LIFE IN A CHINA OUTPORT

By Wm. McLeish.

Reprinted from
The Peking &
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The following lecture was delivered by Mr. W. McLeish, former Secretary of the British Municipal Council in Tientsin, at a meeting of the China Society in London.

Lord Salisbury, during a great political crisis, advised his countrymen to avoid the wrong impressions and bad judgment arising in the use of small-scale maps. This advice is peculiarly apposite to studies on China. From a map like this one might get the impression that Peking is as near to Hongkong as London is to Liverpool: the truth is that in time it is just 36 times as far, and it is actually distant as far as Belfast is from Tangiers. The eighteen provinces of China proper extend from Lat. 20 N. to Lat. 43 N., much the same as from Gibraltar to

John o'Groats; and from Long. 98 E to Long. 132 E., a mileage which would take you from the Hook of Holland well beyond Moscow. I propose to avoid as much as possible the aridities of China geography, and therefore abstain from pointing out on the map the 49 ports and places where Europeans live and trade within the Chinese Empire It has been my fortune to visit 25 of these places, but I shall draw brief attention only to two or three of them which have a strong claim for passing reference.

Hongkong is in one respect, that of shipping clearances, the greatest seaport in the World: as traveller and patriot I modestly protest at the neglect with which descriptive writers have treated this noble possession: for I know of no vision on God's earth more enthralling than that to be seen in certain lights from the Peak above the city of Victoria It may seem profane to speak of scenic loveliness and economic stimuli in one breath, but man is a nidus of strange incompatibilities: and I confess that within the short space of five minutes my soul has been ravished with the beauties of the winter sunset and my pride quickened by the reflexion that the

fine city below me, its endless docks, wharves and factories, its multitudinous shipping, were mostly the creation and possession of the Empire of which we are citizens. On rare occasions we have some revelations of the Unseen: mine have come to me when contemplating the grandeur and glory of the Chu Kiang Delta and the exquisite beauty of the Harbour from the top of this fine hill.

Macao also is a dream of beauty; truly, a "swan's nest in a great pool," but with the swan a-dying: it is a bit of Sixteenth Century Portugal preserved in the amber of the East. Shanghai too, in fairness to its commercial greatness, deserves much better notice than it gets. The story of its creation is a Fairy Tale of Trade, if only a story-teller with vision and utterance could be found Here amidst an ancient and alien civilisation has been built a city of palaces, with huge manufactures and a trade ramifying to the ends of the earth; and all within the life span of many of our Members who are still going strong, some of whom might justly say with pious Aeneas '*cujus magna pars fui.*' We outporters for years regarded Shanghai as our Mecca, and were even believed to face it when we said our prayers: but of

late new influences have come into play, and have lessened this 'adoration of the innocents.'

Traversing the Huang Hai or Yellow Sea, we come to this *clausum mare* known as the Gulf of Pechihli. Into it debouches one great and tragic river, the Huang Ho, which fully deserves its elegiac name as 'China's sorrow,' and also many biggish streams, more or less navigable, which arise in the hill system around Peking. Of these the most important is the Pei Ho, or, as it is called after its junction with the Grand Canal, the Hai Ho. Situated at the confluence, some thirty miles from the Sea, is our objective, Tientsin, which in Chinese means the Heavenly Ford. In my early days and long afterwards the only access was by River: in these times it is more readily reached by no less than three railway routes—one the transcontinental line through Siberia, the other two from the Yangtsze Valley. At Hai Ho mouth lies the amphibious township of Taku with its Pilot Village and the relics or shells of those vast earthworks which constituted the once formidable Taku Forts. These, combined with redoubts further up stream, and a shallow bar some ten or twelve miles out at Sea

constituted the chief defences of the imperial city of Peking. They have been the scene of four episodes in British history—1. In 1858 when we seized them without difficulty during the progress of the Second China War. 2. In 1859 in the same War, when a large naval force under Sir James Hope, trying to force the pas sage in order to enforce a Treaty repudiated by the Manchus, was repulsed with heavy loss. This was the occasion when the United States Commodore Tatnall remarked that "Blood was thicker than water," and rendered us signal service by towing our boats full of wounded men out of action. 3. Then in 1860, still in the same War, British and French forces landed at Pei T'ang K'ou, a few miles up the Coast, crossed the marshes by a causeway, and took the Forts in the rear. The gun-emplacements all faced seawards, so that the Manchu gunners were non-plussed; and the Forts were carried by esca lade. It is not so well known as it might be that this was the first occasion when the breach-loading rifled guns of Mr. William Armstrong were first used on active service Intro duced by him in 1854, they were tried in the China Expedition, and proved a great success. In our

queer British way we allowed a De partmental Committee to push them on one side in favour of the old muzzle-loaders; and their general introduction in the British Army was postponed for a nearly a whole generation. It is equally interesting, fatuous, and incredible that the first guns sent up from the Fleet in 1900 during the Boxer troubles were muzzle-loaders—a policy that almost undid us: 4. The last occasion was in this same year 1900, when a small portion of a huge naval force carried the forts by storm: the force had assembled outside the Bar to secure the safety of the Peking Legations, and to protect foreign life in North China. The right or wrong, wisdom or folly of this procedure will be a subject of endless contention—was it the precipitating cause, or merely the occasion, of the effete Manchu Government throwing in its lot with the Boxer rabble? was it a big blunder which endangered every European life in North China, or was it a tactical inspiration which saved those lives, and obviated the greatest crime in history? Truly, a great dialectic, but instead of entering it, let me give you one or two Take-Youana, with a foreword that the sailors to a man called Taku 'Take

you.' The gallant Christopher Cradock here displayed that cool and conspicuous courage which almost amounted to a fault in so fine an officer. In the attack on the Forts he led the chief storming-party; and while carefully shepherding his men by marching them down from Tongku under the lee of a high bank he himself coolly walked along the top smoking cigarettes, the cockshy of every gunner and rifleman in the Forts: only the uncertain light saved his life. There was a credible and well-found yarn, for the meticulous truth of which I do not vouch, that the British and Japanese stormers swam the moat, swarmed up the scarp and reached the flagstaff together. Down promptly came the 'Dragon,' but what were they to hoist instead? flags had been forgotten or mislaid. Whilst our lads were scratching their heads, the Japanese officer whipped off his coat and white shirt, tore the latter in halves, stooped to a pool of fresh blood, improvised with gory hand a 'Rising Sun' and ran it to the mast-head amidst cheers and laughter. Only a quotation from Byron's little read 'Island' can do justice to the situation—

"Jack knew not what to say.

