

rama of Hong-Kong, were taken from drawings of Mr. Alexander, which my son lent to Mr. Barker for that purpose. On his return to England, the trustees of the British Museum appointed Mr. Alexander to the superintendence of the department of prints and drawings, in which unfortunately he did not long survive. His loss was severely felt and lamented.

Doctor Dinwiddie was a Scotch philosopher, but of what school I know not; he was also called an experimentalist, and expected to instruct the Chinese in electricity and in flying balloons, but it all ended in smoke. On our return, he requested to be discharged and sent to Calcutta, where he meant to deliver lectures, and Lord Macartney very kindly made him a present of all the mathematical and philosophical instruments that were not left in China. The novelty took, in Calcutta, and Dinwiddie is said to have made a little fortune.

The two Chinese interpreters had been sought for and brought from the College *De Propaganda Fide* at Naples by Sir George Staunton, and one of them, Lee, proved an useful and intelligent man. The other, Ko, was a blunt, dull, and dogged person, of little use to the embassy, and likely to be of still less in his mission. Happening one day to have in my hand a Latin copy of the 'Common Book of Prayer,' I gave it open to Ko, who, after looking at it a minute or two, threw it down with violence on the floor, exclaiming "*Est liber diabolicus.*" They were both left in China.

Mr. Staunton, though very young, made great progress in the Chinese language, in which he had afterwards an opportunity of perfecting himself, by an appointment in the Company's factory of Canton, of which he became the chief; and he has published

several volumes and tracts, chiefly on the language of China, besides a curious and valuable treatise on the laws of China, the whole of which he translated into English.

Mr. Hüttner, his tutor, was a good classical scholar, and soon after the return of the embassy was appointed interpreter to the Foreign Office, a situation which he still retains.

Mr. Baring also received an appointment to the factory of Canton, came home, after a time married, and resides with his family at Cromer Hall, in a very indifferent state of health.

Mr. Winder, a young man who had been educated at Trinity College, Dublin, a distant connexion of Lord Macartney, and was entered on the list as assistant secretary, but without anything to do and with very little to occupy his attention. He obtained, on his return home, some civil situation in Ireland, and died shortly afterwards.

Mr. Crewe (I believe, a subaltern in the army), a young gentleman hanging loose on society and a frequenter of the gaming-table, was the son of the celebrated wit and beauty of her day—so beautiful, indeed, that Madame d'Arblay says "she *uglifies* everything near her." Admired by George Prince of Wales, and adored by Charles Fox, she became the standing toast of the Whigs, was consecrated as their patroness by the Prince of Wales, who, on some great occasion, gave as a toast—

" Buff and Blue,  
And Mrs. Crewe."

Mrs. Crewe was also a great favourite of Lord Macartney; and she being most desirous of removing her

son out of the temptations of London, earnestly entreated his lordship to take him to China. "The only condition," said his lordship, "on which I can possibly allow him to go is a most solemn pledge, on his honour, that he will not touch either cards or dice or other instruments of gambling, either on board ship or at any place where we may stop." He gave the pledge and broke it—lost to one of the lieutenants of the 'Lion,' it was said, some thousand pounds, not any part of which could he pay; and it was also said he had compounded the debt for an annuity of as many hundred pounds as he had lost thousands. My cabin on the passage home was on the lower deck, and scarcely a night passed in which I was not disturbed by the rattling of dice, or by Mr. Crewe's scraping on the bass-viol. He was a most gentlemanly, good-natured young man, and was urged on by an old Scotch lieutenant, who ought to have known better. Mr. Crewe succeeded his father, who had been created a baron in 1812, and died in 1835.

Before the embassy left England, it was generally understood that great pains had been taken in the selection of the gentlemen who had the good fortune to be included in the suite of the ambassador. The brief description I have here given of them does not exactly correspond with such a notion; but I believe Lord Macartney had, in some respects, to listen to the gentry of Leadenhall Street. If I except the able and interesting account of the proceedings and result of the British embassy to the court of the Emperor of China, by the late Sir George Staunton, (the vigour of whose intellect was not more remarkable than the liberality of his sentiments,) nothing of a scientific, physical, ethical,

or ethnical character appeared from any of them. When, indeed, it was understood that Sir George Staunton had undertaken it, any other work would have been a supererogation. In fact, he alone, who had cognizance of all that was or was intended to be transacted, and the reasons thereof, could have done justice to the subject.

I thought so then and think so still, yet ten years after the return of the embassy to England I was induced to write and to publish a volume, to show the view which I had taken of the great empire of China and its very extraordinary overflow of population, by drawing such a sketch of the manners, the state of society, the language, literature, and fine arts, the sciences and civil institutions, the religious worship and opinions, the population, and the progress in agriculture, the civil and moral character of the people, as my own observations enabled me to do; and the present Sir George Staunton had the kindness to allow me to look over the mass of notes and observations, which I had put into the hands of his father when employed on his 'Narrative.' With these and my recollections on the passage home from the Cape, I endeavoured to settle, in my own mind, the point of rank which China may be considered to have attained in the scale of civilised nations.

Three years after the publication of this work, and thirteen after the return of the embassy, I had permission to publish the manuscript journal of the Earl of Macartney, entitled 'A Journey of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China in the Years 1792, 1793, and 1794.' It was annexed as an appendix to my account of 'The Public Life' of the

Earl of Macartney. The journal is exceedingly interesting, and details circumstantially all that occurred on his introduction to the emperor at his palace of Gehol, in Tartary, with his observations and reflections on the country and people, and on the events that took place on that occasion.

That which I am now about to relate is chiefly what happened to me individually, or in which I was personally concerned, taken either from loose notes written fifty years ago, or from a recollection of particular occurrences chiefly in Peking, at the palace of Yuen-min-Yuen, and on our journey by the Grand Canal through the heart of the empire; the whole affording to myself the most interesting episode in the history of a prolonged life.

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## SECTION II.

*The Embassy proceeds in H.M.S. 'Lion' and the E.I.C. Ship 'Hindustan,' and passing through the Yellow Sea, disembarks on the Continent of China, at the Mouth of the River Pei-ho.*

THE ships appointed to carry out the ambassador and suite were the 'Lion,' of 64 guns, under the command of Captain Sir Erasmus Gower, and the 'Hindustan' Indiaman of 1300 or 1400 tons, commanded by Captain Mackintosh, an old and highly respected officer of the East India Company. Two more suitable and efficient commanders could not have been selected,

and each of them was personally known to the Ambassador.

The 'Lion,' with her officers, stores, presents, and large quantities of baggage, was so completely filled, that part of the suite were obliged, and I may say delighted, to go in the roomy 'Hindustan;' they consisted of Colonel Benson, Dr. Scott, Dr. Dinwiddie, and myself; and most comfortable we were, being infinitely better accommodated than were any of our colleagues in the 'Lion.' We left Portsmouth on the 26th of September, 1792; had a quick and pleasant passage to Madeira, where the 'Lion' anchored in the Bay of Funchal, an open and dangerous roadstead—as Mackintosh, on a former occasion, had been taught by fatal experience, his ship having been wrecked, and every soul having perished, himself and cook only excepted, who being on shore escaped the melancholy fate of their companions.

