the Chinese character. Conjugal affection there is, but can be little, because wives and husbands are the arrangements of their parents, not chosen by the husbands; it is easy to understand that, if the bond of family is entirely boken in any society, all the virtues are scattered to the winds. Filial piety, or veneration, which is one of the most amiable traits of the character of other nations, is but part and parcel of the state and its system of superstition; and, perhaps the man who bows down and worships at the sepulchre of its remote ancestor, would not, unless the eye of some one watch over him, stretch out his hand to assist his own father. As for paternal affection, that may be said to be little. The father may treat a refractory disobedient child as cruelly as he chooses; and, even if he puts him to death, his punishment is only receiving some forty or fifty blows with the bamboo. Not only this, but children, more especially females, may be exposed and left to perish, or may be sold for slaves. There is no law sanctioning this; but it is done, especially in the case of poor girls who have handsome persons, and promising abilities; for, these last are purchased, trained in all the allurements of such fascination as suits the character of the rich, and then sold to them, or let out on hire. The law, or custom, according to which the Chinese marry very early in life, tend to restrain

promiscuous intercourse; and, as the great body of the people are too poor for supporting more than one wife, the family habits of these are understood to be pretty regular. But in cities and among the wealthy, there is a great deal of immorality in this respect, and immorality under the most repulsive of its forms. This is a mode of vice very common in all despotic governments, where the independance of man is sacrificed to the will of a monarch, or the dogmas of a system; and, were it not for the strong fetters which bind the Chinese to their own monarchy, and keep them apart from all other nations, there is no question that vice would have brought about the subjugation of China, and the obliteration of the people and their government, long before the present time.

It may seem somewhat paradoxical when stated, but it is nevertheless true, that the strength and durability of the Chinese empire consists in, or is founded upon, the individual weakness, and mental inferiority, of the countless multitudes that compose its population. Every man, excepting the emperor, be he of what rank he may, is under the restraint of system, long-established custom, which dare not be broken, and besides this, there is the far more formidable dread of spies, without the least means of knowing who those spies may be. The sovereign power, of which every civil Mandarin is a delegate, is farther strengthened by a standing army of between 800,000, and 900,000 men; and, as these soldiers, down to the very lowest rank, are also delegates of the emperor, they execute their orders with very little regard to justice or humanity. The cost of this establishment is estimated at somewhere about fifty millions sterling; and that of the civil establish-

ment, and the emperor, and members of the imperial family must make it still greater.

The actual number of the Chinese troops, like all other statistical matters connected with the country, is no doubt vague; but still the number of soldiers is described as being considerable. It is over the people only that this great host of soldiers can exercise any tyrannical influence; for they and their Mandarins are under the controul of this civil power, so that it would be very difficult to bring about any thing like a general revolt in the Chinese army. Notwithstanding their numbers, they would, in all probability, make but little stand against European troops; but within the empire they are all efficient for the purpose for which they are intended. Against an invading army attempting to overrun so vast a tract of country, they would be equally efficient, for they could spare ten to one against any foreign troops which might invade their country, and therefore the bravest army that could be sent on such a misson, would be in the end worn out by the numbers.

Intoxication is a vice very little known in China, and upon the progress of our embassies and of other visitors through the most populous and manufacturing parts of the country, scarcely an individual was to be seen in a state of inebriety. Smoking opium is the mode of intoxication most generally practised, though prohibited by law; and it is said to be on the increase. It must, however, be confined to persons of rank or wealth, as the drug is too costly for the common people; and the quantity grown in the western provinces, or smuggled into the country, is too small for its use being very general even among them.

To sum up the whole Chinese character, as modelled by their institutions, we may say that there is little or no kind-hearted or manly virtue among them; that they are thrown upon the gratification of their bodily appetites, in consequence of the enslavement of their minds, and that each is as sensual in his conduct as his circumstances will permit him to be. The vast number of the people, and the constant labour that it requires from the great body of them to earn the necessaries of life, prevents them from being absolutely licentious; but, like all mental slaves, they are superstitious, treacherous, and vindictive. They are so watched by soldiers and police-officers, that they are not allowed to quarrel or even to call angry names—according to the privilege of the lower orders in free countries, and when they come to any thing like a personal scuffle, it consists in "pulling and hauling" each other.

Of the history of China we can give only a mere glance or rather a few points. Like that of all countries having a long history, it consists in a fabulous, a doubtful, and a certain period.

The fabulous partakes much of that absurdity and caricature, which appears to serve the Chinese instead of intellectual design; and therefore, we may pass it over, by simply stating that the empire is the progeny of Yang, "Heaven," and Yin, "earth." It is stated that, after the Heavens and Earth were separated, Pwan koo appeared, who is said to have reigned 45,000 years; he was followed by three emperors, named Teen-te-hwang-she, Te-hwang-she, and Jin-hwang-she, whose united reigns make 36,000 years; the whole account of which is ridiculed, and pronounced to be fabulous by all the Chinese historians.

The next here is doubtful; it extends according to the annals, from more than 3,000 years before Christ, to the middle of the third century of our era. How much of this is to be credited, we cannot know, because it is probable that though the time of the invention of writing is not known, they in all probability possessed this art as early as it was possessed by the Babylonians, the Egyptians, or any other nation. The histories are named after certain dynasties, the Hea dynasty began 2,207 years before Christ, and lasted 440 years; and, during this period the country is said to have been much infested by inroads of banditti. The Shang dynasty lasted 543 years; and under it the country continued to decline. The Chow dynasty lasted 873 years, and under it the country began to improve. It was under this (in 552, B.C) that Confucius was born, and his maxims consolidated the present mode of government. We are not absolutely certain that even this took place at the date assigned to it; but it is probable. The writings of Confucius have been held in great veneration ever since; and they are expressed in the language made use of by the Chinese at the present day.

At this period, civilization appears to have been confined to the northern provinces of China, while the south was comparatively barbarous, though a more enlightened system of things, or at all events a more peaceable one gradually extended to that part of the empire; and about 200 years before Confucius, the empire was broken into a number of separate kingdoms. The Tsin dynasty held the throne, for the forty-four years previous to 207 B.C.; and under them the empire was united, or at least a number of the provinces were formed into a single

kingdom. The Han dynasty succeeded and lasted 470 years, bringing down the annals to A.D. 263. In the early part of this dynasty the empire was much strengthened, but during the latter part it was divided into three kingdoms under separate sovereigns, and this division continued for a considerable time. The Tsin dynast succeeded this, and continued to 420 A.D. Under their sway the empire was very much agitated, and the Tartars were enabled to take possession of the north and west. In this state of things the Sung family ascended the throne, or rather the southern throne; and the fifty-nine years during which they held it were also times of trouble. The Tartars who had got possession of the northern part, appear to have been in possession of much superior attainments to the native Chinese, but the different hordes could not be brought to coalesce; and therefore, though their government was superior to that of the south, they were not able to overcome the latter. To the Sung succeeded the Tse dynasty, which lasted but for twenty-two years, and this dynasty ruled over the southern kingdom, Nan-chow, while the Tartars still held the northern or Pih-chow. The capitals at this time w Nanking for the southern empire, and Peking for th northern, the former being then, by far the finer city of the two, and, in all probability the most splendid, and the least embellished on the face of the earth; its situation is certainly in every way preferable to that of Peking. The Leang dynasty held the throne for fifty-five years; and one of their number was very zealous in introducing Budhism in addition to the precepts of Confucius. The Chin dynasty succeeded by dethroning the then emperor, and continued thirty-two years. Under this dynasty, the project of uniting the northern and

southern empires was formed. The Suy dynasty lasted for twenty-eight years previous to 618 A. D., and some of them made considerable efforts to improve the condition of the empire. The Tang dynasty continued to 907 A. D.; and it was under this, that the two kingdoms were united. They are celebrated for their martial proceedings; but some of them were very cruel and tyrannical. The How Leang dynasty lasted till 923 A.D., that is for sixteen years, and were succeeded by the How Tang, which continued but twelve. Next came the How Tsin dynasty, which continued till 946 A. D., having obtained the throne by the aid of the Tartars. The How Han dynasty which lasted but three years, had also an unstable throne. The How Chow dynasty continued nine years to A.D. 960; and one of them exerted himself in promoting the welfare of the kingdom, in establishing schools, casting down the images, and appointing wise counsellors One of these ministers became the founder of the Sung dynasty, which was of longer duration, extending to A. D. 1279; and the first of this dynasty of emperors made great efforts to improve the literature of the country, but along with this learning, atheism is said to have been very prevalent. The Tartars still maintained an independant position, by occupying a portion of China Proper; and, during this time, a new enemy appeared in the Mongul Tartars. They succeeded in dethroning the last of the Sung emperors; and in the final battle fought near Canton, 100,000 Chinese are said to have been slain. Kobley-khan, the Mongul, ascended the throne, and founded the Yuen or Mongul dynasty, which lasted till A. D. 1367; but he assumed a Chinese name, and rigidly observed the laws and customs of the country He was, in fact, one of the greatest benefactors of the

empire, by promoting the strict administration of justice, completing the great canal, and encouraging other public works. His empire extended fully as far as China does at present, and also probably included great part of eastern Siberia; and he further attempted to subdue Japan; but his fleet of 4,000 vessels was scattered by a tempest, and very few returned back again. During the latter part of their rule, these Tartar princes fell sadly from the example of their predecessor, and this enabled the Chinese again to get the mastery of them. The result of this was the establishment of the Ming dynasty, which continued from 1368 to 1644 A. D. The founder of this was a native Chinese, son to a common agriculturist in Keang-nan, who rose entirely by his merits, and a little after the middle of the fourteenth century, he totally routed the residue of the Mongul armies, and thus brought the whole empire again under the dominion of a native sovereign. Some time afterwards, but during the continuation of the Ming dynasty, the Japanese made reprisals, by fitting out a number of large ships, in which they pillaged the Chinese coast, and there were also famines and rebellions during their reigns. When the rebels had forced their way to the gates of Peking, and had them treacherously opened, the last of the Ming dynasty, in a fit of despair, murdered his family and strangled himself. These disturbances afforded a favourable opportunity for the Mantchoo Tartars to enter China, and obtain the mastery; and the new emperor assumed a Chinese name, and founded the Tatsing dynasty, which still retains possession; and thus the present ruler of China is not a descendant of the Celestial Empire, but a stranger, or, as the Chinese expression is vaguely rendered, "a barbarian." This dy-