"And so he swore."

As we sail up stream we come to the small naval dock-yard where young Roger Keyes, now Rear-Admiral Keyes, attacked and took in succession four 'destroyers' in the old sea-dog fashion—"Boarders away," and at the point of the cutlass. Higher up we have the wharves of Tongku, which accommodate ships too long or too deep for the bends and shoals of the River. It is a busy place and just thirty years old. If the amelioration of Taku Bar succeeds this place has a fine future as the terminal wharf of the big ocean-going liners. At present it does a brisk business in bunkering the coal which the Kai Lan Administration sends down by rail from its pits in the Tongshan and Kai Ping districts The modest coal-track built in 1887-8 by Mr. Claude Kinder was the primordial germ of railways in China considered as a business proposition It has been a splendid success in every way, and the coal-mines have begotten a gold-mine. The track has now been extended to the East and North-East as far as Newchwang and Moukden, where it connects with the South Manchurian and Siberian lines and to the North-west through Peking far beyond Kalgan. Mr Kinder was happily associated with

the late Mr. Tong King-sin, and the ability and sagacity with which these two men won over Li Hung-chang to their plans, and obviated ignorance and vested-interest in high places make a fine chapter in the history of China railways. Even Mr. P. H. Kent's fine book on this subject has not quite dissipated the obscurity due to Mr. Kinder's innate and insuperable modesty in this admirable exercise of British influence in China.

The River is, rather *was*, one of the most tortuous in the World, for it has been vastly improved under the Scheme of Conservation drawn up by Mr. A. de Linde and fathered by the British Municipal Council, the Chamber of Commerce and the Shipping Companies of Tientsin. It has now been in operation for over 18 years, during which time the worst bends have been eliminated by huge cuttings, while others have been improved by groining, training, dredging and other devices of the hydraulic engineer: canals and creeks which lessened the natural scour by abstracting the water have been closed or 'locked'; and generally speaking, the fairway to Tientsin has been lessened by ten miles. The channel now give 12 to 14 feet all the way

up, allowing steamers carrying 1,200 tons of cargo to reach the Bund. Much more is feasible, but inexpedient, till it be seen if the Bar can be deepened to 18, 20 or even 30 feet The Tientsin community, native and foreign, was the first in China to push river conservancy to practical success. Mr. de Linde in the 'Eighties' made a careful study of the whole question· this was submitted to the open minded Li Hung-chang. It took years, however, to overcome official Manchu lethargy in Peking, where a shallow bar and bad river were regarded as Heaven-sent means of resistance to foreign aggression. Remedial measures at last begun in 1898 were half-hearted, tentative, and without much money-backing During and after the Boxer Rebellion military supplies could only be brought up by lighters and native-boats, and on one occasion a man was actually seen wading across the fairway just below the Settlements. In the conditions of settlement after the troubles a permanent River Commission was set up with reasonably adequate funds derived from minute dues on cargo; and ever since good progress has been maintained. I may add that efforts are now being

made to shorten the period of winter closure by means of icebreakers.

In my early days the ice at the Bund during the Ta Han, or 'Great Cold' term was from 14 to 16 inches thick: an artillery battle could have been fought on it during the last week in January, and it would have taken the plunging fire of howitzers to destroy the ice. The most astonishing thing about the freezing and thawing is its speed: an open stream at dusk is iron-bound at dawn, and could carry steam-rollers. I have walked my horse across at 9 a.m. and on my return at 4.30 p.m. have found no ice in sight.

Few folk now read the first and best of Mark Twain's books "*Life on the Mississippi*": it is the epic of the Pilot's art, and has episodes of glorious excitement. Believe me that the Hai Ho used daily to witness scenes as thrilling as those described by Mark the Apprentice. To avoid collision a skipper would put his helm over, and charge a village or a cabbage-field with equal impartiality. The old *Hae An* which took me up, rammed three cottages overhanging the bank; and later on, I saw the Chief Officer drop from the bow into a cabbage-patch. I have seen the whole trade of the

Metropolitan Province held up for five days by a steamer fixed bow and-stern athwart stream, and neither gods nor men could move her till Jupiter Pluvius sent more water from the hills.

The River has little beauty beyond that of atmosphere—a very comprehensive exception; for, put a Whistler, a Turner or a Wordsworth on to the dismal lower Thames, and "Earth hath not anything to show more fair." Few cities can have a water approach more depressing than Tientsin—a dirty stream noisome villages, bare and arid plains, countless graveyards, monotony in its most abject depths. But Providence is great in compensation, and gives us ours by *climate*. A little girlie Home from Tientsin once put with fine epigrammatic force:—"TSAI YING KWOH HAO TI WU T'IEN: TSAI CHUNG KWOH HAO T'IEN WU TI; which, freely rendered, runs 'England has a beautiful earth but no heaven: China has a beautiful heaven but no earth.'

And now here we are at the Tientsin Bund; and a very poor Bund it is when we think what this word connotes at Canton, Shanghai and above all at Hankow. Still, it is now a good deal better than the pictures

show, inasmuch as the foreshore has been piled and faced with Oregon timber, to say nothing of massive wharves. Here are the winter views: you see they make better pictures, in which you will note the Bund free from coolies and cargo. You must know that in the early days we had no godowns, and the storage of cargo presented difficulty. Tientsin has a steady climate, and it makes a very serviceable cheap matting which is impervious to rain. So we stacked our goods under this cover, and made our Bund into a sort of open-air godown. As a big revenue accrued from it, the custom soon became 'fixed': we lost our best promenade, but gained a revenue and trade-facilities. The cargo has to be taken away within ten days, but during this time it may be sold and resold several times without once being handled. I have seen the entire length of the Bund stacked mountains high with pea-nuts enough to fill a fleet. This trade is the direct outcome of the Railways: the nuts are shipped South, where an edible oil is expressed from them. and the residue makes a first-class fertiliser for the sugar canes.