Pass we on to the island of Teneriffe, a pleasant sail of four days from Madeira. The town of Santa Cruz, on the eastern side, affords but little that is inviting. The town of Oratava, on the opposite side, is much the same; but the Peak is a majestic object, up which we scrambled as far as to the base of the cone, when a violent storm of thunder and lightning, with torrents of rain, drove us down again. Our next halting-place was the miserable Porta Praya, in the island of St. Jago; and, passing thence to the Brazil coast, we opened out and entered the magnificent bay or inlet of Rio de Janeiro, unequalled, I believe, for its splendid and variegated scenery, by any other of a similar kind in any part of the world.

We passed the curious island of Tristan da Cunha, without landing, and gave a good berth to the Cape of Good Hope, making the best of our way to the curious volcanic island of Amsterdam, whose large crater unites with the sea by a passage over a pebbly beach.

From hence we reached and passed through the Strait of Sunda, and, by the Thousand Islands, came to Batavia, and here enjoyed the gaieties and the luxurious living of the Dutch. But, that which was of more importance to us was, that while here the Ambassador received a dispatch from Canton, announcing the agreeable intelligence that his Imperial Majesty of China had issued a public edict, declaring his satisfaction at the approaching embassy, and directing that pilots should be stationed at every port on the coast of the Yellow Sea to convey his Excellency and suite to Tien-sing, the nearest port to the capital, or to any other that should be found most convenient for the British ships. By this intelligence the embassy was relieved from the necessity of calling at Canton, which was most desirable on many accounts—among others, that of obviating a delay of eight or ten days. A dispatch was therefore sent to Canton to announce his Lordship's intention of proceeding direct through the Strait of Formosa to Chusan.

It was deemed expedient, however, as it was little or nothing out of our way, to look into Turon Bay, in Cochin-China, that being, as it were, a part of, or in close connexion with, the Chinese empire, and the inhabitants being in all respects, except less civilised, similar to the Chinese. They, however, received us well, and with great courtesy; and here, having refreshed our ships'

companies, we proceeded to the entrance of the Yellow Sea.\*

Of the frequent storms and dangerous navigation of the Strait of Formosa we had an early proof, by experiencing a tremendous storm, accompanied by loud thunder and fierce lightning, in a pitch-dark night, no land on either side being visible for ten or twelve hours, and the brig, the 'Clarence,' in the midst of islets, rocks, and shoals, the sea high, and breaking all around; so that we might almost have exclaimed with Miranda in the 'Tempest,'—

“ The sky, it seem'd, would pour down stinking pitch,  
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin's cheek,  
Dashed the fire out.”

The storm was, as the Chinese pilots told us, what we Europeans call a *typhoon*, and which some of our learned antiquarians have fancied the Chinese derived from the Egyptian Typhon, the genius of all evil; but where or how they came by it, we are left to conjecture. The Chinese are the least, of all people, addicted to the borrowing of names, and too proud even to adopt a foreign word. In the present instance they are content with their own simple name, expressive of the fact—*ta-fung*, a “great wind.”

\* So much has been written concerning the most extensive and populous empire of China, and so much real and valuable information gained by the two British embassies of Lord Macartney and Lord Amherst, to which I have already contributed my humble share; and so much new matter is constantly pouring in upon us since the footing we have obtained, by conquest and negotiation, in or among the most frequented commercial stations along the eastern coast of the Yellow Sea, that little is left for me to dwell upon, but to confine my remarks chiefly to matters in which I was directly or indirectly personally concerned.



Being on the poop of the 'Hindustan' with Captain Mackintosh, I asked him if, in his several voyages to China, he had ever been in such a hurricane as was then raging? His reply was, "Yes, and ten times more severe. Were it possible," he said, "to blow ten thousand trumpets and beat as many drums on the fore-castle of a ship like this in the height of a *ta-fung*, no sound would be heard of either by a person on the quarter-deck or on the poop of that ship." When any story of a marvellous kind was told, Mackintosh was wont to say, "Show me the book:" I asked him jestingly, "Captain, would you put into a book what you have just told me?" His answer was, "Perhaps not exactly in the same words." "No," said I, "I am sure you would make a great reduction in the number of your drums and trumpets."

Having passed this strait, it was decided to detach the brig 'Clarence'\* for the port of Chusan; and Sir George Staunton, Mr. Staunton, and myself, with one of the Chinese interpreters embarked in her: the 'Lion' and 'Hindustan' to wait outside of the archipelago of islands, which are represented to consist of not fewer than three hundred, mostly small, and many little better than naked rocks. Four passages lead into the main harbour in the largest island, of which we took the westernmost, one shore being part of the continent. We found the current to run with such whirling rapidity, so irregular, and the water so deep, that to anchor would have been difficult, dangerous, and perhaps in a calm impracticable. In fact, when about the middle of the passage the wind did fail us, and just

\* There had been prepared two brigs, the 'Clarence' and the 'Jackal,' to attend the ships through the Yellow Sea.

as we were close to a rocky promontory of the continent called *Kee-to* Point.

Here the current swept the 'Clarence' towards the point with such rapidity, that we expected nothing short of being momentarily dashed to pieces; but, on approaching this perpendicular precipice within twice the ship's length, to our surprise and not less alarm, the eddy swept her round with great velocity three several times. An old Chinese fisherman, whom we had taken as pilot, gave us the consolation, that there was no danger, and that her distance from the rock would be increased after every whirl; and so it was. The lead was thrown, but no bottom at the depth of 120 fathoms. The Chinese missionary of the *Propaganda*, whom we had taken to interpret, and who was usually less composed than his countryman, had indeed on the present occasion an escape from being thrown overboard by the boom of the mainsail, and in recovering himself exclaimed, "*Sanctissima Maria, est miraculum!*"

This is the only passage, on the south side, into the harbour of Chusan. On entering we were met by one of the large Chinese *junks*—as we are pleased to call them (from their proper name *tchuan*). An officer came on board to announce that his vessel would precede us, and point out the proper anchorage. He and two or three other officers were extremely civil, and presented us with a basket of fruit. The *tchuan* led the way; and, clumsy as she appeared, with her stiff unbending bamboo sails, to the surprise of our seamen, they observed her sail quite as well as the smart-looking 'Clarence.' We anchored about the centre of a very spacious harbour, surrounded by the coast of the main

island and others contiguous to it, so as to give to it a circular shape, and the semblance of being completely land-locked—as it appears from a sketch I took of it from our central anchorage.

Mandarins forthwith visited us; and it was arranged that we should wait on the tsung-ping, or military governor of Ting-hai, the chief city of Chusan, early next morning. He was abundantly civil, received us in his hall of audience, and promised to have pilots ready for us; presented us with tea, fruit, and cakes, and talked of plays, feasts, and entertainments; and was rather surprised at the haste we manifested.