nasty has not been always in peaceable possession of the throne but been engaged in various civil feuds, and also foreign wars. The earlier emperors of this dynasty evinced a much stronger disposition to trade, and to hold intercourse with foreigners, than is in accordance with their present disposition, or with the general system of the empire and the commencement of the sixteenth century was characterised by the introduction of the Jesuit missionaries into the empire. These crafty fathers did not at once make known their ultimate intentions, but began by instructing the inhabitants in European arts, and ingratiating themselves with the emperor. These missionaries had been sent out soon after 1518, the year in which the Portuguese, after having made themselves masters of stations along the coasts, chiefly on islands, from the head of the Persian gulf to the Oriental isles, sent their first embassy to China; but it was not till 1542, that Xavier, "the apostle of the Indies," as he was called, appeared in China, and was made president of the missionaries. At first they were all well received; and had their ultimate objects been civil, that is, if they had come merely to instruct, not to subjugate, it is highly probable that, long before this, China would have been included in the list of civilised nations in our understanding of the word; and that the arts and resources of the country and the science of Europe would have co-operated to the mutual advantage of both. When, however, it was found that the object of these missionaries was to secure a despotic control over the minds of the people, the emperor, and also all the officers in authority over him, very naturally became jealous of a despotism, which threatened to overturn that of which they themselves were the organs, and by which they were the

profiters; and this gradually led to the ejection of all missionaries by the edict of 1723. To enter into the particulars, and much more to reason upon them, would greatly exceed our limits; but we must say that, in so far as the non-introduction of a more sacred faith, and of higher and more intellectual character, has been a privation to the Chinese, the fault was in the missionaries, and not in the natives of the country. The structure of the government and the successive links of despotism, of which it consists, may be compared to a chain containing as many links as there are degrees of authority, and the parties holding this authority appear to have been wise enough to see that, if a single link were broken, the whole chain would be disunited, whatever might be the place of that link in the chain.

The founder of the Ta-tsing dynasty appears to have been a man of judgment and discretion, with, perhaps, a reasonable admixture of craft. He strictly followed the established customs of the empire; and himself and his followers, learned the Chinese language, married with the Chinese families, and assumed the dress of the country. He also appointed Chinese to office, in preference to Tartars; and contented himself with retaining his Tartars for an army, subject to the control of the Chinese, according to the law which had been established by Confucius, and the other reputed philosophic founders of the Chinese system. He even encouraged the superstitions of the country—finding, perhaps, that these were among the most powerful instruments by which the despotism could be preserved.

But, notwithstanding the tact with which this emperor won the favour of the Chinese, and consolidated his empire, and all the efforts which he made to elevate their

character, the empire was by no means free from disturbance; for the Tartars were constantly harassing the border provinces; and Chin-chin-lung known in western history as Coxinga, appeared on the coast with a formidable army landed, and laid siege to Nanking, which had ceased to be the imperial city from the time that the northern and southern kingdoms were united. This audacious Tartar allowed his army to celebrate his birth-day by a festival of three days; and the troops within the city, taking advantage of the jollification, fell suddenly upon them, and, after great slaughter, drove them to their ships. They were instantly pursued, overtaken, and, in great part, destroyed, while the men on board were massacred in a cruel manner. The leader escaped with some of his armament, drove the Dutch from the island of Formosa, and there established a piratical kingdom. Kang-he and his successor continued favourable to the missionaries; and the former, having spent a long reign in endeavouring to promote the interest of his empire, closed it in peace. His son was equally attentive to its interests; but he issued those severe edicts against the Jesuits which drove them out of the country. By this time the Ta-tsing dynasty was firmly established; and, though there have been wars on the borders, misunderstandings with foreign nations, and commotions within the empire, this dynasty has never been in danger of subversion. Keen-lung, who was the emperor towards the close of the last century, reduced many of the Tartar tribes; but he was foiled in his attempt to conquer the Birman territory, though he contrived to add Thibet to the tributary states. He showed more disposition to interfere with foreign states, than is usual with Chinese rulers, and various European nations

sent embassies to his court. By energetic government, he not only strengthened his own empire, and pleased his subjects, but also greatly restrained the pirates, which had so long infested the Chinese coasts. His successor was far more feeble; and under him, though there was no absolute diminution of territory, all branches of the administration were in a most corrupt state. The present emperor, Taou-kwang is not remarkable for any great attainments, but the government appears to be well organised; and the period which he has reigned, has been one of comparative tranquillity, though not absolutely free from danger.

Such is a mere line through the history of the Chinese dynasties; and as this history is the longest one of any nation on the surface of the earth, the details would, of course, fill a number of volumes. Even then they would not be very philosophical, or greatly to be depended upon, inasmuch as all good is likely to be attributed to the reigning emperor; and thus the real facts are hidden, and the conclusions which could be legitimately drawn from those facts, as bearing upon the spirit of the people, are all of an inferential nature. One thing, however, is certain: There is not in China any of that progressive improvement from a barbarous to a civilised state, which we meet with in other countries, having long histories; and as little is there any of those reverses and declines to which most other nations have been subjected. The personal character of the emperor, and the judgment with which he appoints his officers, must, of course, have an influence upon the state or the population, just as the same circumstances have an influence upon other despotic governments,— or indeed upon all governments whether they are despotic or not. There is some-

thing unchangeable in the character of China and its inhabitants, by means of which no wisdom and energy on the part of the government can cause the government to arouse themselves, and run any career of improvement, more especially intellectual improvement; and the same immutability of character appears to prevent depression from originating a systematic decline of this most singular and wholly unexampled population.

SECTION VIII.

THE CHINESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

THE language of the Chinese is, perhaps, the most singular of their possessions, singular as they are in every respect. Their characters are so totally different, not only from those of the alphabetical languages, but from the hieroglyphics of every other nation which has attempted to convey ideas by the organs of sight in that manner, that it is exceedingly difficult for any other nation to form an accurate notion of them. As we have already said, they express substances and not sounds; and therefore there is no necessary connexion between them and the oral speech of the country. The fundamental forms of which these characters are made up, are exceedingly simple, and not very numerous, considering the purposes for which they are intended. They are said to be only about 214 in number; and they are called mother characters or ruling characters by the Chinese themselves, though European writers term them, the keys of the language. In using this expression, the European writers are not very correct, for, in order to understand the whole which is expressed by one of the compound characters of the Chinese, the relations in which the ruling characters stand to each other have to be taken into consideration, as well as the forms of the characters themselves. This is, in fact, the grand difficulty of the matter, just as the modifications which the

several parts of a compound word, or the several words, members, or clauses, of a sentence, have upon each other, in an alphabetical language, constitute the chief difficulty in understanding it. Each character is, in fact, a sentence; and all the mother characters, or individual parts and minor characters of which it is made up, are the component parts of that sentence, each of them a monosyllable, and having a distinct and separate meaning when it stands alone; but so modified in the compound, that the mere knowledge of these individual parts does not communicate an adequate idea of the subject, or the thought, which the compound expresses. It has been understood that these elementary parts are rude representations of objects of sight; but their origin is too remote for enabling any very satisfactory conclusion to be arrived at with respect to their original adoption, just as is the case with all alphabetical characters, which, though supposed to express the position which the organs of speech assume in pronouncing them, are, in most alphabets, very unlike these. The Chinese themselves consider these characters to have been in use 2,700 years before the Christian era; but there do not appear to be sufficient data for either confirming or contradicting this assertion. Some of the elementary characters enter into the composition of a vast number of compound ones; and though they themselves do not exceed the number we have mentioned, yet these combinations amount to nearly 20,000, composed of only; and the entire language contains a great many more. In practice, there are not more than 35,000 distinct characters, simple and compound; and of these a good many are synonymes. In the text of the code of laws, there are said to be 100,090 characters; but not more than 2,000

of these are essentially different in their elementary parts; and from this it will be seen how much of the real measure of their language depends on the relations of the component parts of the characters, and consequently how apt foreigners must be to misunderstand the real meaning of what is written.

The Chinese, from the readiness with which they can vary the combinations of their elementary characters, have wonderful facility in finding names for new objects; and, on this account, there are very few objects brought into their country which are expressed in Chinese—at least among the people in their intercourse with each other, by the names which the importors give them. At Canton, and other places where the Chinese have intercourse with foreigners, especially with those who do not understand their language, they imitate, as well as they can, the words used by those foreigners, but they rarely make use of those words in their dealings with each other. Besides this, there are various modes of writing the same character, just as there are various modes of spelling and pronouncing the language of any other country; but these variations are seldom used. The principle of the written language, like the fundamental one of the government, has a great air of philosophical perfection about it; but it is a species of perfection which cannot be followed out in practice. The characters are usually arranged into six classes: — First, Hing-seang (image), the ancient hieroglyphical form of the character; Che-ke-tsze (indication) a class of characters indicative of their meaning; Hwuy-e (combination) a class of characters having a figurative rather than a literal sense; Heae-shing (by the sound) a class of characters whose meaning is effected by the intonation of the

voice; Kea-tseay (direct metaphor) a class of characters whose literal sense are used metaphorically in another, as for example, when the character for the sun is used to denote splendour, which is the sense wherein it is applied to the emperor, it is purely metaphorical,—the same as our figures of speech in poetical language; and Chuen-choo (development) which is rendered more compound by the repetition of the character, or to the use of another, or of others, along with it.

Besides these classes of characters, there are six modes of writing used for different purposes: Chuen, the ancient, which is very hieroglyphical, and is now used only for inscriptions. It is more brief and obscure than the others; and was the method employed, while books were engraved on slips of bamboo before the invention of block printing, which is supposed to have taken place about the commencement of the tenth century. Kae-shoo, is the most elegant form of the character, and is that in which official documents are written, affording greater freedom than that made use of in books. It is considered the neatest form, and the letters are less angular than in most of the others. The Tsaou-tsze form has the characters so much contracted, that much of practice is necessary to read them. It is used in letter writing and business. Sung-tsze, is the regular book printing form. Besides these, there are other varieties, but they are seldom used.