My next slide is a map of the Concessions; with the following pictures

it may convey some idea of the cosmopolitan nature of Tientsin. In foreign concessions we hold the China record—eight in all. The British and French led off in 1861, when a tiny area was earmarked for American use, though it never matured as a Concession. The original British area of 74 acres has been three times extended in diverse and curious ways, and now exceeds a square mile. The French have enlarged their borders once, or, if by this time the critical *impasse* of last year has been obviated, possibly twice. The Japanese came next in 1895 as a condition of the Treaty of Shimonoseki: the Germans got their area in 1896, though it was 1898 before these two appeared in a concrete form. The Austrian, Italian, Russian and Belgian areas were sequels to the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, that of Austria being nothing else than a deep cut into the densely populated Native City. That acute and witty critic, Dr. Arthur Smith, has waggishly remarked "All the Powers, except China, are now provided with commodious waterfronts." The sarcasm gets home, because it is feathered with truth; but like all sarcasms it has to be taken with the salt of reservation.

The eight Concessions in some degree reflect national characteristics, especially so in their buildings and modes of development. We British folk as usual show a rampant individuality. We alone have full municipal freedom: only in the contingency of gross abuse would we come under Consular restriction: in the others, there is a semblance of freedom, but the Consul stands so close up either as Chairman of the Council, or with his power of veto that self-Government is a name rather than a reality. British procedure has been followed all round in the drafting of Land Regulations, just as our practice has been followed in matters of police, fire-extinction, sanitation and finance. English is the *lingua franca* of communication, though not in its purity: it is reduced to a droll parody known as 'pigeon' English. A Chinese yokel right from the soil may acquire a working knowledge of the jargon in a few weeks: "Boy! what's gone wrong with this pudding"? "No can tell, Master! p'laps b'long No Too small cook catchee too much smell-water"—an apology for too much essence of lemon. A friend of mine entered his kitchen with a stick to eject an interloper when his coolie intervened with "Hi!

hi! Master! no beatee he! he b'long the instead," a reference to the Cook's *locum tenens*. It is a peculiarity of the Northern outports that nearly every foreigner learns a little Chinese—also a jargon, I fear.

While all the Concessions are expanding quickly, the Japanese has much the largest rate of increase. In the census of 1913 they numbered 2,175 out of total foreign population of 3,993: we come next with 644, the Germans next with 412. while the French, Americans and Russians claimed about 150 each. An interesting sub-feature of the census was the presence of 65 British Indians, mostly policeman and watchmen. There were twenty different nationalities. The Chinese numbered 95,296 of which 37,753 were in the Austrian area, 15,946 in the British, and 13,000 in the Japanese. These figures did not include the foreign garrison of 5,000 troops, of whom 2,200 were British, 789 American, and 846 Japanese.

The presence of these divers and diverse troops during the last 17 years has added much to the amenity of life. It has ever been pleasing and instructive to attend the leaving ceremonies of a popular Officer-in-Command, and to note the difference

in the physique, drill and equipment of the guards-of-honour. Fine military music too has been our portion; and our children as well as the soldiers have loved to swarm into Victoria Park to hear the 'Retreat' by our bugle-bands, drums-and-fifes, and by the pipes of the Scotch and Indian regiments.

Many of the Indian regiments have good pipe-bands, arising in partnership with the Scots on active service. The Concessions *quâ* townships do not need much notice: the roads, buildings, parks, playgrounds, churches, schools and clubs are much the same as you see at Home. I now screen a few of the chief views and buildings, and you will see for yourselves that we are fairly up-to-date.

We are weak in artistic statuary. A big bronze Crusader in the German Concession is the mythical 'Roland.' I am unable to say whether the Emperor sent it in memory of the men who fell in 1900, or as a visible reminder of 'Deutschland uber alles'; but whatever its aim, the ricksha coolies imparted a touch of utility to it by dubbing it the *'T'ung jen'* or 'Brass man' and using it as a finger-post. In the Japanese Concession there are two good memorials of 1900, one for their

own men, the other to mark the exact spot where a very gallant American, Col. Liscum. fell. Much the finest of such memorials is in the Russian Concession· you see it dimly and quite inadequately in the slide now again on the screen. It was erected by the subscriptions of a grateful community, and with the generous help of the Russian Government. I am proud to state that we British folk bared our hearts and purses on this occasion, as well we might, seeing that we owed our lives to the gallant Russians.

The large building that you now see is Gordon Hall, located on the North side of Victoria Park, the latter being our local memorial of the first jubilee of the Great Queen. The name was given to the Hall in honour of General Gordon, who, as Captain Charles Gordon R.E., delimited the Concession and laid out the street-plan in 1861. To quote a time-honoured joke, the building is Compradoric rather than Doric, but it is of imposing size and strength. We are proud of it as the first Town-Hall in modern China, as it antedates that of Shanghai by some ten years; but its chief interest is now historical. It was severely mauled by shell-fire in 1900 when our women

and children found safety in it. capacious cellars. The British Municipal Council commemorated the common gratitude to the gallant fellows who lost their lives in our defence by some handsome memorial brasses: outside of St. Paul's, London, I know none better, or even so good. They give the names of 687 soldiers and sailors of eight nationalities who perished in the defence of the Concessions, the storming of the Taku Forts, and the Seymour Expedition. Let me emphasise the fact to which the brasses testify in eloquent silence, that Tientsin was the rock on which the great Boxer sedition split, though Peking has gathered most of the glory. The Manchus in the Palace postponed the great assault on the Legations till they saw how the cat was going to jump in Tientsin; and when they realised that neither the Boxer *canaille*, nor the imperial troops nor both combined could overwhelm us, they adopted milder measures Had Tientsin fallen, and it was a very near thing, every European in North China would have perished In truth, we had it badly enough: more shells in a week than Ladysmith had in three months. One of the *Terrible's* gun-layers told me that his

South African experiences were child's play to those in Tientsin, when modern Krupp guns were sending long bowls into an area then less than ¼ of a square mile. This was the most striking episode of my 28 years in China; and in thinking about it I recall old Plutarch's reflection that mighty issues often hang on trivial antecedents. Sir Edward Seymour started on June 14th on his gallant effort to relieve the Legations in Peking, leaving behind him between 600 and 700 bluejackets to protect his base in Tientsin. The moment he had gone the Boxers tore up the Railway behind him, and thus compelled a fine Russian battalion 1,600 strong which had just arrived with a battery of four guns and a troop of Cossacks to remain behind. In our keen sympathy with the Admiral we at first regarded this as a misfortune; but it turned out to be our very salvation. It raised our fighting force to 2,300, and with these we just did it and that was all.