The multitude of ships, several hundreds of different kinds, that were lying at anchor before the seaport town, gave evidence of an extensive commercial intercourse with Chusan; and yet, to our astonishment, the governor told us that the pilots for our ships could only take us to the ports along the coast, as far as the next province. This we said would not answer our purpose; and, moreover, that the Emperor, in his public notification, had ordered pilots to be in readiness at Chusan to conduct the ships of the Ambassador to Tien-sing. This produced a general muster, from which was to be singled out every man who had ever been at Tien-sing. Two only were found to answer the description, but they had left the sea for many years, were comfortably settled in trade, and begged on their knees they might be excused. In vain, however, they pleaded the ruin of their families, the Emperor's orders must be obeyed; the governor was inexorable, and they were ordered to embark in the course of an hour. Such an act of violence and injustice, painful as it was to witness, could hardly be reprov'd, with consistency, by some of our

naval officers, who might in the course of service have taken part in similar scenes at home.

The city of Ting-hai is from one to two miles from the coast before which the shipping lie. It is enclosed by a lofty wall of masonry, in which are several gates leading into streets of tolerable width; the rest are mere alleys. About the year 1700 we had a factory in the suburb, close to the shore of the harbour, which was walled round, and from which the wives of the factors were excluded. We also obtained a commercial station at Ning-po; but, at the end of some fifty years, the Chinese got rid of us from both.

There is just now, however, in England, a craving desire to exchange Hong-Kong for Chusan—not merely to occupy Ting-hai or the suburb, or both, as emporia for commercial concerns, but to possess the whole island. It is to be hoped, however, that the Chinese will resolutely resist any such demand: indeed, they have done so, and succeeded. To a less jealous people, the possession of a spacious harbour and a large extent of territory, which from its position would overawe the wealthiest and most flourishing commercial cities in the empire—Ning-po, Hang-choo, and Foo-choo, with their numerous ports and suburbs—to say nothing of dispossessing or corrupting some 120,000 families, by taking their lands, or converting themselves or their children into what they deem us—barbarians: and, if these objections were overcome, we should create for ourselves an interminable hatred and jealousy throughout the whole of this great empire. If wisdom and prudence govern our councils, we shall remain content with what conquest has given us. If, indeed, we had asked for Lan-tao or Lin-ting, instead of Hong-

Kong, as being larger, more calculated for a thriving population, and half the distance from Canton, we should have acted more wisely.

I have some reason to remember Chusan, though five-and-fifty years have elapsed since I was there ; not for anything remarkable, except that I had my pulse felt by a Chinese physician, and never since by any medical man in China or elsewhere. Out of curiosity I had partaken of a dish prepared by one of the Chinese pilots from a mollusca (*medusa porpita*), whose transparent colourless jelly had rather an inviting appearance. I had also eaten of some acid fruit presented to us ; in consequence of the one or both, I was seized with a most violent and excruciating pain in the stomach, so bad that Sir George Staunton ordered the lieutenant, who commanded the 'Clarence,' to send a boat on shore to inquire for some medical man, and bring him off. A venerable Chinese physician made his appearance, felt my pulse very carefully, and told our missionary that he would cure me : a person went with him on shore, brought back a packet containing, among other things, a large proportion of rhubarb, and after about twenty-four hours of severe suffering I was myself again. When in course of conversation, many years afterwards, I told Sir Henry Halford that, to my knowledge, I had never before this had my pulse felt, and certainly never since, he threw up his hands and exclaimed, "What would become of *us* if every one were like you !"

The 'Clarence' having once more passed Kee-to Point, less whirled round than before, and got into the Yellow Sea, she rejoined our ships at anchor about five miles off. Some of the officers had made visits to

several of the islands, but to one in particular named Pootoo (Poo-ta-la), the Temple of Budh. This group of islands is remarkable for the number of bonzes or priests of that sect, said to amount to between two and three thousand, inhabiting as many hundred separate temples or pagodas. It would be well worth the while that some of our Chinese scholars—Sir John Davis, for instance—should pay a visit to this sanctuary of Buddhism, and examine what records or legends they possess; for the temples of all sects in China, or the most respectable, have libraries. Sir William Parker, having landed on the Kin-shan or Golden Island, in going up the Yang-tse-Kiang, saw a most beautiful well-bound library in one of the temples, which he intended on his return from Nankin to bring away for the British Museum; but on reconsidering the principle on which hostilities were conducted—to make no reprisals—he decided not to disturb it. He found, however, on his return, that the splendid library was gone, the captain of the French frigate, that followed our expedition up the river, having carried it off, and it may probably be now seen in the king's library of Paris.

One of our impressed pilots had come on board without his compass, and it was in vain to make him comprehend ours with its moveable card, theirs being a simple needle about an inch in length, vibrating within a circular cavity cut in a piece of wood, and so contrived that the centre of gravity coincides with the centre of suspension. On showing one to Ramsden, he admired the simplicity and the efficiency of the contrivance, but thought it applicable only to very short and light needles. The Chinese originality of this instrument may be inferred from the multitude of circles on the wood that

contains it, embracing their system of mythology, their cycles, constellations, their astronomical or astrological science, the mystical characters of Fo-shee (Fo-hi), and, in short, an abstract of all they profess to know on these subjects. The one I brought home contains twenty-seven concentric circles. The name of their needle is Ting-nan-ching—the needle pointing to the *south*; and (Kang-hi) Kaung-shee, who was in the habit of committing his thoughts to paper, thus writes: “I have heard Europeans say that the needle obeys the north. In our oldest records it is said that it turns to the south. The ancients are the first in date; and the farther I proceed the more I am convinced of their knowledge of the mechanism and operations of Nature. Moreover, as all action grows languid and is nearly suspended towards the north, it is less likely that the virtue, which gives motion to the magnetic needle, should proceed from that quarter.” Kaung-shee was the ablest of Chinese emperors, but how could he reason but from what he knew? No Cook, no Weddell, no Ross, had then given him the benefit of their discoveries.

On doubling the promontory of the province of Shantung, the land became hidden in thick fogs; these clearing away, enabled us to see that we were within four miles of the coast. We had opened out, it seemed, the extensive gulf of Pe-tche-lee, and our pilots being evidently ignorant of our situation, we took the advice of the magistrate of Chusan—to navigate from port to port—and at the port of Kee-san-soo took two pilots to carry us to Mee-a-tou and to the city of Ten-tchoo-foo, the governor of which paid his respects to the Ambassador on board the ‘Lion,’ and sent a trifling, as he called it, refreshment, consisting of four bullocks, eight

sheep, eight goats, five sacks of fine white rice, five sacks of red rice, 200 lbs. of flour, and several baskets of fruit and vegetables. He also supplied us with another pilot to take the ships across the gulf of Pe-tche-lee to Tien-sing.

In crossing this gulf with no land in sight, the water had shoaled to six fathoms; an unusual situation for large ships to come to anchor in, but nothing else was left for us. The land was from twelve to fifteen miles distant, and so low as not to be visible from the deck. One of the brigs was despatched to the mouth of the Pei-ho to report our arrival. Here two superior officers from the court had already embarked to wait on the Ambassador, carrying with them refreshments which consisted of 20 bullocks, 100 hogs, 100 sheep, 1000 fowls, 3000 pumpkins, as many melons, apples, pears, plums, apricots, and other fruits, with an abundance of culinary vegetables, and wine in large earthen jars. Many of the hogs and fowls had been bruised to death and thrown overboard, but the Chinese eagerly picked them up, cleaned, and salted them.