From this very brief analysis, it will be seen that much of the meaning of the Chinese language as written, depends upon the perfect familiarity of the party attempting to read with these modications produced by the compounding of characters. The Chinese are among

themselves great adepts in this matter; and this is the reason why education in the written language is so general, and why they usually have recourse to writing when they have much conversation together upon any subject of importance. Still, in ordinary conversation and business, only a small number of the characters comes into play; and, therefore, with the great body of the people, education means nothing more than being able to speak, to write and to read, to such an extent as serves for the ordinary transactions and intercourse of society. When we come to the learned, not only those capable of writing a book, but capable of merely reading one, the Chinese language is a very different matter; and probably, no man during the longest life can be able to acquire the whole. Even those who are well learned in books upon one subject, feel themselves greatly at a loss with those upon another, because new characters, and new combinations far more puzzling than any characters, are ever and anon presenting themselves; and as there are visible embodiments of the ideas, and not of mere sounds, the perplexity is much greater than in the words of any other language.

As the literati of China are the most esteemed class of its inhabitants, and all aspirants or longers for place and emolument, at which they are pretty certain of arriving according to their attainments, these scholars or literati are much more numerous in China, in proportion to the whole population, than learned men are in those countries where they are stimulating the people to the most rapid and useful improvements. The number is usually estimated at 2,000,000, and it must be admitted, that even taking the Chinese census, no European country has such men in so high a ratio. They

have been so from the time of Confucius, who was the grand modeller of this system of things; and as they are in fact the governing party, we have in this the solution of the grand problem of the stability of China. The government has taken hold of the language in all cases wherein it extends beyond the business of common life; and thus they have taken from the people the most powerful means of cultivating their minds and improving their condition. These parties who know the learned language, are the only ones among whom anything like public opinion could exist; and so there is nothing left for the body of the people, save business, sensual gratification, and regard for the government for the memory of Confucius, and for ancestry generally.

As the Chinese have been writing books for more than 2000 years, and printing them for at least 800, the quantity of books contained in the empire is immense. The style of their writing, and the thinness of their volumes—which are very unlike the "ponderous tomes" of our lengthy writers, reduce them on an average to the same quantity as a common sparely-printed octavo in English; but some of the works make ample amends in the number,—there being among them an abridgment of an Encyclopædia in 450 volumes, while the Encyclopædia itself consists of 6,000. The library of the Emperor Keen-lung contained 168,000 volumes, and these chiefly on Chinese history and politics. They had books on all subjects: history, philosophy, poetry, fiction, and miscellaneous collections. Some change of style has taken place since the first books were writen; but far less than in any other country. The time of the Han dynasty, which consisted of a portion before and another after the Christian epoch, may be regarded as the philosophic

age of China; and, as the belief has been carefully impressed, that these philosophers knew and embodied in their writings all that can possibly be known, and that the search of philosophic truth is impiety, there is no progress in any one of the many sciences which come under the general name of philosophy. In the poetry, the tales and the lighter reading, novelties are frequently produced; but the more solid works consist almost invariably of mere compilations from the old materials. The language of these is very difficult to read; and thus they may be said to be sealed books to the people generally. Many of these read; but what they read is for the most part frivolous in its character, and not always expressed in the most delicate terms. There is not any thing like a newspaper or periodical in the whole empire, except the Peking Gazette, and that is a collection of mere official details without the development for discussion of any principle whatever. Peking, though the capital, and now supposed to be the most populous city in the empire, is by no means the most literary—that distinction being still maintained by the province in which Nanking once the southern capital is situated, there being more literary men, and more parties employed in printing in that province than in any other part of the empire.

Our limits forbid us from entering further into any notice of the language; but what we have stated will be found sufficient to establish the general point, that the literature and the language are among the most powerful instruments of that despotism which has preserved the multitude of the Chinese as one distinct people for so many centuries. Of the oral language we need say little; it is monosyllabic, and so exceedingly meagre

in its significant sounds, that it is scarcely possible for a foreigner, and very difficult for a native to understand it; but it is made somewhat sonorous by the use of expletives—sounds indeed, but sounds which have in themselves no meaning.

SECTION VIII.

MANUFACTURES AND COMMERCE.

UNDER the first part of these names we include all the occupations and acts of the people, which are carried on with a view either of procuring the necessaries of life, or for furnishing manufactured goods for home or foreign consumption. Though China is, in the main, an agricultural country, that is, cultivation the occupation of the body of the people, yet their implements are rude, the plough being little else than a crooked stick dragged by a buffalo, and the ground is not ploughed to much depth, though upon the stiff lands, it is carefully broken by harrows. The land is even left in fallow, and every species of animal and vegetable refuse, which can be decomposed by the soil and the weather, is carefully preserved as manure. To such an extent is this carried, that the barbers carry each a bag into which they put the hair shaved from the heads and beards of their customers. Some of their careful practices in this way would not sound very seemly in European ears; but still, by preserving this, making composts, and labouring incessantly, they render the land highly productive,—so much so, indeed, that were the best farming nation in Europe to be transported to a Chinese province, and become its only occupants, they would not be able to raise food for half or even one-third of the population, which now is obtained according to the Chinese system. Not only

this, but they would not be able to cultivate the soil to any advantage. They have one crop in the year from every field, two from most, and three from many. They pickle the seed to preserve it from insects, and use drill sowing-machines, and many other contrivances. Rice comes to maturity in about three months; and it is variously planted according to the nature of the ground. In consequence, apparently, of the stimulating nature of their manures, the crops come early. The seasons are various, according to the rains, which do not fall at the same time in every year. But April or May is the harvest-time in the southern districts, June in the central ones, and July in the more northerly. They cultivate almost every species of esculent vegetable, with the exception of oats, to which they have a great dislike, but from what cause is not known. In their gardens, they evince the same economy as in their fields; and one may say with truth, that no country of equal extent has its surface so continually occupied, or is so productive as China.

The chief products of the Chinese soil, which connect them in any way with foreign trade, are the cotton-plant, the mulberry-tree for the use of silk-worms, the tea-plant, and various medicinal plants. To enter into the mode of rearing and preparing for the market these, or any products of them, would far exceed our limits; and their connexion with the trade of foreign nations in China will be glanced at in another place. Silk and tea continue to be exported in large quantities; but the export of cotton is not so flourishing inasmuch as the cotton manufacturing machines can now find better supplies nearer home.

It is much the same with Chinese porcelain, which

was, for a long time, the only porcelain known, and was held in the greatest esteem when the Portuguese first brought it to Europe. As in all other matters, the Chinese are very deficient in the design of this beautiful article; but their execution is of the best quality. The composition and the modes of working it have been imitated in Europe; and the forms of the vessels, as well as the decorations, have been greatly improved upon; but no European porcelain has yet attained either the same strength or the same power of resisting heat as the Chinese. It is said, however, that the art of making the best quality is lost; and the falling off in the export from Nanking, which was at one time very considerable, may have discouraged the art, though not to very great extent. Pottery is also made in large quantities, and used generally for domestic purposes and culinary vessels; and this potters' ware forms the principal article of furniture in the dwellings of the humbler classes. We believe that there are government regulations whereby the price of this ware is kept so low as to be obtainable by the poorest. There are others, more elegantly formed, and of larger size, which are used by the wealthier for ornamental purposes. Glass is not a favourite article in the estimation of the authorities—the expense of the vast establishment of these rendering it necessary that the working people should have every thing cheap; so that both their numbers, and the income of the government, local and general, which depends in great part upon those numbers, may be kept up.

In these and all their manufactures, and also in their common trades, the Chinese are neat-handed, and do their work well. Their silks and cottons are of very prime and durable texture; and their paper is also well

made, they use various materials according to the quality wanted, and the best paper is smooth and beautifully white. In Peking the windows of many of the better houses are formed of rose-coloured paper, which, however, is said to be imported from the peninsula of Corea.

A people who write so much as the Chinese, require a great supply of paper; and this, with the ink and pencils, forms an extensive branch of manufacture. Their printing is from wooden-blocks, the copy being written on very thin paper, which paper is pasted on the block, and all the blanks cut carefully away. Each block generally contains two pages; and when these are finished, they can be printed from with ease and rapidity. They also use a sort of moveable blocks, each cut for one character, but this is not the common method.

All the common workmen are excellent imitators, and remarkable instances have been recorded in which they have copied the nicest European works with perfect accuracy. Copying is, indeed, the whole system of the nation, from the emperor to the very lowest; and, both in opinion and in action, every age has followed so long and so implicitly the one before it, that all spirit of contriving and thinking for themselves, in so far as improvements are concerned, has been completely extinguished.

The Chinese, both as a nation and a government, have the same objections to the introduction of machinery, for aiding man in manufactures, as are possessed by the ignorant in all countries, and those indiscreet persons who seek notoriety for clamouring for the continuance of the delusion. For this reason, if the trade were perfectly open with all parts of the country, there are very few manufactures in which the English could not undersell them in their own markets, and thus render a

very substantial service to the whole empire; but the close restriction of the system, and the indisposition of the people to quit the paths in which their fathers have trodden, render this highly desirable result a very unlikely one. Even if so disposed, the people are placed in circumstances which would prevent them from carrying on trade with the more enlightened of other nations, in terms at all advantageous; and, therefore, their foreign commerce must continue to be very trifling in proportion to the capabilities of the country. Wages, except the salaries of government officers, are every where very low; and money, which is not very abundant, is hoarded up, or partially lent at a high interest, instead of being employed as active capital.