Our family experiences may interest some of you. Our house was twice hit directly by common segmented shell which exploded inside: I was 'out' on both occasions, but our Chairman was in the next room when the second shell burst. We

had 13 holes in our roof due to shell fragments, and as many as 70 holes in the roof-iron and window-wire-netting. On June 19th, our day of crisis, I was fatuously but seriously asked to consider the order in which I might have to shoot my wife and family that night, to obviate the unthinkable fate of their falling into Boxer hands. I am sorry to say the 'Silly Ass' was going round alarming the 'weaklings,' simply because we were running short of ammunition. There was no justification for his fears or his pessimism. This was the night when a gallant Tientsin youth, Mr. James Watts, with fine nerve and skill rode through the Boxer lines to Taku, guiding a few Cossacks with despatches setting forth our serious plight.

Next as to the why and wherefore of Tientsin. You see here a stream known as the Yü Ho, Imperial River, or Yun Ho, the Transport River. This is nothing else but the Northern end of the famous Grand Canal, which traverses Eastern China from Hangchow to Tientsin, crossing the Yangtsze and Huang Ho *en route*. Its main purpose was to ensure safety from oceanic storm and pirates, and thus safeguard the transit of the so-called tribute-rice to Peking.

Railways now solve the problem in a better way. The Canal has so silted up in places that it is doubtful if through communication exists: if it does, it can be for only the smallest of boats. It is, however, in great sectional use; and, like the Curate's egg, it is good in parts. Three years ago I was on it at Tsang Chow in Southern Chihli: it was then engaged in desperate strife with the Ching-Pu Railway over the coolie passenger traffic, and as the Scotch engineer put it, was making the Railway's 'burrrn coal,' by carrying coolies some sixty odd miles for ten cents: the *tieh lu* or iron road had of course to come down to the same absurd tariff.

Note also that the city is situated at 'head-of-tide' and was for centuries the terminal port of fleets of huge ocean-going junks bringing tribute rice. These survived till my day and presented an astonishing sight as the incoming steamers threaded their way through a narrow lane miles long. Further note that Tientsin is practically the sole outlet for the four Provinces of Chihli, Shansi, Shensi, and Kansu and large portions of Shantung and Honan: the *hinterland* population is at least 80,000,000.

I have at hand the statistical data of our trade, which reaches the handsome sum of 133,000,000 taels—the second largest in China—but I do not propose to inflict them on you unless they are specially asked for. I may, however, refer to a detail of that old bone of contention in China—the population. Once I discussed this subject with two territorial magnates, both men whose business it was to know; one told me the population was a million and a half, the other said it was 45,000. As one figure is 37½ times larger than the other, it was an absurd discrepancy. I had not the smallest doubt that the second man took the family as his unit; but even allowing ten folk to one household, this would only give 450,000 as the total—a figure much too small. The books give 800,000 or 900,000, which I think much too large. I personally incline to a figure between 600 000 and 700,000. You may ask "Why not number the people and decide the point. Well! the Chinese, like most Orientals, dislike the numbering of heads. They smell the tax-collector behind this census-taker. Moreover they would lie like tomb-stones: but all the same I think the Census is coming.

The former City was in no wise interesting as a town, and had little or no prominence in art or manufactures. It was only a collecting and distributing centre, the marine gateway of the Capital and *hinterland*. The only artistic productions known to me were carpets and coloured mud-figures, pretty enough but too fragile for distant carriage. Now and then one met an artist who could model a recognisable but laughable statuette of oneself.

I said above that the City was in no way distinguished: let me at once qualify this by saying it was very notorious for the evil manners of its *jeunesse dorée* and the rascality of its rag-tag-and-bobtail. It was once common to see in the tea houses of Central China a notice "No Tientsin men admitted"; and undiscovered heinous crime in other cities was generally debited to Tientsin 'bul lies.' At the same time they were shrewd fellows, and a Peking proverb has it that "Ten oily-mouthed Pekingese can't get round one single plausible Tientsiner ('Tonguey' is the exact word). Li Hung-chang came up to the Viceroy of Chihli after the infamous massacre of the French Catholics in 1870; and settled in Tientsin, instead of going to the old

Provincial capital—Paotingfu The rowdies soon found that they at last had a master. An old friend of mine then a resident, told me how the great *Chung T'ang* put down the common crime of winter arson. He caught some incendiaries in the act, exposed them naked under dripping water, and froze them to death in an ice-casing. I was never able to confirm from native sources this dreadful and unique example of the punishment fitting the crime. After the Boxer troubles the City lost its walls by way of punishment. The germ of good often lies in things evil, and it is pleasant to know that this very bitter indignity, as the citizens at the time thought it, has evolved as an unmitigated blessing. Their site is now occupied by great boulevards along which 'trams' and a vast vehicular traffic roll right merrily.

The City is now the most progressive town in China and an easy leader in education and social science, of which anon. The folk in their zeal for betterment have even rid themselves of those dearest and most cherished possessions of urban China, bad smells and the scavenging pig. Apart from imposing walls, gates, *p'ai lous* and temples, fine buildings are rarely found in Chinese towns.