The names of these two officers were *Van* and *Chou*, with the addition to each of *ta-gin* (great man). *Van-ta-gin* was a soldier of the rank of lieutenant-general, and *Chou-ta-gin* a civilian, the governor of a district in Pe-tche-lee—two most amiable, well-conditioned, and cheerful men, who attended the embassy from this time till its return to and departure from Canton—men who gained the esteem and affectionate regard of every one in the embassy, having been ever ready to please and to make us all comfortable.

Fifteen Chinese vessels having transported into the Pei-ho all that belonged to the embassy, our two great



ships left the gulf without further delay, the 'Hindustan' for Chusan, there to remain for further orders, and the 'Lion' to Canton.

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### SECTION III.

*Navigation of the Pei-ho from its Mouth to Tien-sing, and thence to Tong-choo, the Port of Peking.*

WE were now fairly landed on the continent of China, embarked and moved on, as speedily as a thousand men or more could get our baggage, presents, and provisions into the barges provided to convey them and us up the Pei-ho; and we found them to be spacious, neat, and commodious. Each had a sitting-room and a sleeping-room, with bed-places on the sides, a room for servants, and a kitchen. They are sometimes sculled with a long oar, working on a pivot near the bow, and moved by four, five, or six men, who occasionally land to track the barges. In sculling, the stroke is accompanied with a rude air, in which all join, thus combining cheerfulness with regularity. These barges each bore a flag with certain Chinese characters, which, as some of the missionaries told their correspondents in Europe, implied, "The English ambassador bringing *tribute* to the Emperor of China." The character which these honest religionists translate into *tribute* was 貢, *kung* (valuable), being compounded of two parts, the *key* at the top signifying *art* or *workmanship*, and the other part *rare*, *highly esteemed*—the meaning of the character, therefore, may signify *precious things*, and not *tribute*.

With the exception of the two villages of Ta-Koo

and See-Koo (*Great* and *West Koo*) near the mouth of the river, scarcely any other deserving the name appeared, till we came to the very extensive city of Tien-sing, about ninety miles from the sea. The banks hitherto had been low on either side, the surface of the country swampy, and covered with coarse grasses and rushes; very little cultivation, and here and there only a straggling cottage of mean description; now and then some half-dozen of these might be seen together. We were all struck with the general appearance of meanness and poverty. Yet the vast multitudes of people of both sexes, that crowded down to the banks of the river, as the barges glided along, were such as to command attention, though the general style of their dress gave no great indication of comfort; but their numbers proved the existence in the interior of plenty of towns or villages, though hidden from our sight by the sunken river and its high banks.

On approaching Tien-sing, we had to pass along such numerous stacks of salt, piled up in sacks of matting, and ranged for miles on both banks of the river, that I was desirous of endeavouring to make some rough estimate of the quantity; and if my data were at all correct, the store of salt here stacked would suffice for the consumption of about thirty millions of people for a whole year, or, as Sir George Staunton calculated, from my notes, the weight would be about six hundred millions of pounds.

The multitudes of people and the craft of various kinds on both sides of, and passing through, Tien-sing, were so numerous that, with great difficulty and delay, we were able to traverse the town in about three hours. The crowd was immense on the two

shores, in the shipping, and on the roofs of the houses; and it was a singular sight to observe such multitudes with their naked bronze-coloured heads broiling in the sun, and standing up to the middle in the water, all quiet and in perfect silence, exhibiting, as Mr. Davis said on a similar occasion, "a sea of shaven heads in a perfect calm."

The population, whose constant residence appeared to be on the water, was also immense. On the river within the limits of the town, and above and below it, there could not be less than six hundred stationary and trading vessels, all built on the same plan and very much resembling each other. I boarded one, which had a range of ten, others I was told had twelve, distinct sets of apartments, erected along the deck, each containing a whole family. The hold was also divided into ten parts, being one for each of the families located on deck, and laden with articles for the Pekin market. The number of traders and sailors in a vessel of this description could not be fewer than fifty, so that of these alone the population would amount to thirty thousand; and from what we observed of the craft on the upper part of the river, between Tien-sing and Tong-choo, mostly crowded with men, women, and children, I should conceive that the floating population on the Pei-ho, from its mouth to Tong-choo, the port of Pekin, could not be much under one hundred thousand souls.

At Tong-choo we were lodged in a spacious temple, from which the priests were turned out without ceremony to make room for us, consisting at least of a hundred persons. About three thousand porters were immediately supplied for carrying to the capital, twelve

miles distant, the whole of the baggage belonging to the embassy. The plain between the ships and the temple was like a fair, and cakes, rice, tea, and fruit upon masses of ice, were abundantly exposed for sale; a slice of melon, so cooled, cost a *tchen*, value about three-tenths of a farthing.

I had been taught at Chusan, the expediency of carrying my cot along with me, and here I found its utility; for on turning down the sheet, in the temple, the first object that caught my eye was an enormous scorpion. The cot was forthwith removed from the temple, and suspended between two trees in the enclosed courtyard; but the *cicadas* kept up such a loud and perpetual chirping the whole night as to prevent all possibility of sleep. The thermometer stood at 80°, and had been during the day and in the shade at 88°.

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#### SECTION IV.

*Journey from Tong-choo by Land, through Peking; and the Distribution of the Embassy to Gehol in Tartary, to the Palace of Yuen-min-yuen, and to one in the Capital.*

THE distance from Tong-choo to the south-east gate of Peking is reckoned to be twelve miles. At five in the morning of the 21st of August, the procession moved forward, more remarkable for the multitude and variety of its component parts, than for the regularity of its arrangement or the brilliancy of its appearance. The motley group consisted, in the first place, of about three thousand porters, laden with six hundred pack-

ages, some of them large and heavy enough to require thirty-two bearers; next to these were eighty-five waggons, accompanied by thirty-nine hand-carts of one wheel each, laden with wine, porter, and various eatables, together with ammunition for eight field-pieces, which closed this part of the procession.\* Next to these was the Tartar legate, with the officers of the court, and their numerous attendants, some on horseback, some in chairs, and others on foot; and after them followed the Ambassador's guard in waggons; the servants, musicians, and mechanics also in waggons; the Ambassador, the Minister Plenipotentiary, his son, and one of the interpreters followed, in four ornamented chairs, the gentlemen of the suite chiefly on horseback, the remainder in small covered carriages on two wheels; and last of all, the two officers Van and Chou, with their attendants, closed this motley procession. At the halfway-house we had a breakfast provided, of roast pork and venison, with several made dishes, eggs, tea, milk, and a variety of fruits served up on cakes of ice.

The public road, constructed of large slabs of granite, very ill laid, with deep ruts between them, and their surfaces corroded into holes, was but little adapted for the ease and comfort of those passengers, whose fate it was to be conveyed in small cramped carts, without springs and with no seat within; so that the occupant is reduced to the necessity of sitting on his haunches, and of enduring the perpetual jolting of his miserable vehicle. Mr. Davis, who, on Lord Amherst's sudden departure homewards, had exchanged his horse for one

\* These details are taken from my note-book, the materials being under my charge.

of these carts, says, "I had abundant reason to regret the choice, for the convulsive throes of this primitive machine without springs, on the ruined granite road, produced an effect little short of lingering death; and the only remedy was to get out as often as possible, and walk." To those who had made choice of such miserable machines, nothing but the novelty of the scene could have made them tolerable. Crowds of native spectators lined the sides of the road, on horseback, on foot, in springless carts, in waggons, and in chairs, all apparently in the greatest good humour, expressed by smiles and grins, and exclamations of delight. Carried in chairs were numbers of Chinese ladies, but the gauze curtains at the sides and front kept them mostly from our view; many well-looking Tartar ladies, however, in their silken robes, were less scrupulous in permitting us to witness their charms.