From the physical diversities of the country, the inland trade is very great; and the system of it does not appear to be either skilfully arranged or well understood. It is indeed so trammelled by those regulations, which hamper every thing that it could scarcely be carried on by any other nation than the Chinese. In order to understand any thing of the commerce, it is necessary just to name the principal denominations of money and weights; the measures are, not so necessary, because almost all articles are sold by weight. The smallest coin is the cash, which is an alloy of zinc and lead, of an oval shape, and stamped with characters on both sides, with a hole in the middle, so that the coins may be strung in various numbers, such as fifties, hundreds, &c. These are in general circulation at the ports, ten cash, one hundred cash, one thousand cash, the last, the taël, worth about six shillings and eight pence, are the modes of reckoning. Sy-cee silver, or silver in lumps, not coined, but cast in particular forms, also circulates

abundantly; and when pure, it is on the average about three per cent. better than Spanish dollars, which are also circulation at the ports. Gold is also used, and, like the Sycee silver, goes by weight.

In the weights, the Tael is the standard one, and does not differ greatly from the English hundred weight. Like the taël in money, it is divided and sub-divided by tens. The tael varies in different places.

Much of the inland trade is carried on by means of the canals; and the craft used in navigating these is well-constructed and commodious. The principal trading towns are situated in the grand canal and the rivers; and from these, commodities are sent to all parts of the empire. Duties which are levied upon the whole trade of the country bear no proportion to those obtained from the land; but the dues upon the canals are considered as being oppressive.

The particulars which we have enumerated in this and the preceding sections, will furnish the reader with a skeleton of data whereby he can judge of the causes and resources, that have enabled China to maintain itself unchanged for such a period of time, notwithstanding the annoyance given to its coast by pirates, and the repeated predatory inroads of the Tartars into the western provinces; and as we thus have evidence of what China has been enabled to do, independently of the incessant attempts of those who were near at hand, we can thence infer how small and how temporary an impression could be made upon it by a handful of men from a distant country, how superior soever they may be to the Chinese as the science of the weapons of human destruction. It only remains to notice the foreign trade. This may be divided into an eastern branch, and a western and

southern one; but because the last of these involves a history, and bears upon some questions of great interest to England, to British India, and, in short, to all countries from the Malay peninsula to California, we shall devote a separate section to its consideration, and confine the remainder of this to the eastern trade.

The eastern trade is carried on from Canton, and all the great trading cities along the south-east coast where the creeks and harbours are so numerous and convenient. They belong to owners in different places; but they are navigated exclusively by natives of the province of Canton, and of that to the eastward of it. Perhaps the most extensive trade is with Siam, as Bangkok, its capital, is situated in a well-wooded district, where vessels can be very cheaply built. Many of these vessels belong to the Siamese; but they are all manned by Chinese sailors. They send to that country various kinds of produce of a more tropical kind than their country furnishes, and they receive manufactured goods in return. Singapore, a free port in the Strait of Malacca, also carries on a considerable trade with China; but they do not now venture as far as the Bay of Bengal, though in earlier times they extended their voyages as far as the Persian Gulf. With the Oriental Archipelago, the trade is greatly increased since the Manchou dynasty mounted the throne; and many Chinese are now resident in the islands. Many of the junks employed in those distant voyages are upwards of 300 tons burden. There has long been a trade with Corea, but as that is now an integral part of the empire, it of course does not fall within this denomination. With the Philippine islands, the trade which was never extensive, has of late years fallen off.

When not prevented by hostilities, the Chinese have long had extensive mercantile transactions with the inland countries around them; and the only branch of this which can be considered as a western trade, is that with Russia: a little without the western angle of Yun-nan there is an emporium on the Irrawaddy, at which an extensive trade is carried on with the Birmese, a good deal also with the Chinese dependencies, and a little with the states of central Asia. Indeed, when the eastern trade was interrupted by the convulsions in the south-west of Asia, Samarcand was the grand entrepôt; and there are still merchants of almost every nation, and a great deal of business done at Bukhara, which has risen upon the ruins of the former famed city.

The details of this would be foreign to our subject, but enough is stated to show that both by sea and land China has a most extensive trade with those nations which lie nearest to it, and with which intercourse can be kept up at the least expense. But, notwithstanding the extent of this traffic, and the advantage which they derive from it, the merchants do it on their own private account, and are not in any way connected with the machine of the government, but holding a lower rank among the people. This is probably a great advantage both to the merchants and to the government itself. Merchants seldom profit by government interference, even when intended to be of especial advantage to them; and by not interfering with these transactions, the empire is enabled to keep clear of those squabbles about commercial objects, often of most trifling consequence, which have so frequently occurred among the commercial nations of the west. If they do not interfere in favour of their own people who are in foreign coun-

tries, then they have a plea in equity against the interference of foreigners, with the mode in which they, as a government, treat those subjects of the others which resort to China, or are resident in it. This is a very important point; and it has been the cause of almost every squabble with the western traders, and their governments have had with the Chinese Empire, as well as the only good reason for the jealousy towards those traders and others, whose predecessors were so readily received and so courteously treated at the first.

SECTION IX.

THE WESTERN AND FOREIGN TRADE.

This includes all the sea-borne traffic with China, from the straits of Malacca to the American shores, and it extends southwards to include Australia, Africa, and South America. The early trade to the Persian gulf, and the Red Sea, and that subsequently carried on through central Asia, are but imperfectly known, but about the thirteenth century, the fame of this country had reached the west; Armenians, Venetians, and others had visited it, and some of the natives had been converted to the Catholic religion. The first European who came to China with a view to obtain a settlement, was Perestello, a Portuguese, and he was soon followed by a fleet prepared both for merchandize and war; a quarrel soon arose, and acts of aggression were committed on both sides, which ended in the expulsion of the Portuguese from every spot except the small peninsula of Macao in the Canton river. Those early expeditions were injudiciously fitted out, for, in the hope of striking terror into the Chinese, the ships were manned by the greatest ruffians that could be obtained. This was worse—but not much so, than our own plan of stocking new colonies with condemned criminals.

In 1537, the Portuguese built a few houses on the spot; and as the coast was then much infested with pirates, they were very efficient in restraining these, and

so they were allowed to take possession, and Macao soon became a place of importance. In brief space, the Portuguese had established a valuable trade, and were allowed to visit Canton twice in the year to make their purchases. The Portuguese trade consisted of two branches, an Indian one, including the Archipelago, and an European one. After they had enjoyed it about a century, the Dutch and English appeared in these seas,—the former for the purposes of commerce, and the latter for an attack on the Portuguese; but they failed in this, and quarrelled with the Chinese, which created a jealousy of the English from the first. The Dutch obtained possession of Formosa, but were driven out, though they were afterwards permitted to trade to the port of Fŭh-chow. While the trade with Japan continued, the profits on that at Macao were very great, but the residents there complained of the exactions of the local authorities, but they obtained no redress. About the middle of the seventeenth century, an edict was issued for destroying all the foreign settlements; but the Jesuits who were then in high favour at the imperial court, obtained the delay of this, and in 1685, the Emperor Kang-he declared all parts of the empire open to foreign commerce; but foreign nations neglected this opportunity, and it passed away and has never been repeated. When the Manchow dynasty had conquered China, which was about the time that Siberia was annexed to Russia, the traders from Siberia passed regularly to Peking, without the least molestation. The Russians in Siberia, however, endeavoured to push their conquest into the Chinese territory, and the consequence was, that an edict was issued forbidding all intercourse with the interior, therefore the trade was confined to one place on the frontiers.

During the eighteenth century, there were many misunderstandings between the Chinese and the establishment of Macao, and by some fatality, the Portuguese never duly improved their advantages while they were in their power. The rise of the Dutch and the fall of the Portuguese, in these seas, gave the former a considerable share in the Chinese trade, but the Portuguese retained Macao, and allowed the English East India Company to make an establishment upon their territory. The settlement here has attracted a number of Chinese who have formed a large town on the other side of the neck of land, where the English establishment is situated, but they took the precaution of building of both English and Portuguese, and placed strong guards at the gates by which the supplies were brought in.

As the Spaniards have come last into contact they were the most privileged, but their trade was not direct to Europe, neither could the French ever establish a remunerating commerce. As the British power extended in India, their trade with China became greater than that of any other nation; but the Chinese jealousy of them has always been very great. The foreign trade, and especially the English branches, was found to be of much advantage to the Chinese who resided near the places of resort, or who were engaged in preparing and forwarding Chinese goods to Canton, or of receiving and distributing the cargoes brought by the English ships. The local authorities, more especially the lower ones, also profited a great deal, both by the fees which they exacted, and by bribes given them, chiefly for conniving at the evasion of the laws of the empire. Some of the governors sent argumentative messages to Peking in favour of foreign trade, and others remonstrated, probably from dissatis-

faction at what they received. Still, under all these circumstances, the trade went flourishingly on, while it continued of the nature of a monopoly trade in the hands of the East India Company; but when the trade was opened, in 1835, and adventurers, not servants of one company, visited the place, there ensued a new system of things.