Tientsin is just beginning to be an exception. There is an interesting Drum-Tower at the cross road centre of the City: a handsome memorial temple to Li Hung-chang: and a large Mahommedan mosque—all worthy of inspection. The T'ien Hou Kung and the Yu Huang Kung Temples to the Queen and Emperor of Heaven must have been beautiful but are now so far gone in neglect that a visit brings more pain than pleasure: moreover, the usual harpies are ever on the perch to plunder the foreign 'Innocent Abroad' Truly, in these days one would prefer to be a Cerberus in Hell itself than a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord Buddha

The new Home of the Y M C.A promised to be a fine place and such buildings as the new Railway Offices, and the Industrial Exhibition would bring credit to a good Western town. Two-storied houses and shops are beginning to appear in the City in my early days such buildings were thought contrary to the will of the immortal gods, and almost an offence against public morals. In the foreign view this absence of elevation has kept Chinese domestic architecture in swaddling clothes throughout the ages.

Here are two riparian scenes on the Grand Canal at the N.E. corner of the town. It was here that our Royal Engineers in 1860 determined the accurate Latitude and Longitude of the City—39-8 N. and 117-18 E I may remark that while the Latitudes of Chinese towns are now fairly approximate to the truth, their Longitudes leave much to be desired many of them being from 10 to 20 minutes of arc wrong. This is unpardonable, seeing that Père de Froc and the telegraph wire to Sicawei are available. Steel bridges have now replaced the 'floaters' over the Canal and the Hai Ho and have thus got rid of the incredible blocks in the river traffic Wonderful as the picture is the reality was often worse A through boat might have to wait *days*. and always had to wait *hours*. to pass unless a high official, or my lord the Foreigner, was on board and took a hand in negotiating the matter.

This is the famous French Cathedral, twice destroyed in the seditions of 1870 and 1900. Now let us drop down stream till we again reach the Imperial or Purple Bamboo Groves, or Tzu Chu Lin, *alias* the Foreign Settlements But who and what are

the Foreigners? Well! many of us are officials of the Consular, Customs or Chinese Government 'services,' but most of us are merchants, traders and store-keepers, on whose interests lies the superstructure of all the rest. As a social aggregate, we are now a miniature of the large and complex societies of the West; but for the first thirty years we were a very simple organism the function of which was 'agentic' if I may coin a word. I mean that we lived almost wholly on Agency business There were no Banks, and none of that vast export trade now in evidence True, the Agents were pioneers, and did their best to initiate the Northern Chinese into the advantages of steam navigation and the use of foreign goods.

Those of you unfamiliar with the China Trade may not know that it has two great divisions, the *clean* and the *dirty* or if you so prefer it, the *aristocratic* and the *plebeian trades* The former confined to tea silk, opium and bullion was esoteric and pertained to South China and the River Yangtsze It was in the hands of men of somewhat exceptional culture and wide mental outlook and was run on princely lines rivalling those of the Medici in mediaeval

Italy: everything was of the best: moreover, it was based on a shipping which was the envy of the world for beauty and efficiency. No Northern trade at all resembled this, unless I except straw braid for cleanliness and minor dealings in lace embroideries and Peking art curios for charm. In the late Seventies and early Eighties came rumours to Tientsin that great blobs of fine camel-wool were to be seen blowing about on the deserts and plateaux to the North and North-west, outside the Great Wall: that these districts had goats and sheep even as the sand of the seashore or as the seed of Abraham; and that coarse short-stapled wools could be got in any quantity, provided that transit could be organised.

Native agents were sent up with sycee, that is silver in hunks: they bought the stuff and organised the transport. Success was prompt, and wool, hair and hides began to appear in Tientsin in quantity: furs of every variety and quality came next; and then bristles and feathers followed on. Now, in the raw state most of these things are dirty, and smell as a field which the Lord intends to bless. The wily tribesmen and agents made them much worse by

loading them with sand, dirt and damp. This meant that freight had to be paid on useless filth over journeys which might extend from 500 to 1,500 miles: it also meant that the cargo has all to be unpacked, examined and cleaned before it could be exported This was the origin of our large cleaning and calendering industries. Even now, after forty years' experience, we get cargo from distant Koko Nor with dirt in it to the amount of 15 to 25 per cent. Most of the wool goes to America. where it is made up into carpets. Later on, after the Railways had induced new tillage, oil-bearing nuts beans and seed appeared on our Bund, not as single spies, but in vast battalions: to these are now added jute and cotton

The American gut trade sends to us for animal entrails; and the Japanese collect bones to grind into phosphate manures· and surely these are the *ne plus ultra* of unsavoury commerce.

The passage of all this material through our Port has of course suggested local manufacture. Coal is cheap, labour abundant, and the Chinese are shrewd and enterprising when once their fear of the unknown is overcome: at first they prefer to

follow the foreign leader than to launch out on an unknown sea under their own pilotage. They now intercept hides for their own tanneries, and are rapidly coming along in the production of carpets, foreign hats for Chinese, cotton spinning and weaving, &c., &c. The manufacture and distribution of salt is also a great local industry. In China salt is a government monopoly, and is run by a gabelle of the old Bourbon type. The salt is very crude, and is obtained by the evaporation of sea water. The curious picture now shown is that of a Chinese windmill used in pumping the water on to the brine-pans. I have heard skilled foreign mechanicians give high praise to the ingenuity of the device by which the sails come up into the wind with the minimum resistance and retire from it bellying-full. I may add that salt smuggling is also a large local industry, carried on with great success and assiduity.

Tientsin is also the place to make money, for we have two fine mints with up-to date machinery and large outputs. A smaller but very interesting trade is that in the China pony. The Chinese themselves are poor breeders of horses, and find it better in every way to import the

Mongolian pony for draught and agricultural purposes. For racing purposes foreigners are supplied by native dealers, who go up into Mongolia twice a year, and bring the ponies in mobs down to Tientsin for transshipment to the ports. The dealers judge the animals by their own criteria, and test them by stop-watches and catch-weight races. Of course they try to unload their indifferent ponies on us for the Chinaman is a master in the fine old fence of horse-selling. Marlowe* wrote, and Shakespeare parodied, a fine line

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*MARLOWE'S *Tambulane*. Act. II. Sec. 4.—Tamerlane is seated in a chariot, drawn by a group of the kings whom he has conquered, *i.e.*, addresses them as if they were horses.