The only objects of art that attracted notice, on this public road leading to the capital, were a temple or pagoda of the usual kind, and, near it, a bridge of white marble, with balustrades bearing sculptured figures of lions and other animals of the same material. A little beyond these the walls and the lofty gate of the capital appeared in view.

On approaching them, we found the walls to be about thirty feet in height, flanked with square towers at bow-shot distance, perhaps about seventy yards apart; the base of the wall was about twenty-five feet thick, reduced by the slope to twelve feet at the top within the parapet; the middle part of the wall being of earth, held together by two retaining walls of blue brick, interspersed here and there with blocks of granite. The south-east gate, through which we entered, is sur-

mounted by a lofty tower of several tiers of port-holes, closed with painted red doors, appearing not unlike the sham-ports in the side of a ship of war. A second gate encloses a space of ground surrounded by buildings appropriated to military purposes, as the depôt for provisions and ammunition, and barracks for the men, the whole being meant as a *place d'armes*. On this side of the city there are three such gates, and on each of the other three sides two, from which Peking is sometimes called the *City of Nine Gates*.\*

In passing from the south-eastern to the north-western gates of Peking, I shall merely notice the objects that met the eye along this route. The first street is wide and straight; the line of buildings on each side of it were shops and warehouses, mostly with open fronts, and in or before which were displayed every possible variety of wares for sale; among other articles coffins for the dead, splendidly gilt and ornamented, were most numerous and made the greatest show, equalled only by the brilliant display of funeral-biers and marriage-cars, with their highly decorated canopies of sky-blue or bright green with gold devices, which were really handsome. Similar decorations and flags were placed before the several houses, exhibiting two long lines of waving colours, of different shape, displaying every variety of tint.

Independent of the valuable wares and merchandise thus arrayed in front of the houses, a multitude of moveable workshops of tinkers and barbers, of cobblers and blacksmiths, together with tents and booths, where tea and rice and fruit with various kinds of eatables,

\* I had many opportunities of passing and repassing the north-western gate, and they are all on the same plan.

were to be sold, had contracted the street, spacious as it was, to a narrow road in the middle, scarcely wide enough to allow two little carts to pass each other: yet, within this narrow space were processions bearing umbrellas, flags, and painted lanterns—trains carrying corpses to their graves with lamentable cries—others with squalling music conducting brides to their husbands—troops of dromedaries laden with coals from Tartary—wheelbarrows and hand-carts stuffed with vegetables; and if to these be added, numbers of pedlers with their packs, jugglers and conjurers and fortune-tellers, musicians and comedians, mountebanks, and quack-doctors—with all these impediments, so little room was left for the persons of the embassy, that it was nearly three hours before we reached the north-western gate.

The great street, we had thus with some difficulty passed through, leads directly to the eastern wall of the imperial palace, that forms one side of that through which we had next to pass. This wall, with its four sides, encloses all the buildings and gardens appertaining to the imperial residence in the capital, and is of itself a remarkable object, being covered along its whole extent with a yellow roof, of a deep and brilliant colour, and so highly varnished as to look like gold. Turning to the right, we had on one side the imperial wall, and on the other a range of private houses. On a second turn to the left, at the end of this street, we had now the northern side of the imperial wall also on our left, and on the right were private houses, without any display in front, and with very little bustle in this part of the Tartarian city.

About the centre of this northern side of the palace



wall are three gates, or rather a treble gate, before which we halted, with an intention perhaps to afford us a glance through them of the imperial gardens, consisting of a large space of ground, which, we could observe, was artificially laid out in hills and valleys, the one being thrown up by the materials taken from the other, and some of the excavations supplied with water, in which were small islands with light buildings upon them; and the hills were covered with groups of trees or large shrubs.

Proceeding to the north-west we passed a double gate, similar to that through which we had entered, not a little overjoyed on finding ourselves once more upon a flagged causeway, bad as it was, and in an open country, having first passed a small suburb beyond the gate. We were conducted to a villa said to belong to the Emperor, about eight miles from the capital, containing a number of small and mean detached apartments, scattered over a surface of ground of about fifteen acres, all of them miserably out of repair, and in so dirty and ruinous a condition as to be totally uninhabitable. The officers Van and Chou were immediately desired to notify to the officers of the court, that these were not accommodations suitable to the dignity of a British Ambassador, who had, however, already communicated his determination to have nothing to do with them, and had insisted upon his immediate removal to Peking. The peremptory decision was immediately responded to; and it was announced that a suitable house in Peking was ready for his Excellency's reception.

On returning to the capital, the premises were found to be large enough, but the numerous apartments all

shamefully dirty and wholly unfurnished; in other respects it was said to be one of the best that Peking afforded. It was built, it seems, by a *hopoo*, or collector of customs at Canton, thence preferred to the same situation at Tien-sing, where, for his roguery in embezzling the revenues, he was thrown into gaol, and his property confiscated. Our conductors told us, that on proposing this house to the Emperor for the use of the British Ambassador, the good old gentleman replied, "Most certainly; you cannot refuse the temporary occupation of a house to the Ambassador of that nation, which contributed so very largely towards the expense of building it." It was in fact a Chinese palace.

It consisted of a large space of ground divided into several courts, with detached buildings on the sides, and artificial rocks crowned with stunted trees rising out of basins of water. Its whole appearance, however, was, to an English taste, destitute of everything like convenience or comfort; which happened to be of less importance, as it was speedily announced, that the Emperor wished the introduction of the Ambassador should take place at Gehol, in Tartary, about 140 miles from Peking; that such of the presents as were most valuable and the least bulky should be presented there; and that the large and valuable mechanical and scientific instruments should be fitted up in the great hall of audience at Yuen-min-Yuen, for the Emperor's inspection at his return: and now my charge began to be serious. To prepare for this, Dr. Dinwiddie and myself, with our two mechanics, had apartments allotted to us in the palace of Yuen-min-Yuen, and the remainder of the suite, not intended for Tartary, were to be left in Peking.

Having picked up some little knowledge of the spoken language (difficult only in catching the correct tone of pronunciation) on the passage from England and since our arrival in China, by the assistance of our two Chinese Catholic priests, and also from our attendant mandarins and the bargemen, I was less annoyed at this temporary banishment, more especially as the principal officers of the establishment of Yuen-min-Yuen were directed to grant me unconditional leave, whenever I should find it necessary or proper, to visit the capital, where the mass of our property remained, and also to afford me the means of doing so; and it is but justice to say, that a horse or one of the small covered carts was always at my disposal. From the Chinese servants who were granted to me, and the numerous mandarins and workmen appointed to arrange the presents, I extended the little knowledge I had previously acquired of their language.