We must not, however, attribute the rupture with the Chinese entirely to this cause; for it had its beginning as early as the year 1808, in which year Buonaparte showed a disposition to annex Spain and Portugal to the rapidly extending dominions of France. It was apprehended that, if he should succeed in this, the British commerce with China would be entirely ruined, and the English dislodged from their position at Macao. To prevent this, an armament was sent under Admiral Drury, not with a view of at all interfering with the Chinese, but to protect Macao from a French armament then known to be in the neighbourhood. This was a matter of European policy which the Chinese did not understand or recognise; and, therefore, they regarded the appearance of the armed ships, and the landing of the troops at Macao, as a direct interference with their own authority. They soon showed that they were in a state for defending their country, and also for sending fire-junks to burn the ships in the bay; but at the same time the governor of Canton intimated that he would not begin hostilities, though he was prepared to resent and repel any attack which the admiral might make; and the result was the withdrawal of the English force, and the consequent degradation of their name in the estimation of the Chinese. Things went on in this way, with increasing exaction and restriction on the part of the

Chinese authorities, until 1828, when an edict was issued, prohibiting all dealing except through the Hong merchants; and the petitions which were presented to the Hoo-poo against this, only made the Chinese more overbearing. In the two following years these matters went on; and thus, by one injudicious interference with China upon grounds entirely European, the East India Company, or that government whose protection they sought against French influence, widened the breach between the English and Chinese, to an extent which forbade its being closed. In 1833, when the trade was opened, new regulations were made; for, as the free traders were not the servants of one company, it became necessary that they should be under some sort of superintendence. The late Lord Napier, captain in the navy, and in that capacity, a servant of the British government, was sent out; and he appears to have been considered not only as such, but as a representative of the government in his character of superintendent; and, on this account, he considered every thing which might be an insult, or construed into one, from misunderstanding of the laws and customs of China, as an insult to the British crown. The Chinese did not recognize him in this capacity; and perhaps, from the consequences that had resulted from Admiral Drury in 1808, it was unwise to send a naval officer in an armed ship, in the capacity of what the Chinese recognized only as a head supercargo,—a mere merchant, and man of no authority; nor was it perhaps wisdom to send on such a mission one who was a noble in his own country—and it may be, not a little vain of his nobility, It was represented to him that as England had its laws, so had China; and as the Chinese law did not admit of a government agent entering their empire,

he must not proceed to Canton. Lord Napier appears to have been obstinate, in spite of the remonstrances of the Hong merchants; and when the advantages China derived from the duties on the trade were pleaded, the answer was, that they were a matter of no concern. On September 2, 1834, the trade was suspended, and fresh provisions prevented from being sent into Macao. His lordship went on board ship, and soon afterwards proceeded up the river, but was fired upon from the Chinese forts. On September 14, he agreed to quit Canton, but his retreat to Macao occupied seven days, and he was accompanied in the boats by an armed force, amid the beating of gongs, and the shouts of the soldiers that they were ignominiously driving him from Canton. He had demolished the forts at the Bocca Tigris, and little loss was sustained, but the attempt was a failure, The ships of war were removed to the island of Lin-ting, and soon after he died.

The trade was re-opened after the demise of Lord Napier, and the office of superintendent supplied by his colleagues; but from some cause or other, they very soon gave up their occupation, and returned to Europe.

They were succeeded by Captain Elliott, who appears to have brought matters to the ultimate crisis, namely, a rupture with the Chinese, which may not be easily adjusted. This is much to be regretted, as, notwithstanding the bickerings with the authorities, the trade had increased greatly, and probably become far more lucrative to all parties, after it was made free. The exportation of tea from China had certainly increased very much and with increased profit to the Chinese; but, on the other hand, the importation of opium into the country had so much more augmented, and was vastly more

profitable to the party supplying it, than the tea was to the other. The tea to the British islands amounted to about thirty-three millions of pounds annually, while that to all other parts of the world did not exceed half the same quantity. The profit to the traders and the revenue on this was very great; but then the interest of the opium trade, the principal part of which is from British India, had thrown the balance greatly against the Chinese, so that the Sy-cee silver was leaving the country in large quantities. Notwithstanding this, the export of staple commodites of China had rapidly increased; for, comparing the three years from 1832 to 1834, with the three from 1835 to 1837, there appears an increase of 392,266 Piculs in the tea, 470,129 Piculs in the cotton, and 10,205 bales in the silk. The only way of accounting for an export of silver, along with an export of its staple commodities, in a country to which silver formerly was carried in payment, is by considering the contraband trade in opium, which had increased at an enormous rate, and was carried on, not at Canton, but at the islands and anchorages below the Boeca Tiaris, and even on the high seas, and at various points of the coast. The conduct of the superintendents, as above alluded to, and this withdrawal of silver, are, along with those peculiarities of the empire itself, of which we have endeavoured to give an analysis, the proper data for coming to something like an understanding of the opium question, and the present stoppage, and possibly, final loss of all intercourse with this singular country, an event which would be severely felt by the British, but would make scarcely any impression upon the Chinese empire.

SECTION X.

THE OPIUM QUESTION.—THE RUPTURE WITH CHINA.

We give the precedence to the first of these subjects, because it is one of direct pecuniary loss to parties who have never been backward in complaining, for which reason it has been brought before the public. It is, however, only one branch of the main question; and of these branches it is the last in natural order, as well as in the order of time. Those branches are: First, the total dissimilarity of China to all other countries, and the general conduct of the representatives of the English in China, whether as appointed by the East India Company or by parliament; and secondly, the opium question.

1. The preceding sections, down to the one before this, present a brief abstract of the peculiarities of China; and from them, if they have been attentively perused, the reader cannot fail to discover that China is a country which stands alone—and by so doing, has stood longer than any other, in the whole structure of its institutions, which are exceedingly minute, and watched with the greatest care. Its government neither sends nor receives any ambassadors, or, if it admit them, it is merely as a matter of courtesy, and not in any official capacity whatsoever. Again, it will be remembered, that the Chinese government never interferes with the transactions of its

own merchants, or indeed restricts any of the people in the exercise of their callings. It recognises no power or authority over an inch of its soil, by any foreigner resident on that soil; for even the Portuguese hold Macao by sufferance and payment for quit rent, and in so far as the English hold it, they do so by sufferance under the Portuguese as well as the government of China. It is the express law that every foreigner entering China, or those waters, over which the emperor claims dominion, also does so by sufferance. This sufferance was once not difficult to be obtained; but it can be continued only upon a strict conformity with the law; and it will be observed, that an edict of the emperor like a Russian ukase, becomes the established law at the instant of its promulgation. Farther, it is always understood that people visiting China come there for their own purposes and their own advantage; and, therefore, when they attempt to make invasions upon any of what may be called the civil regulations of the country, they are not punished, but warned off. If they offend against the criminal law, they are liable to punishment,—as for example, when a Chinese is killed by a foreigner, blood for blood is demanded. This is the position of foreigners in China; and all such are only individuals there; for the empire has no dealings with foreign governments.

The English stand in rather a worse position than other nations; and they do this independently of those bickerings which have taken place in the Canton river, or with the authorities there. This is not owing to the Chinese laws and customs; but to a suspicion, that if the English were once recognised as having a right to officers resident in Macao, and capable of entering Canton without petition, or addressing the government through

any other channel than the Hong merchants,—in a word, if they were to have any other than a mere merchant, or superintendent of merchants there, the Chinese dread that an attempt to acquire territory would soon be made; and then the empire would in time share the fate of India. This suspicion may be groundless, but it is a perfectly natural one; and there are some circumstances connected with our government superintendents—more especially with Lord Napier, that gave some ground for this. The correspondence on this subject laid before parliament contains much useful information; and making allowance for some blunders in the translation, such as the word barbarian, (which means nothing more than that the party so styled is not a Chinese), the edicts of Loo, the governor of the provinces of Kwang-tung and Kwang-se, are very excellent specimens of diplomacy. We quote a few specimens, in which he lays down the Chinese law of the case: "As to the object of the said Barbarian Eye, (*i. e.* head or principal man,) Lord Napier, coming to Canton, it is for commercial business. The Celestial Empire appoints officers,—civil ones to rule the people, military ones to intimidate the wicked. The petty affairs of commerce are to be directed by the merchants themselves. The officers have nothing to hear on the subject. In the trade of the said barbarians, if there are any changes to be made in regulations, &c., in all cases, the merchants are to consult together, and make a joint statement to the superintendents of customs, and to my office. Whether the proposals shall be allowed or not, must be learned by waiting for a reply. If any affair be to be newly commenced, it is requisite to wait till a respectful memorial be made, clearly re-

porting to the great emperor, and his mandate received. Then it may be commenced, and orders may be issued requiring obedience. The great ministers of the Celestial Empire are not permitted to have private intercourse by letter with outside barbarians. If the said barbarian Eye throws in private letters, I the governor will not at all receive or look at them. With regard to the barbarian factory of the company, without the walls of the city, it is a place of temporary residence for barbarians coming to Canton to trade. They are permitted only to eat, sleep, buy, and sell, in the factories. They are not permitted to bring up wives and daughters; nor are they permitted to go out to ramble about. All these are points decided by fixed and certain laws and statutes, which will not bear to be wantonly transgressed. To sum up, the nation has its laws,—it is so every where. Even England has its laws,—how much more the Celestial Empire. Under this whole bright heaven, none dares to disobey them."

The edict containg this, bears date July 21, 1834, and on August 14, Lord Napier in a dispatch to England, which displays great ignorance of China, contains, among other objectionable paragraphs, the following: "Our first object should be to obtain a settlement on the same terms that every Chinese, Pagan, Turk, or Christian sits down in England. This, no doubt, would be a very staggering proposition in the face of a red chop: but say to the emperor, 'Adopt this, or abide the consequences, and it is done, Now, 'abiding consequences' immediately anticipates a bloody war against a defenceless people." This involves a fixed determination to obtain an establishment in China by the sword, and consequently in utter contempt of the Chinese authorities.

This was of course sent to the government at home, and not communicated to the Chinese; but at an interview with the Chinese officer on August 23, enough was stated to excite their suspicions in a very high degree. The Mandarins had kept Lord Napier waiting for two hours; and he resented this by "desiring them to remember, that whereas on former occasions they had only to deal with the servants of a private company of merchants, they must understand henceforth that their communications would be held with officers appointed by his Britannic Majesty, and by no means inclined to submit to such indignities."

Besides confirming the suspicion, that an acquisition of territory in China, and the ultimate conquest of the country, were objects which the English had in view, this was an open declaration that his lordship had come contrary to, and in direct violation of, the laws of the empire; and upon other occasions he told them that he was come prepared with an armed force, by means of which to carry the point he had stated to the English government, in spite of all the opposition they could offer, and at any sacrifice of their lives. The appearance of armed forces in the Chinese sea, had always excited alarm, and often brought the trade into jeopardy; and when this armed force was under the control of one who avowed himself an agent, or rather an officer, the express representative of the English government, it placed the safety and integrity of China, in so far as strangers could injure them, in great jeopardy.

There is no doubt that, while the trade was in the hands of the company, the Chinese, who could not be ignorant of what had taken place in India, must have had their suspicions; but still as they knew the company

only as merchants who conformed passing well to the regulations, the law as allowed; and even after this rupture with Lord Napier, when his successors were not naval officers, there were no interruptions. On the contrary, there was always a desire to give every facility to commerce, provided that that commerce, and all matters connected with it, was conducted through the Hong merchants, the only parties with whom foreign traders can deal, and the ones expressly appointed for that purpose.