"Holla! you pampered jades of Asia!
What! can you draw but twenty miles a day?"

SHAKESPEARE'S *Henry IV. Part II.* Act. 88, Sec. 4.—Pistol.

"These be humours indeed! shall packhorses
And hollow pampered jades of Asia
Which cannot go but thirty miles a day
Compare with Caesars and with Cannibals
And Trojan Greeks?

about the 'pampered jades of Asia': let me put two of them on the screen, firstly in the rough, secondly in the finished state. One can hardly imagine that the two animals belong to the same planet. The second picture is that of Rajah, one of the finest ponies that ever came down from the Plateau. His record beats that even of the redoubtable Hero of Shanghai, for he won the Tientsin 'Champions' seven times without a break; and was equally formidable over all distances. He was succeeded by the equally wonderful Moidore, who with a slightly shorter list of victories, did finer 'times' on several ocacsions. Uncouth as the China pony may seem to the eye accustomed to scan the points of the English thorough-bred, the Arab, or the Barb, he is game to the heart's core. Some experts think him the oldest extant sample of the soliped. His powers of endurance are wonderful, either for a single effort, or for a continual struggle against hunger and cold. He has been known to carry 150 pounds over 76 miles in 7 hours 33 minutes; and has carried the same weight from Moscow to Vladivostock at an average rate of 30 miles a day. He has a fine record in Antarctic travel: and lastly in the

days of Attila the Hun and Ghengis Khan he played the chief role in conquering the Western and Eastern worlds respectively. In our day he is equally good on the 'flat' and on the Polo-ground.

Here are a few pictures of our Course. I well remember the astonishment of an Indian General-Officer the first time he saw it. "How many people are you in Tientsin." "About 1,800 not counting the garrison" "And how many members are there in the Race Club?" "About 300" "Well! you astonish me! Why! man! we have nothing better than this in India, and I never heard of your confounded place until I was sent here." I stated that I knew four Courses on the China Coast about as good as, or better than, ours. Perhaps the most remarkable feature about racing in China is that the man of modest means, even the poor man, can indulge in it. The Longpurses have of course *more* chances but hardly *better* ones. The Mongol or China pony reacts so much to change of climate, to feeding, to training and, let me add, to good riding, that the judgments of the dealers and experts are often upset, and the 'discarded' of Dives becomes the flier'

and 'champion' of Lazarus at a cost of Taels 50, while the promising griffin that cost Taels 400 or 500 evolves as a fiasco. A humble clerk who is at once the Owner, Trainer and Rider of an 'outsider' may carry off the big prizes under the very nose of his own *tai pan;* this, of course adds much zest to the sport

But to revert to Tientsin, here is the prosperous and well known *Ku Yi Chieh* or Fur St More impressive than its material progress is the City's advance in social science and political and philanthropic energy. I am not sufficiently acute as a social analyst to trace this progress to its sources in the due scale of their importance; enough to say that instead of being the most turbulent city in China, it is now what D'Israeli would have called "a source of light and leading"; and this is the outcome of many factors—the long, strong and liberal rule of Li Hung-chang and his immediate successors, notably Yuan Shih-kai: the advent of steam-navigation: the prolonged occupation of the City by foreign troops in 1860 and 1900: the just administration of the Provisional Government in 1901 2: education: the example of the Foreign Concessions in such matters as roads.

scavenging, police, water-supply, lighting, playing-fields hospitals, &c., &c. I remember how we laughed in 1887 at the zeal of a far-seeing Commissioner of Customs, who macadamised a bit of Chinese highway that skirted his stables. Within 25 years of this tiny effort, Peking and Tientsin possessed miles of first class macadam roads over which the motor car was jocundly careering

In showing the picture of the Tientsin Provisional Government the lecturer drew attention to the figure of the German representative as that of Major von Falkenhayn who was War Minister at the time of the outbreak of the War, and whose name has been successively before the public as the real author of the attacks on Verdun and as the present Commander-in Chief in Asia Minor He first showed his high ability in Tientsin. Similar attention was drawn to Mr. Hoover, the American distributor of food to starving Belgium and now Food Comptroller in the United States. Attention was also drawn to the remarkable list of Naval Officers who showed their mettle in Tientsin in 1900:—Admirals Sir Edward Seymour, Jellicoe, Beatty. Craddock, Phillimore, Warrender and Keyes.

Li was the generous founder and

patron of Schools of every sort; and all of them with the exception of the Experimental Farm at Hsin Ho, have given good results. His University, Naval and Military Colleges, Telegraphy Schools, flooded the new generation with light and new ideas The ex-President of the Republic, Li Yuan-hung, was an alumnus of our Naval College in my time. Yuan Shih-kai went in more for philanthropy—reformatories, schools for the blind, the dumb-and-deaf, maternity hospitals, nursing-homes, ambulances, elementary and middle-schools—they are everywhere in Tien tsin in these days, and we account them as silver in the days of King Solomon. We must not in our analysis ignore the good education and social work of the Missionaries, the splendid services of educationists like Dr. Tenney and Dr. Lavington Hart of St. John's College, Cambridge, and the very fine work in many fields of action of the American Y.M.C.A. Amenity of life has marched *pari passu* with these developments, and the gentle foreigner in ambulating round the City is now rarely scowled at and cursed in his paces, as of yore.

For many years of my life I had daily to ride through a string of vil

lages, and had many opportunities of seeing the communal life of the Chinese. My whistling for the ferry boat made me a popular character with the children, and I was often hailed with "Ma Lao-yen! ch'ing ch'ui yi ko pir"—'Please blow us a whistle.' This was to them a wonderful accomplishment. Once I found my pony stepping gingerly amidst a huge crowd of tiny piglets accompanied by one mother sow.