On my first arrival at this palace, I found Chinese workmen busily employed in breaking open the packages, to my no small alarm for the globes, clocks, glass lustres, and other frangible articles, the danger to which I considered to be inevitable, as indeed it would have been if entrusted to less careful and dexterous hands than those of Chinese, of which I had already experience. On the conveyance of these valuable articles to the great audience-hall I had the satisfaction to find that not a single article was either missing or injured.

After having positively rejected a set of mean apartments, and very dirty withal, I succeeded in obtaining some that were larger and more decent, which our attending mandarin took care to tell me belonged to one of the ministers of state. A gentleman now intro-

duced himself to me, whom, though in a Chinese dress, I immediately perceived to be a European. He spoke Latin, said his name was Deodato, a Neapolitan missionary, ordered by the court to act as interpreter; he offered his best services, and hoped he might prove useful to us: and it is due to him to say that, during a five weeks' residence here, I received from him the most friendly and unremitting attention. Signor Deodato was an excellent mechanic, and, in that capacity, was of great value in keeping in order the numerous pieces of clockwork, previously here assembled, having found their way from London *viâ* Canton.

To make amends for the shabby kind of apartments, considered good enough, however, for a minister of state, we sat down to an excellent dinner, consisting of a great variety of dishes neatly dressed and served up in porcelain bowls. The best soup I ever tasted anywhere was here, made from an extract of beef, seasoned with a preparation of soy and other ingredients. Some vermicelli we found delicate, and all the pastry, made with the flour of buck-wheat, was unusually light and white as snow. Our fruit was iced, and it appeared that in the neighbourhood of the capital ice is within the reach of the poorest peasant.

An old eunuch, who seemed to be the guardian and director-general of the palace, by his interference and inquisitiveness, was the only cause of interruption to the unpacking and distribution of the valuable instruments for the Emperor; but I soon put a stop to his meddling in matters that did not belong to him and of which he knew nothing. As soon as we got them set up in the hall of audience, visitors of all ranks, from princes of the blood to the lower class of mandarins

and plain citizens, came daily to look at the presents, and principally at the English *tribute-bearers*, whom, I believe, they considered as the greatest of the curiosities. Among the visitors came, one day in great state, the president of the tribunal of mathematics, accompanied by Govea, a Portuguese missionary and titular bishop of Peking; also Padré Antonio and his secretary—all three members of this learned tribunal. Their object was to make themselves acquainted with the nature and use of the astronomical instruments, and more especially of the grand planetarium, in order that they might be able to give a correct description and explanation to His Imperial Majesty, and to afford proper answers to such questions as might be asked.

From the few questions that were put by the president of this learned body respecting the planetarium, it seemed that the only conception he had of it was, that in the principle of its construction it was similar to one of those curious pieces of musical mechanism (only on a larger scale) which in the Canton jargon are called *sing-songs*; and that it was only necessary to wind it up, like a jack, to set it a-going when it would tell him all he wanted to know. The bishop and his companions appeared by their questions to be little superior in mathematical and astronomical science to the president. This gentleman, however, was apparently of a mild and placid temper, pleasing in his manners, and of a modest and unassuming deportment. His secretary was a keen, sharp fellow, very inquisitive, and wrote down the answer to every question proposed. Next day the bishop came unattended by any of the Chinese members of the board; and I learned from him that the

astronomical part of the national almanac, such as calculating the eclipses, the times of new and full moon, the rising and setting of the sun, &c., were entrusted to him and his colleagues ; and he admitted that their calculations were much assisted and facilitated by the *Connoissances de Tems*, which they regularly received ; and from this, and by knowing the precise difference of the meridians of Paris and Peking, they were enabled to give all that was necessary for the Chinese to know ; that the astrological part of the almanac was entirely under the direction of the Chinese president and members of the board. He admitted, however, that there were two or three intelligent Chinese, who had made themselves acquainted with the principles on which eclipses are calculated. How often, when among these people, did I think of my poor old friend Gibson, and how much I was indebted to him !

The two elegant carriages made by Hatchett were objects of great admiration ; but it was a puzzling question for the Chinese to decide, which part was intended for the Emperor's seat?—the neat and commodious seats, with their cushions inside, with the windows and the blinds, and every part within, were elegantly fitted for the reception of none but the monarch ; but then a question arose, who was to occupy the elevated position, with its splendid hammer-cloth, edged with gold and decorated with festoons of roses ? To determine the disputed point, the old eunuch, who had a particular affection for the carriages, applied to me, and when told that the Emperor's place was within, and that the elevated seat was for the man that drove the horses—with the usual ejaculation of surprise, *hai-ya !* he asked me if I supposed the *ta-whang-tee* would suffer any man to sit

above him, and to turn his back upon him? "That," he said, "will never do," and asked, if the splendid coach-box could not be substituted for the seat within the carriage or placed behind it?

The Emperor, however, it seems, never once troubled himself about these carriages, if we are to credit the Dutch account; for it is reported by them, who speedily followed us to Peking, that they found them stripped of all the ornamental parts, and bundled into an outhouse behind a parcel of dirty carts.

I had some difficulty in explaining to the mandarins the names, titles, and offices of a collection of portraits, which Lord Macartney had presented to the Emperor at Gehol, and which his majesty had despatched to Yuen-min-Yuen, to be translated into the Mantchoo and Chinese languages. We got over the names pretty well; that of the Duke of Marlborough being written down *Too-ke Ma-ul-po-loo*; of Bedford *Pe-té-fo-ul-te*, &c.; but the portrait of the latter, having been taken in his boyhood, when I desired the Chinese secretary to write him down as a *ta-gin*, or great man of the second order, he immediately said, "I suppose you mean his father was a *ta-gin*." I explained to him that with us neither age, nor superior talents, nor great acquirements, were necessary to obtain the appellation of *ta-gin*, to which many of our legislators were entitled by birth: he also exclaimed *hai-ya!* laughed heartily at the idea of a man being born a legislator, when so many years of close application were required, to enable one of their countrymen to pass his examination even, for the very lowest order of state-officers. But as the Emperor can confer a sort of nominal rank on the descendants of Confucius, but not such as to entitle to office, emolument, or

exclusive privilege, they agreed to put down his Grace as one of that description, positively refusing to give him the title of *ta-gin*, alleging that the Emperor was not so stupid as to believe, that a little boy could have attained the rank of a *great man*.

On the 14th of September, three days before the Emperor's birth-day, Padré Anselmo came to tell me that he feared all was not right at Gehol; that the Tartar legate had been degraded from his rank for deceiving the Emperor, and for not having paid his personal respects to the Ambassador on board ship, when in Tien-sing roads; that his peacock's feather had been exchanged for a crow's tail; and that regard for his age and his family alone had saved him from banishment. The Emperor, it seems, having heard that the Ambassador's portrait was suspended in the cabin of the 'Lion,' asked the legate if it was like him, when it came out that he had never been near the 'Lion,' as his order directed him, but had reported that it had been obeyed.