Up to a comparatively recent period, the local authorities were not very strict in confining commercial intercourse to the Hong, and causing all communications with the superior authorities to be made through them, and them only. But the indications which had been shown, of turning, or attempting to turn, the British commercial intercourse with China into a political one, contrary to the whole policy of the empire, and the extent to which the East India Company, avowedly commercial, had pushed its conquests, and imposed its authority, confirmed their fears, and therefore, made them far more strict in confining legal trade, and application to the higher powers, to the officers specially appointed to hold intercourse with merchants.

The transition from the company's principal agent to the superintendent of the free traders, as directed by the act abolishing the monopoly, was rather a difficult matter in the management at home, and it was far more so in the practical application in China. To have done it rightly according to the Chinese customs, the English merchants and residents at Macao ought to have appointed their own superintendent. Whether they could have agreed in doing this, is a question which we pre-

tend not to answer; but, at all events, it was a dangerous innovation upon a people with whom innovatiions are odious, to send a person invested with the royal authority, and it was still more so to send a naval officer —a lord, who could not be supposed to know any thing about the trade or its interests, but who would naturally feel more jealous of insult to his official honours, than of watching over the interests of that most valuable and important trade, over which he had received authority. The appointment, and the person appointed were the errors; and unfortunately they were of such a nature as not to admit of correction without the greatest difficulty. It would be no easy matter to say what kind of superintendent should have been sent; for it is rather a puzzling enquiry; but, at all events, he ought to have gone in no other character than that of a superintendent of merchants; he ought not to have attempted to leave Macao without the usual permission, or to hold any communication but through the Hong merchants; and, in addition to this, he ought to have been prepared for his office by a thorough knowledge of the Chinese laws and customs, and also with the necessity of obeying them to the very letter. As for insults offered by the Chinese, there are none, excepting when the regulations are broken. Within these, the persons authorised to transact business with foreigners, are civil in the highest degree; and, as for supposed verbal insults, expressed in chops, edicts, or any thing else, they are never intended, and do not exist but in the mistranslations of the very ambiguous and hyperbolical language which is in common use in China. When the emperor, the governor, or any one else says, "Tremble at this," it really means no more than "God save the Queen," at the end

of a British proclamation; and the epithets bestowed on the emperor and empire, have nothing more of hyperbolical parade in them, than our "Most gracious and most excellent majesty," and "Britannia rules the waves." The last, in fact, is perhaps more absurd than any Chinese epithet; for every one knows that Britannia has no more rule over a single drop of the ocean, than Canute had over the flowing tide when it so used his royal person upon the beach at Southampton.

2. We now come to the opium question, and the conduct of Captain Elliot, which together, have in the meantime suspended the English trade, and prohibited British manufactures from being brought to Canton by the vessels of any country. The direct tendency of this has been to destroy our own trade for the actual if not the expressed purpose of throwing it into the hands of our rivals, principally into those of the Americans. The importation of opium into China, was always prohibited by the letter of the Chinese law, though as long as the quantity remained small, and other matters went smoothly on, it was connived at by the officers, and passed in part at least through the hands of the Hong merchants. Indeed, it was once imported legally as a medicinal drug, till by degrees the people who were able to afford it, got very fond of it. Smoking is, we believe, the principal manner in which it is used; and, when in moderate quantity, it is a pleasant, and by no means a dangerous stimulant, though like all other stimulants, it is pernicious and destructive when used in excess. The excess, not the moderate use, is the evil; and as the quantity of opium imported into China, though great in our estimation, is trifling in proportion to he number of inhabitants, and far too high priced to suit the bulk of the lower classes.

It might be as wise, according to our mode of thinking, for the government to allow the importation, as it is on that of our government to allow the importation of ardent spirits from our colonies, of tobacco from the Americans, or of any other stimulant whatever. The Chinese are pleased, however, to exclude opium; and we are pleased to lay duties amounting almost to a prohibition upon foreign corn, the wines and brandies of France, and various articles, and impose heavy ones upon others. There is a difference in the operating principle of the two cases; the Chinese prohibit the importation of opium on the ground that it injures the people, both in their health and strength, and in their means of support, —the latter by draining the Sy-cee silver out of the country, in such quantities that there is not enough for those purposes in which the government order payment to be made in this metal. The British, on the other hand, impose the prohibiting duties for the *supposed* advantage of certain influential classes of their subjects; lay a heavy duty on foreign spirits for the benefit of distillers at home; and in all these matters, there is a direct intention not concealed, of obtaining a larger revenue than could be gotten by any other means. The Chinese may be wrong, and the British right: but this is a point which we are not called on to decide; yet whatever may be the right, according to western notions, the Chinese have an unquestionable title to make whatever laws they please for the government of their empire,—for all that they require is, that those who do not like them should leave the country.

The opium trade is altogether an anomalous subject, and one which is exceedingly difficult to deal with. The greater part of the opium, which had amounted to the

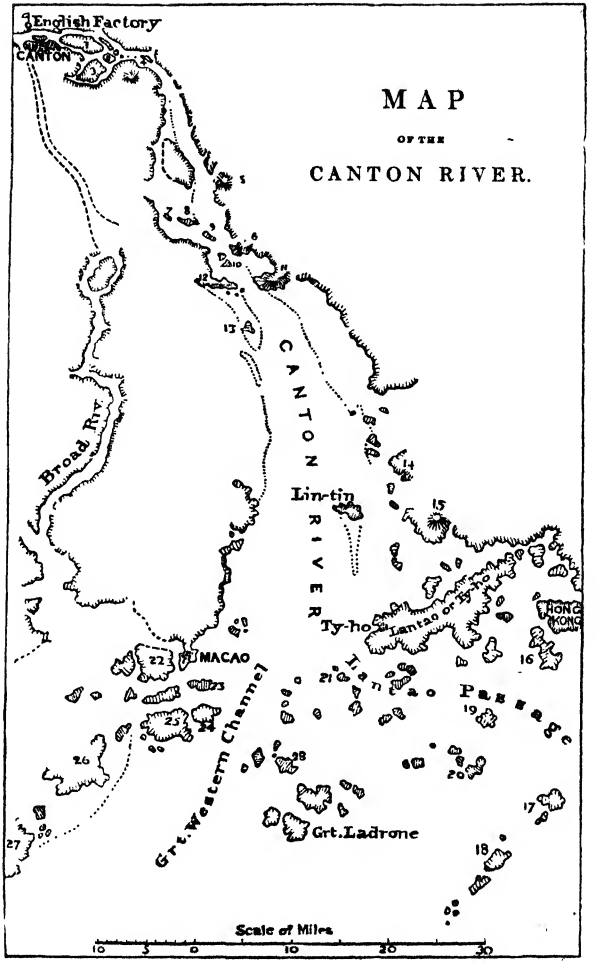
enormous quantity of more than 15,000 chests annually, yielding a revenue of more than 2,000,000 sterling, was the property of the East India Company. Much of it was grown in the valley of the Ganges, and the absolute property of the company; while the quantity sent from Dukhun to China, paid a transit duty of 175 rupees per chest, for being transported from Bombay. By this means the company acquired a most lucrative monopoly, not only from that grown immediately within their own territory, but from the growth of all India. The government agents receive and prepare it for the market; and it is sold to the merchants in lots of five chests each, under very peculiar conditions of sale. The East India Company is under the Board of Control, which is part of the English government; and, therefore, there must have been strange ignorance indeed on the part of the government, if they were ignorant of this official dealing in a contraband article. This is no party accusation; for administrations whose principles, or to speak more correctly, whose sayings are diametrically opposed to each other, must have been equally cognizant of it. A ruse is, however, practised by the sales to individuals, by which it is rendered doubtful whether the British administration can be called upon to make good any loss sustained by the smugglers; and it is certain that no such loss ought to be made up out of the pockets of the British people. If the government shall connive at dealing largely in an article which is contraband in the country to which it is sent, and by which a profit of 300 per cent. is made, then it is but fair that those who make this enormous profit by breaking the laws of a foreign country, should bear the loss, just as a smuggler of contraband goods into England, must lose his cargo and vessel,

if captured by the coast. Suppose an end put to our trade with China, and that the Chinese were to smuggle their tea into this country in their own vessels, would the losers have any claim on the Chinese empire. These cases are exactly parallel, and many others may be found.

The merchants of Calcutta and Bombay are the purchasers of the opium; and they were, and are in the habit of keeping a number of stout vessels constantly on the passage; while eight or ten receiving ships were always stationed off Lin-tin, to receive the smuggled article. Lin-tin, as may be seen from annexed sketch of the Canton River, is not in the high seas, but within the Chinese territory; and whatever quantity of opium might at any time be collected there, the Chinese had as much right to order it to be confiscated and destroyed together with the ships, as a smuggling lugger in the Thames would be confiscated by the English authorities; and if the Chinese spared the ships, and contrived to get Captain Elliott to assist them in destroying the opium, then they deserve credit both for their forbearance and good sense.

References to the following Map.