I was so taken aback that I dismounted, and counted 22. I then sent for the Owner to ascertain if they were all of one farrow. He assured me they were, but added that it was the biggest the village had ever known. This curiosity counted to me for righteousness with them: they liked to think we were interested in their affairs. By good luck in this same village I once heard an old woman on the curse—Lao por ma jen, puh ch'ueh k'ou ('The old lady cussing without a stop'). I am quite unable to do justice to her performance: she was atop the house from morn till dewy eve, with an interval for the noonday meal. Think of a Macbeth witch raised to the Nth, shrieking dirt and imprecation through the whole gamut of human sound, with action intensifying the

ferocity. Skirting the crowd I attracted her notice, and instantly the typhoon of her objurgation was turned on to me. The village, perfectly indifferent before, now felt that it was 'losing face,' and tried to draw me off—but this was a great find, and I refused to budge. The greatest comminatory artist that ever drove a Spanish mule team was not comparable to the old China woman.

As many of you know, Chinese swearing favours dirt rather than profanity, as with us. The poor old body was well known as a crank and shrew, ever at loggerheads with her family and neighbours: she was wont to let her wrath brew till it burst in a temperamental hurricane. We Westerners have nothing quite like this, but I imagine that in old days Celtic wakes were something near them as emotional discharges. I used to come across distressing scenes in riding past family graveyards out on the plain—women showing cataclysms of grief on the anniversaries of death; but Chinese friends assured me that they were more formal than real

The open-air life of the villagers was always interesting to watch, especially their food-supply. A hefty big chap would seat himself on a

cook's bench and get a good square meal, or nothing at all, for his ten or twelve cash (about a penny). He gambled for it; and if he lost, he would just tighten his belt, and seek consolation in a pipe. Sweet potatoes, chestnuts (finely cooked by being roasted in a cauldron amidst hot ashes), *pai t'sai* or cabbages, locusts or caterpilars fried in oil, and above all the well known *tou fuh*, or bean curd, always drew crowds of urchins and men as the moment of consummate cooking drew near.

In Chinese life the adaptability of simple means to complex ends ever impressed me. I once asked a sagacious old 'China hand,' the late Alexander Michie, to sum up his China experiences for me: he at once replied "It is the only country in the world where you can buy a bucket of boiling water in the street"—this is a deeper saying than it looks at sight. The Chinaman in his tools and gear rejects paraphernalia: the barber shaves and shampoos his customers *coram populo*, his whole plant being removable on a carrying-pole. Need I remind those of you who have not been in China recently, that the Revolution and the consequent loss of the *pien tzur* or pigtail, has hit this large class hard?

The blacksmith carries his forge and anvil round with him, and brings his entire smithy to your back door to make you a poker or a frying-pan: the carpenter ditto with his bench. Your shoe is cobbled by the roadside while you wait, and the *lao por* mends yours shirt or your breeks with the same Arcadian simplicity. The milkman brings round the cow (accompanied by the muzzled calf) and milks her in your presence so that you may see the milk is genuine; and, let me add, he will do you in the eye even then, unless you are exceedingly sharp. The poulterer, fishmonger with live food and the flesher with dead are all itinerant, and so are the clever and patient *chü war tih*, or crockery-ware menders, as well as the curio and embroidery men with their beautiful wares. Our Tientsin ladies sometimes enliven their tea-parties by giving prizes to her who brings the best ten-cents'-worth bought in the Market. I have seen it won by a full five-course dinner which included soup, fish, flesh, pastry and fruit, with the tray and napkin thrown in. Paternal prejudice disposed me to think that my own daughter ought to have won on one occasion when she marched four stout coolies into

the house, each carrying two huge pails of boiling water—enough to tub a family. Let me screen a few of these common-place sights for you.

Now let me relieve your tedium by saying a few words about our foreign amusements and recreation I have dealt incidentally with the horse. I need hardly say that we now have the motor-car, the one thing wanting to complete our satisfaction with it being much greater length of road—a want which somehow reminds me of the advice of the witty Frenchman to the people of Madrid—that they should sell some of their fine bridges over the Manzanaries and buy more water for the starveling stream with the proceeds. The motor-car, like many other western inventions brought to the notice of the Chinese has confuted that ancient falsehood that the Chinese can tolerate nothing new, so innate is his conservatism. I venture to say that few are more alert to recognise the merits of ultilitarian novelty. Scores of cars are now used in Tientsin, Pekng and Shanghai by the appreciative sons-of-Han. Cricket and football have not caught-on with any strength in North China except with the British and American soldiers: on the other hand 'Soccer' football is in great

favour, and, like athletics, it has spread to the Chinese colleges and schools, who show great rivalry in inter-college matches. Tennis and Golf are great cults, and the former is now rapidly extending to young China. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Tennis revolutionised foreign life in China in the 'Eighties'; it redeemed us from the curse of *ennui*, and its Comus-like train of evils. In Tientsin we have two good golf-links, well-dotted with graveyards; and please do not be shocked when I say that they make admirable hazards and bunkers without in any way being desecrated; we carefully avoid offending delicate human susceptibilties. Our best hazard, however, is the famous *Wei Tzu*, or Mud Wall. This is the thirteen miles long wall of circumvallation built in 1859 by the Mongol Prince, San Kac Lin Sen, to keep out the Foreign Devils. There is a local tradition that it was built in 18 days I am among the incredulous: but if it be true, then it was one of best bits of organised spade-work ever done in the long history of labour. Although I can hardly believe it I admit that China is the one country in the world where such a job is possible. I once saw 22,000 men visibly at work at

once within an area of 1/5 of a square mile, an ant-hill of human labour which I greatly regret preceded the cinema. It was typically Chinese too, that 2,000 of them were 'cooks' for the other 20,000. Our sailors in their droll way at once called the *Wei Tzu* 'San Collinson's Wall': it kept the British at bay for two minutes, the time it took a midshipman to swim the moat, climb the rampart, and open the gate. From it in 1863 or 4 the Tientsin folks saw the camp-fires of the dreaded *T'ai P'ings* when they reached their 'furthest North.' It played quite a great part in our defence in 1900; and before now, has been a very 'City of Refuge' for the rustics in times of flood.