Two days after this, on going to the hall of audience, I found the doors shut, and the old eunuch walking about in so sullen a mood that he would not speak to me. Groups of officers were assembled in the court-yard, all looking as if something very dreadful either had happened or was about to happen. Nobody would speak to me, nor could I get any explanation of this extraordinary conduct; though I concluded it could be no other than the result of a temporary anger of the old Emperor, for the deception that had been practised on him. At length my friend Deodato made his appearance, with a countenance not less woeful than those of the government officers. I asked him what had occurred? His answer was, "We are all lost, ruined, and undone. Lord



Macartney has refused to comply with the ceremony of prostrating himself nine times before the Emperor, unless a Chinese officer, of equal rank with himself, shall go through the same ceremony before the portrait of his Britannic Majesty; or, that his Lordship's proposal, which he had now to offer, should be accepted—namely, that he himself would perform the same ceremony of respect to his Imperial Majesty, which he is required to do to his own sovereign. And Deodato observed that whatever might be thought of this at Gehol, the great officers of state, in the tribunal of rites and ceremonies in Peking, were, he knew, outrageous, perplexed, and alarmed; in short, that it could not be conceived what might be the consequences of allowing an ancient custom to be broken through, and a new one, of a barbarous nation, to be adopted in lieu of it. But Deodato was, moreover, fearful that the ill effects of it might extend to his own class.

The only visible result upon *us* at Yuen-min-Yuen was the abridgment of our table in the number and quality of the dishes—the usual mode among the Chinese of manifesting their displeasure. Something of the same kind, it appeared, had taken place at Gehol: from the time that the Ambassador began to demur to the ceremony, and to offer conditions, attempts were made to starve him into compliance by an abridgment of his table; finding that to fail, they had recourse to an opposite plan, and became full of liberality, kindness, and complaisance.

On the 21st of September the Ambassador returned to Peking, and notice was issued that, on the 30th, the Emperor would inspect the presents at Yuen-min-Yuen. They were all perfectly ready, and I was not a little

delighted at the idea of turning them over to the Chinese. This was the day fixed for his intended return, and it was notified to the Ambassador, that it was a usual compliment for all public officers to meet him on the road ten or twelve miles from the capital, and that it would be so considered, if his Excellency and suite would join in the ceremony. There was nothing unreasonable in this, and accordingly the whole suite were mounted and arrived on the ground about six in the morning. This road was newly made for the occasion, beautifully rolled smooth and level, well watered, and on each side were, at intervals of about fifty yards, triangles of poles erected, from which were suspended painted lanterns. On the margins of the road, as far as the eye could reach, were thousands of state-officers in habits of ceremony—Tartar troops in their holiday-dresses—standard-bearers without number—military music and household officers lining the two sides of the road. The approach of the Emperor was announced by a blast of trumpets, followed by softer music; and the description, in an ancient and hallowed record, is so strikingly similar to the one in question as to be here appropriately applied: “And at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flutes, harps, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces that were gathered together, fell down and worshipped”—save and except, it may be added, certain strangers who were present and obstinately resolved to do no greater homage to any sovereign, than that which is required by their own, and who contented themselves by volun-

tarily bending one knee to the ground, as the Emperor of China passed by.

Seated in a clumsy state-chariot, his Majesty bowed very graciously to the Ambassador as he passed, and sent a message to say that, understanding he was not well, he advised him to return immediately to Peking, and not to stop at Yuen-min-Yuen, as had been intended and arranged on leaving Gehol.

The following day, the 1st of October, the Emperor, attended by a Tartar officer, inspected the presents in the hall of audience, and examined many of them more attentively than I could have imagined. He desired the Tartar prince to tell us, through Deodato, that the accounts he had received of our good conduct at Yuen-min-Yuen had given him great pleasure; and that he had ordered a present to be made to each of us, as a proof of his entire satisfaction. The present consisted of rolls of silk, and pieces of silver cast in the form of a Tartar shoe, each being about an ounce in weight. They were delivered by the old eunuch, who wished to exact from us the usual prostrations, even after the Emperor had departed; but I only laughed at him, and asked him where the bamboos were kept; he understood me, gave a grin and a growl, and walked away. I thought it right, however, to desire Deodato to explain to the Tartar prince, who remained, that we had no objection to do as the Ambassador had done at Gehol, and which had been repeated by us on meeting the Emperor; and he immediately said that nothing more was required: accordingly, on receiving the presents, we each placed one knee on the lowest step leading to the throne. I told Lord Macartney what we had done, and he said it was perfectly correct.

In the course of our remaining here, I walked a great deal over the park, and made a rough estimate of its extent—including the gardens and pleasure-grounds of Yuen-min-Yuen—as occupying a space of nine or ten miles in diameter, or about sixty thousand acres. Of those parts contiguous to the palace, which may be supposed the most carefully cultivated, and the numerous pavilions and ornamental buildings in the best order, I can say nothing in praise; no care whatever appeared to be taken of any, nor regard had to cleanliness. The general appearance of the surface, broken into hill and dale, and diversified with wood and lawn, bore some resemblance to Richmond Park, with the addition of large sheets of water, generally covered with a blue water-lily—the *Nymphaea nelumbo* (or *nelumbium*?)—a favourite flowering plant with the Chinese, and possessing something of a sacred character. I saw none of those extravagant beauties and picturesque embellishments which Sir William Chambers has given of Chinese gardening; nothing of the kind appeared within the scope of my rambles, which, however, close to the palace, were mostly made by stealth; for the old eunuch and his gang were continually on the watch to prevent us going beyond the boundary of the audience hall. One day, on strolling towards a large pavilion within a garden, I heard the old monster screaming and running after me, "*Neu-gin, neu-gin, poo hao!*"—Women, women, not good! Not wishing to take any notice, I turned my back upon the ladies, and strolled in an opposite direction.

The only room worth noticing is the hall of audience, which stands alone at the head of a large court-yard; its dimensions within are, length 110 feet, breadth 42,

and height 20; the ceiling painted with a variety of colours, in circles, squares, and polygons, whimsically disposed. The throne, placed in a recess, is entirely of wood resembling mahogany, and beautifully carved. A few porcelain vases, a pair of kettle-drums, a few volumes of manuscripts, and an old English chimney-clock, with the name of Clarke, Leadenhall Street, which the old eunuch had the impudence to tell me was made by a Chinese, constituted the chief part of the visible furniture. A few wretched attempts at sculpture, and some bronze figures, were here and there seen in the courts, the objects fanciful, distorted, and entirely out of nature.