1 Whampoa Island
2 Danes Island
3 French Island
4 First Bar Island
5 Saw Shee Hill
6 Anung-hoy, or Woman's Shoe
7 Sam-foo Island
8 Gee-foo Island
9 Ty-hoo-tow Island
10 Wang-tong Island
11 Chum-pee
12 Ty-cock-Tow
13 Lung-eet, or Dragon's Cave
14 Shak-waan
15 Castle Peak
16 Lamma Island
17 Western Lemas Island
18 Ky-poong
19 Lin-tin
20 Three Gates
21 Chung-chow
22 Twee-lien-Shan, or Paetra Island
23 Typa-que-brada Island
24 Koho, or Apomee Island
25 Wung-Cum, or Wotanha Istand
26 San-tcheou Island
27 Ty-loo Island
28 Tong-ho Island


English Factory
CANTON
MAP
OF THE
CANTON RIVER.
CANTON RIVER
Broad R.
Lin-tin
Ty-ho
Lantao or Ty-ho
HONG KONG
MACAO
Grt. Western Channel
Grt. Ladrone
Scale of Miles
10 5 0 10 20 30

It has been said, and we believe with truth, that the smuggling of opium into China cannot be prevented, even by the total expulsion of the English from the Bay of Canton; but this is not the question. It is not the smuggling of opium into China, in which the gist of the matter lies, it is in the smuggling of it to stationary receiving-ships, of the existence of which, and the extent of the practice, not only the superintendent and all the English resident at Macao, but the government at home, must have been perfectly aware. Therefore, it was a protected smuggling, but still a smuggling for the private gain of individuals or of the East India Company, and not of the British nation, and consequently the British people have no obligation to pay one stiver of it. If Captain Elliott, in his high office of representative of the English sovereign, chose to become a custom-house officer for the Chinese, and command this opium to be destroyed, that was a mere question between them; for by every law even of western nations, the Chinese were entitled to confiscate this forbidden commodity. The quantity so destroyed was great, amounting to 20,283 chests; and the value upwards of 2,000,000 sterling. But this also is nothing to the point, for, it is no justification of a man's holding any thing illegally that that article is very valuable. If this were a sound principle, one man may be hanged for stealing a loaf of bread, and another set free for having audacity enough to rob the Bank of England.

Of the conduct of the Chinese authorities to Captain Elliott, and his conduct beforehand, or in return, we shall say little. It was but following the same kind of practice which had been commenced by the first superintendant, and to whatever hardship he might have been

put, he evidently brought it upon himself. As for the cutting off of the supplies, or the threats of poisoning the water, upon which so much stress is laid, these may be the Chinese modes of sending out of the country those foreigners who are in it only by sufferance, and who will not quit upon repeated notice; and, however horrible the poisoning may be in our estimation, we must allow the Chinese to eject by any means, those who violate their laws, and despise their constituted authorities. Upon the whole, this exceedingly valuable branch of English commerce has been put in jeopardy by ignorance of China, by unnecessarily taking offence and by making a retaliation on the part of our residents there. If the trade is lost, either a great boon will be given to other nations, or the people of this country, who have been so long habituated to the use of tea, will be deprived of one of the most innocent necessaries of life,—unless we shall find an adequate supply from some territory, over which foreigners have no control—and, this idea naturally turns our thoughts to Assam.

ASSAM.

ASSAM, though it is, geographically speaking, an eastern branch of the great valley of the Ganges, has very considerable resemblance to China; for the greater part of it is a plain, watered by many large rivers; and from this plain hills rise on the north, the east, and south, and ultimately attain the elevation of mountains, especially on the north, the east, and south-east. As a valley, it is that of the Brahma-pootra; and though the main stream of this river, which is in the centre of the valley, may have its source beyond the northern boundary of Assam, yet that source appears to be on the south side of the great ridge of the Himalaya, though it is not improbable that the Dihing, one of its northern branches, comes from the table-land of Thibet.

Assam lies between the meridians of 90½° and 97½°, east, and thus stretches over 6 of longitude, or about 400 miles in length. In latitude, it lies between the parallels of 25½° and 28½°, or 3° of latitude, that is, nearly 200 miles. These limits, however, extend over all the mountain tracts to the north; and the breadth of the valley does not average more than about fifty miles.

The total area is computed at 8,200 square miles, and the native population is about 400,000. It is bounded on the north and east by Bhotan, and other states belonging to independent tribes and mountaineers; and on the south, by the Birmese territory eastward, and then by various other small states. The west opens upon the valley of the Ganges; and at, or near the boundary of Lower Assam, the Brahma-pootra takes a bend southward, divides into two large branches a little north of 25° of latitude, and after inclosing a large lozenge-shaped island, it joins the main stream of the Ganges near the sea. In the whole of its course indeed, the Brahma-pootra divides into branches, which again unite; and thus the centre of the valley contains a number of river-girt islands. All along the river the soil is exceedingly rich, and scarcely equalled in fertility by any other in the world.

This richness of the soil is in great part owing to the peculiarity of the climate. The whole of this part of Asia is a monsoon country; and in this portion, the monsoon is particularly severe. The cause of this, is the proximity of the snowy summits of the Himalaya, which are every where very elevated on the north side, and one, Chamalari, at the north-west of the valley, has an elevation of 25,000 feet. On the east also, the heights are considerable; and in the south-east there are high summits, though they do not extend far to the westward. On the south-west, the mountains gradually subside, the Garrow hills in that quarter being of inconsiderable elevation as compared with the others.

From this position of the encircling mountains, it will be seen that Assam is open to the south-west monsoon, but that this monsoon is arrested in its progress upon

all the other sides, more especially as that to which it most directly blows. This rainy monsoon acquires its greatest violence about the middle of June, and the rains continue with little intermission for three months. They fall heavily, and being driven by furious gusts of wind, they literally grind the mountain rocks into sand. When the rains have continued for a short time, the water-courses on the hills, and along the slopes, become foaming floods, which wear down the decomposed rocks, and grind them to a powder during their progress. As the courses of the Brahma-pootra, and all the countless streams of the plain itself, lie almost on a level, the lower portion of the plain becomes one sheet of water, unless upon the mounds, where the houses of the inhabitants are built; and these inhabitants would have nothing but cooler intercourse, were it not that they have causeways, about eight feet high, leading from one place of habitation to another; but though this flood is extensive and of considerable depth, it is not a destroying but a fertilizing one; for the floods of this river and the Ganges, pour in so much water, that it mingles with the ocean by slow degrees. Thus the water deposits on the valley all the disintegrated substances which it has brought down, and consequently the fertility of this district is perennial. While the valley is flooded, the climate is not unhealthy; but when the flood subsides, the air is for a time very much so, at least, to foreigners. For four months after the middle of October, the sky is generally cloudless, and not a drop of rain fells; but, about the middle of February, the weather is unsettled; and there are alternate showery and dry days, as in the spring of temperate countries. This is caused by the action of the mountains, from which the air descends,

and meets the upward current from the surface of the valley now dry and warm. Thus Assam may be said to have both a tropical and a temperate climate in the course of the year, which is also partially the case with China.

Such a country is fitted for producing very many species of plants, and producing them in great abundance and in high perfection. Very much of it is an excellent rice country; but the inhabitants are so few in comparison with the extent of even the rich surface, that much of it is covered with timber trees, among which, many yield valuable produce, and others are of vast size; so that the natives have boats of more than six tons burden, hollowed out of a single tree. Their entire carriage is by water, and they have no craft but boats; though, under different management, it might be the best steam-boat country in the world. The dense and marshy forests on the low grounds, contain the elephant, the rhinoceros, and all those animals which are found in the forests of the lower Ganges.

It is understood that the original inhabitants came from the borders of China; and they appear to have been numerous at one time, and lived in peace and prosperity; for there are many ruined temples, and indications of towns, which have been long overrun with tangled bushes. When the Moguls gained possession of the valley of the Ganges, they attempted to join Assam to their dominion; but they failed till the time of Acber, and though his army subdued the country, the greater part perished when it became flooded, or by the pestilent atmosphere which succeeds the flood. Thus weakened by foreign invasion, the people were much harassed by the inroads of the mountaineers; and the native

chiefs were almost continually at variance with each other. In this state, the country was taken possession of by the Birmese, who treated the inhabitants with great cruelty. They sought relief from the East India Company; and having obtained this, they put themselves under the British protection—in other words, the country became part of our great eastern empire. A regular communication is now carried on between Assam and Calcutta; and there is no doubt, that under British government, the country will soon become more populous, and improvements will take place.

The natives are in their religion a mixture of Hindoos and Mahomedans, together with some Christians of Portuguese descent, in the western parts. These reside at Goalpara, in the lower part of the country; and this is also the principal mart from which goods are sent to and from the country. The greater number are exceedingly poor, and many of them are slaves. Their manners are simple, but education is at a lower ebb among them, than it is in India.

From what is said of the position of Assam in latitude, it will be noticed that it lies on exactly the same parallel with the tea districts of China; and the soil is very nearly the same, and the climate and seasons but little different. The tea plant, which in all its varieties, is one of the *Camellidæ*, is one of the plants which grow best in this description of soil. It has been said that the Chinese confine the growth of tea to poor soils on the slopes of hills, because they cannot afford to grow it upon better ground. This, however, is not the case; for, upon better ground, the plant would not thrive. In Upper Assam the soil upon the lower slopes of the hills, though not very far up, or upon the ground which is

inundated, the soil consists almost entirely of silicious sand in a state of minute division; and this is exactly the character of the tea soils in China. Eighty-four per cent. is the average proportion of this ingredient, and the one next in abundance is carbonate of iron, and after that allumina. Of vegetable matter there is but 1 per cent. in the surface soil; and at 2½ feet in depth there is still less. It does not appear, however, that this very scanty proportion of vegetable matter is absolutely necessary; for the tea plant will grow in soil which is a little richer; though, according to a very general law of vegetable nature, if grown there the leaves would be larger and of very inferior flavour.

In that section of Upper Assam, which lies between the 95° and 96° of longitude, there is already explored a very considerable extent of soil admirably suited for the growth of tea; and not only this, but native tea plants, with scarcely a shade of climatal variation from those of China, have been found growing to perfection in a number of places; and as, though there has been much exertion made for that purpose, this part of the country has hitherto been but little explored, there is no doubt that farther examination will find the same plant in many other places.

The plant has not hitherto been found to the north of Brahma-pootra, or in the extreme east. There the low country is to a great extent covered by jungle, especially where the great river Dihing comes in from the north. In this part of the country there is an island about eighty miles long and forty miles broad, formed between the Brahma-pootra and the branches of one of its southern affluents. These are the Nohdihing which runs north-west; and the Booreedihing, which flows westward with

a winding course. Between the last mentioned, and the Dibooroo, which rises in the island and flows westward, there is a range of hills of trifling elevation, and it is chiefly upon them, and upon similar slopes south of the Boree-dihing, that the plant has been discerned. There is no doubt, however, of its existence in many other places; and just as little doubt of the existence of as much land in Assam suited for the growth of tea, as would supply not England merely, but all the world.