On first appearing in North China we Foreigners wondered why all the villages were perched up on earth platforms ten feet above the plain Some of the old folk spoke of floods, but no one listened to them. Not till the 'Eighties' did water appear, but after that for a whole decade we had floods almost every year. They are apparently cyclic, but irregular at that. The picture now shown is the site of the recent extension of British Tientsin in the great flood year of 1890. The whole area is now

covered with villa residences on good roads: I need hardly tell you that this very week the detailed news has come that the plague of water has reappeared this Autumn, in a worse form than ever known before. These visitations of course involve famine and dreadful sufferings from cold in the hard winter of North China, I mean of course to the poor Natives. We do our very best to mitigate this suffering; but none the less do we take advantage of the unlimited chances of autumnal boat-sailing and winter ice-boating. *Pei-dze* picnics and the ice-boat on these occasions challenge skating as *the* winter amusement. The *pei-dze* is a sledge in its starkest simplicity—two long runners, covered by a reed-mat. The motor is a straddle-legged coolie, who stands on the back part of the runners, and works a spiked-pole between his legs. He can get from six to nine miles an hour out of it The picture is a lifelike reproduction of a snap-shot. I regret that I have been unable to unearth a picture of the ice-boat fleet, as it was really a very beautiful sight. Speeds were incredible: 40, 45 or 50 miles per hour were attained. When the helm was put down, and the ship went

about, the unwary passenger might be shot out like a stone from a catapult; and our only explanation for 'no casualties,' was that a Special Providence existed for ice-boaters as well as for drunken sailors.

Our three months of continued frost of course gave fine chances for skating and ice-hockey: but the abominable dust-storms compelled us to take these pleasures under covered sheds made of our omniuseful matting.

These dust-storms, like the floods, seem to be affected by obscure cyclic or secular changes, which have so far eluded explanation. For the last ten or fifteen years they have been much less frequent and less violent than formerly: the new-comers refuse to credit us grey-beards when we recite the theme. In early days we had them about once in three weeks during the winter and once in 5 or 6 weeks during early Spring and late Autumn. They blew for three days, and were invariably followed by a big fall in the temperature. The surface of the Gobi or Shamo desert, a fine sand, and the still finer, almost impalpable dust of the loess formation, were caught up by the strong North-west wind, and were borne for hundreds of

miles, filling the air with a darkness almost Egyptian. The dust got into our houses, beds, clothes food, eye. ears, and most certainly into our tempers, and reduced the pleasure of life to its very lowest denominator. We were confident that we could detect the sickening taste of the disgusting camel in the air we breathed.

Without plaguing you with figures I may state that North China during the year has a range of temperature from the Fahrenheit 'zero' to 100. I have had the rare experience of seeing—13° and 113° registered with in twelvemonths on the same thermometer—a fairly trustworthy instrument. These extremes suggest stressful times; but the fact is, that we have one of the very best climates in the world. There is a trying period of damp heat lasting for two months, but this is the one fly in the ointment of our meteorological satisfaction. The winter cold in the daytime is mitigated by genial bright sunshine; and, barring dust storms, our Italian skies last for weeks at a time.

The Winter sees the climax of our social activity, and we certainly go the pace. Dining, dancing public and private theatricals, concerts, literary societies, club-life, badmin

ton, riding-parties and out-door sports are in constant evidence. There is of course a chronic famine in the gratification of the higher artistic tastes, such as classical music painting, statuary, architecture and museums; but with this large exception, 'outport' life offers more pleasure than that at Home. The art starvation can be made good if one acquires the taste for and knowledge of the great art and archeology of China. We have excellent and up-to-date libraries, and an enterprising, ably-conducted Press.

While dealing with this social phase of outport life I proudly express my belief, based on a long series of comparisons, that no single British community of its size in the Empire excels or even equals Tientsin in its record of War beneficence Its generosity is literally boundless. I can remember the time when our *greatest effort in social philanthropy*, a bazaar in which we asked the help of our cosmopolitan neighbours and Chinese friends, produced $800. Contrast this with a similar effort in 1916 which produced $80 000 and this in addition £2,000 for a bed in the Star and Garter, a sum of £8 000 for Sailors' Orphan Homes £7.000 for an aeroplane, &c.. &c.

The one great drawback to our perfervid life used to be absence of change. In the pre-Railway days, the seaside did not exist for us. Chefoo, our nearest neighbour, was eighteen hours distant by steamer. and we were apt to get stale in mind and were certainly very parochial in our outlook. All this now pertains to the past. During the last twenty years we have made our own seaside resorts, and very delightful places they are too! Pei Tai Ho on the Gulf of Pechihli at a distance of 160 miles is an ideal health resort, idyllic in natural charm, with great scenic beauty, and just as free from convention as it is from beach-niggers. It has fine sea-bathing, and has a summer temperature 10 or 15 degrees below that of our steaming plains. During the Hot Season women, children and jaded men gather there from the whole of North China Quite close are Ching Wangtao and Shanhaikwan, more secluded and restful. The former is our open winter port, and is the deep-water depot for the export coal trade. It is a creation of the great Mining Company; the latter is where the Great Wall of China meets the Sea At one time the Wall actually ran far into it in the form of a great mole·

but centuries of coastal current and Manchu neglect have completely obliterated it.

These places and the fact that we can make rapid exits by train in four different directions have completely removed all sense of imprisonment. In the old days we were cut off from all communication with the outside world for three months every year. I remember once when a blizzard overtook our mounted courier coming up from the Yangtsze with mails. a London letter was delivered to me 63 days after date: the usual time was 40 to 45 days. Compare this with the pre-war experience of some of us, when we made the journey from Tientsin to Charing Cross in three hours less than *twelve days*. This astonishing progress in travel is just about commensurate with the wonderful social and political changes which by good luck have coincided with my own brief span of residence in North China. The grand old Empire, or shall I say State, after a somnulence of œons is now moving as a giant refreshed and a Chinese political Galileo might well say. though still with a slight yawn, "*Eppur si muove*"—'*In truth IT IS MOVING.*'