It is true that the plant is not already in cultivation here, but there is nothing to prevent it speedily becoming so, and should this be the case, Britain will be perfectly independent of China in that article, and could carry on a profitable trade in it with other nations. If this is done, however, and the Assam company are in the progress of so doing;—and they deserve every encouragement for their judicious discernment and adventurous spirit, it must be done not by a colony of English, even of exiled countrymen worked in chains, it must be by Hindoos, and in this case the Assam tea grower would have a great advantage over the Chinese. This arises from the comparatively small expense at which tea could be prepared in this locality. We do not mean that the cultivation should be carried on by slaves; for that is not the way to get cheap labour, to say nothing of the violence and injustice done to man. It could be done by free labour; for the price of labour per day averages sixpence in China, and only twopence halfpenny in India; and of course, an increased number of Hindoos could live as cheap in Assam as to the westward of the Brahma-pootra. Besides this there are comparatively more labourers to spare for this purpose

in India, and taking this circumstance in conjunction with the former, the fair conclusion is, that Assam might be made to furnish an ample supply of tea, of excellent quality, and at a very low price.

The very ground upon which the tea plant has been found growing in Assam, gives an obvious hint as to the manner in which the plant may be best cultivated. We have already mentioned the composition of the soil, and the vast quantity of fine silicious sand which it contains; and we may now mention that, according to the report of Mr. Bruce, who appears to be a very accurate observer, that it grows near the smaller rivers, and upon ground which is divided into a sort of beds, by water courses formed during the rainy seasons. These beds are covered with a sort of jungle consisting of a great variety of trees; and the largest tree Mr. Bruce met with, was "twenty-nine cubits high and four spans round;" but generally speaking, they were of much smaller dimensions than this; but the abundance of the plants, and the vigour with which they grow, even under the taller trees, prove to a demonstration that, duly attended to, the culture of them would be triumphantly successful.

THE END.

Thoms, Printer, Warwick Square.

ERRATA.

The Author has to apologize for the following errors, which are wholly typographical, and have occurred from the author's inability to revise the sheets before they went to press.

Page
16 line 5, for south and the west, read "north and the west."
17 13, for and its extreme south, read "and its extreme north."
21 last line but one, for light, read "bight."
26 line 16, for which flows into, read "which flows from."
44 27, for which stronger, read "which foreign"
57 23, for draw before them, read "drove before them."
64 24, for bogs and little islands, read "bays and little islands,"
66 14, for costly made safe, read "easy and safe."
70 10, for green tree, read "green-tea."
92 9, for reach upon each other, read "re-act upon each other."
93 13, for more of this sterility, read "none of the sterility."
140 17, for its remote, read "his remote."
145 26, for the least embellished, read "the best embellished."
154 28, for composed of only, read "composed of these only."
166 31, for as the science, read "in the science."
176 21, for Boeca Tiaris, read "Bocca Tigris."
193 1, for as that, read "on that."
— 16, for cooler intercourse, read "canoe intercourse."

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On the Importance of a Map of the World.

Of all the furnishings requisite for a family, one of the most valuable is a Map of the World, on a scale sufficiently large for displaying the great distinguishing points of every country, at the same time that it presents a general view of the whole. The great value of such a map consists in the facility with which it can be made an artificial memory to every kind of knowledge, and a bond of union, uniting the whole together, so that it is as easy to pass from any one department to any other of a different, or even an opposite character, as it is to pass from one part to another of the same department.

The earth is sometimes represented by the globe or model, and sometimes by the plane picture or map; and, for all useful purposes the map, in hemispheres, is beyond comparison the more serviceable of the two, not only in the details of geography, but more especially the studying the earth as a whole, in the relations of its different parts, and the results which we draw from the comparison, at one view, of these with each other.

Such is the importance of studying intimately and correctly a good Map of the World that, independently altogether of the characters of the earth itself, considered as a whole, no one is properly qualified for acting his part well in the common business of life, and no one is capable of duly appreciating the value of history, enjoying a book of travels, or, in short, of talking like a rational being about any of those countless foreign substances which are now met with as the materials of articles of use or ornament, or as portions of food, in almost every house within these kingdoms.

If all persons could once be led to this, it is incalculable to conceive how much more delightful it would make the world we live in; because it would enable us to live mentally, and in our mental life consists our real enjoyment of all the world at once. Thus, for instances, we should be enabled to drink our coffee in the groves of Yemen, with turbaned Arabs and loaded camels around us; and, under that balmy sky, we could look across the Red Sea, where there is in one place an assemblage of worm-built reefs, extending line upon line, and white with the foam produced by an angry wind; and in another place reeking with the steam of volcanic fires, while the bottom is as gay as a garden with the vegetation of the deep, and the waters are literally encumbered with living creatures. So might we drink our tea in some fantastic alcove in the pleasure-grounds of a Chinese mandarin, and enjoy the characters of that most singular country, which has remained changeless for hundreds of years, amid all the vicissitudes, reverses, and progressions of our part of the world. We should never taste the stimulating flavour of cinnamon without being borne in thought to Ceylon, with its rich fields of rice; its beautiful copses, which furnish this wholesome and exhilarating spice; its tangled and swampy woods, with their herds of gigantic elephants; its more dry and inland forests, peopled with countless thousands of apes, which make the early morn literally hideous with their cries, and the females of some of which may

be occasionally found descending to the brook, in order to wash the faces of their little ones. So also we should never taste a clove or a nutmeg, without being wafted to the spicy islands of the oriental archipelago, where all is the vigour of growth and beauty, and the richness of perfume; where perpetual health is carried on the gentle gales of the widest ocean of the globe; where some of the fruits combine the qualities of the most racy of their own tribe with the substantial nourishment of delicate animal food, and the admixture of a cooling ice and a cheering cordial; while the trees around us would be thronged with the loveliest of birds, and the birds of Paradise, with their long and filmy feathers, streaming in every direction through the air, like meteors—meteors which shine but do not burn.

But we must stop, for there is no end to the catalogue, and it is an exhibition of which we must not see too much at a passing glance, lest it should wile us from our proper purpose. And we have mentioned these few particulars merely to let those who are yet in ignorance of the subject know how well the world is worth our studying; how richly the earth which we inhabit has been endowed by its bountiful Maker; how full the feast which it affords to all; and yet how varied, how free from surfeiting, how healthful.

Now, as we have already said, not only might, but *should*, every commodity of every region transport us to that region, and make it render up to our enjoyment all that it possesses; but a Map of the World, which has been duly studied, brings the whole before us the moment we glance at it; nor is it confined to the external appearance, and the productions and the present population of the several countries; for in proportion to the extent of our knowledge will be the extent of the reminiscence which this most powerful talisman will conjure up. Truly, it is magic,—but it is magic of nature's exhibiting; the effect of infinite wisdom and goodness, without deception, without anything to mislead or corrupt, and with everything to inform the head and soften the heart.

As we look upon these two circular spots of paper, the whole of the human race, from Adam downward, rise in succession to our view; and every event, pictured to itself, stands out as fresh and as forcible in its colours as if it were before our mortal eyes. Now we see the congregating clouds and the flashing lightnings, and hear the dismal sounds of the volleyed thunder and the rending earth, as "the windows of heaven are opened, and the fountains of the great deep are broken up," in order to drown the world sunk in iniquity beyond all mercy and forgiveness; but, in the very depth of the tempest terrors, behold the ark of deliverance for the man who was faithful amid an offending race, riding safely on the top of the swelling waters; and no sooner is the purpose accomplished, and execution done upon the guilty, than, lo! "the bow of hope is seen in the cloud, and the promise of mercy is declared to a renovated world."

Again, we might call—or rather there would arise without our calling—any one scene in the world's history, whether sacred or profane. We might march through the divided waters with the delivered Israelites

and, standing safely on the shore, behold the overwhelming of Pharaoh and his host. So might we continue the stream of history down to the present hour, adding nation after nation as it arose, and losing it in the sandy desert of oblivion when it perished from the scroll; and in tracing the sacred story we should be enabled, if we brought sufficient knowledge to the task, to ascertain in a manner beyond all doubt that the history of the Old Testament is so faithful to the natural character of the countries in which the scenes of it are laid, and so entirely free from all allusion to other countries,—so different, indeed, from all human record, in this respect, that it cannot but be true to the letter.

Let the knowledge be once fairly acquired, whether it be limited or extended, if it be properly applied to the map, the map will render it up more briefly and clearly than it would be rendered up by any other means. The extent and the readiness of this *memorial* or suggestive power, on the map, will astonish those who have not been in the habit of using it; and there is a most agreeable way of finding this out. Let, for instance, the conversation be directed to the varieties of the human race, in appearance and character, and let any one lay his finger successively upon lands strongly contrasted in this respect; and, in whatever order he takes them, he will find that the people stand up, as it were, the instant that his finger touches their country, as if that country were touched by the wand of a magician.

It is the same with every art which mankind have practised, and every science which they have studied. If we once are in possession of the knowledge, and have had the map in juxta-position with us in the study of it, the map will not suffer us to forget it, but will faithfully bring to our recollection, at all times, every thing of weal or woe that has happened to our kind; and not to our kind only, but to all the creatures that now tenant the earth, or have formerly tenanted it, in every one of its varied localities; and the revolutions which the earth itself has undergone — either violently by those convulsions that are now and then taking place, or more slowly and silently, but with equal certainty, in the lapse of ages — may be equally brought to our recollection by this invaluable record. The map will not furnish us with the knowledge at first, but it will keep for us what we have acquired.

On a great scale, there is no artificial memory half so good for this purpose as a Map of the World. It must, however, be borne in mind, that the map is only the casket, and not the jewels of knowledge; but then it is a casket so perfect, and so permanent in its arrangement, that every jewel which we can put into it is found the very instant that we require it. Every family, therefore, should have a Map of the World, as large and good as their circumstances will admit, and, BESIDES THE PLEASURE OF ITS POSSESSION, IT WILL INSURE THEM ITS VALUE MANIFOLD IN THE INSTRUCTION OF BOTH OLD AND YOUNG.

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