The park and garden at Gehol, called *Van-choo-yeuén*—or garden of ten thousand trees—which the Emperor gave directions to the first minister should be shown to Lord Macartney, appears by his Lordship's description to be very different from, and much superior to, Yuen-min-Yuen. He was conducted over the whole park, and has given a detailed and animated description of the endless beauties that met his inquiring eye. He says,—

“It would be an endless task were I to attempt a detail of all the wonders of this charming place. There is no beauty of distribution, no feature of amenity, no reach of fancy, which embellishes our pleasure-grounds in England, that is not to be found here. Had China been accessible to Mr. Browne or Mr. Hamilton, I should have sworn they had drawn their happiest ideas from the rich sources which I have tasted this day; for, in the course of a few hours, I have enjoyed such vicissitudes of rural delight, as I did not conceive could be felt out of England, being at different moments en-

chanted by scenes perfectly similar to those I had known there—to the magnificence of Stowe, the softer beauties of Woburn, and the fairy-land of Paine's Hill." \*

From a covered pavilion, situated on an elevated summit, commanding a vast extent, his Lordship says,—

“The radius of the horizon I should suppose to be at least twenty miles from the central spot where we stood; and certainly, so rich, so various, so beautiful, so sublime a prospect my eyes had never beheld. I saw everything before me as on an illuminated map—palaces, pagodas, towns, villages, farm-houses, plains, and valleys watered by innumerable streams, hills waving with woods, and meadows covered with cattle of the most beautiful marks and colours. All seemed to be nearly at my feet, and that a step would convey me within reach of them.” And he adds, “If any place in England can be said, in any respect, to have similar features to the western park, which I have seen this day, it is Lowther Hall, in Westmoreland, which (when I knew it many years ago) from the extent of prospect, the grand surrounding objects, the noble situation, the diversity of surface, the extensive woods, and command of water, I thought might be rendered, by a man of sense, spirit, and taste, the finest scene in the British dominions.” †

Having learned at Yuen-min-Yuen that preparations were making by the officers of government for our departure, I rode over to Peking to give Lord Macartney information of what was occurring; and, being himself desirous of having the day fixed for this purpose, he despatched a note to the first minister, who returned an

\* Lord Macartney's MS. Journal.

† Ibid.

answer by the Tartar legate, to inform him that, in order to prevent any likelihood of being surprised by the approaching bad weather, the Emperor had named the 7th instant (October) for the commencement of the journey; and had issued his orders that every honour and distinction should be paid to the embassy on the road.

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#### SECTION V.

*Leave Yuen-min-Yuen and Pekin, on a Journey to Canton, by the Grand Canal, by various Rivers, and by Land, comprising a Distance of Twelve to Thirteen Hundred Miles.*

HAVING now carefully examined and seen that all the valuable presents for the Emperor were properly placed, and gone over the catalogue with Deodato, in presence of the old eunuch and an officer belonging to the palace, I gave notice to our small party to be ready the following morning to depart for Pekin. The kind Deodato called on me to take leave, and thus gave me the opportunity of expressing to him, how much I felt indebted for his valuable assistance, and for the constant and friendly attention I had experienced at his hands. He was a gentleman well deserving a higher and more desirable situation than that in which his destiny had placed him; but he said that, so long as he gave satisfaction to his employers at home, and was treated respectfully by the Chinese authorities, he was not disposed to complain. He was a highly-gifted and an amiable man.

On arriving at our hotel in Peking, the Ambassador and the whole of his suite (except Mr. Maxwell and myself), the soldiers, servants, and musicians left Peking about two hours after our joining; some of them on horses, others in the country carriages, forming a sort of procession, before which a Chinese officer on horseback took the lead, having the letter of the Emperor of China to the King of England slung across his shoulders, in a case covered with yellow silk.

As soon as we had settled our final accounts with the Chinese officers and servants attached to our hotel, Mr. Maxwell and I, in the evening of the 7th of October, rode through the streets of Peking for the last time. We were quite alone, not a single Chinese servant, soldier, or officer to conduct us; but I had no difficulty in finding the way to and from our hotel to the broad streets, through which we had before passed, and along which we now proceeded without the least molestation, or indeed, I may say, without the least notice. The difference between the appearance of the streets of Peking and of London is very striking; in the former the crowds of the day retire in the evening to eat their rice, and, following the example of their great Emperor, go to bed with the setting sun; in the morning, when the day begins to dawn, the buzz and the bustle of the populace is like that of a swarm of bees: just the reverse is that of our streets and population, more especially in the early part of the morning, when London is a perfect desert. The late Admiral Sir Roger Curtis was in the habit of mounting his horse, on summer mornings at three o'clock, to ride through the deserted streets of London, when, he said, their geography, and the plans and elevations of the buildings,



appeared at once to the eye unobstructed by the multitudes of the day. At eight in the evening the gates of Peking are shut, and the keys sent to the governor. When Lord Amherst and his party approached the south-eastern gate, it was shut, and his Lordship and the whole of his suite were obliged to travel a great part of the night outside the walls, over a most detestable road, and only arrived at their destination the following morning at daylight.

We had not much time to spare to save us from being locked within the city walls; and it was at a late hour that we joined the rest of the party in the suburbs of Tong-choo-foo, where we were once more lodged among the gods of the nation, in a spacious temple, whose priests are so accustomed to give way to the officers of state, as to resign to us also the temporary use of their apartments without a murmur. Once more we found here so many scorpions and scolopendras within doors, and such myriads of mosquitoes with the incessant noise of the chirping cicadas without, as to defy all attempts to sleep, when the more noisy gong summoned the holy men to their morning devotions, and us to prepare for our embarkation on the Pei-ho.

We found the river now much more shallow, and the barges proportionably smaller, than on our ascent of it, but they were very commodious; and those worthy officers Van and Chou had taken care that no expense should be spared to make our journey as pleasant and comfortable as the nature of the country permitted. Having observed that we were in the habit of using milk to our tea, they had purchased two fine cows in full milk, and prepared a yacht for their reception, to afford us a supply of that article. Whenever

we had to pass near the residence of a chief officer, an entertainment was prepared, and in order to make it more acceptable served up, as they thought, in the English style ; so that we had hogs roasted whole, quarters of mutton, geese, ducks, and fowls the same ; a mode of cookery altogether differing from the practice of the country, which is that of stewing small morsels of meat with greens or rice, and rich sauces.

At Tien-sing, however, our chief conductor, *Sun-ta-gin*, had prepared a sumptuous entertainment, consisting of excellent mutton, pork, venison, and poultry of all kinds, together with a great variety of confectionary, peaches, plums, grapes, chesnuts, and walnuts. Our dignified chief allowed us to walk on shore as much as we pleased, but cautioned us not to go far from the banks, for fear of retarding the yachts or being left behind—hinting at the same time that Van and Chou would be held responsible for any accident that might happen while under the protection of the Emperor.

At some distance from the city, and bordering on the river, was observed an extensive burying-ground, ornamented with weeping willows and cypresses interspersed among the tombs. In a corner of this cemetery was a small temple, with an altar in the centre, and before it I noticed an elderly lady busily employed in drawing out the sticks of fate, but she missed the fortunate number. During the shaking of the cup her countenance expressed much eagerness and anxiety, and her manner betrayed a peevish and muttering tone on leaving the temple, which made me think we had disturbed her in the midst of her devotions. The keeper, one of the inferior priests, being asked by our interpreter what her object was, said, “Nothing less than to draw for a

favourable chance of being blessed with a second husband, the hope of which had been demolished by the decree of fate."

These fatalists are the lowest of the three classes of priesthood in China, said to have existed from the time of Confucius, under the name of Tao-tsé, a sect invented by one Lao-keun—impostors who pretend to deal in magic, to possess the elixir of long life, and to tell fortunes—in all of which they appear to have plenty of custom from the lower classes. The doctrine left them by their founder is truly Epicurean—to live happily is the chief end of man—to take no concern about this life—to eat, to drink, and to sleep are the great blessings of life—and to subdue every passion of the mind that interferes with self-enjoyment.

When with much delay and difficulty we had got through the crowds of shipping at Tien-sing, among which were said to be about five hundred of the Emperor's revenue-vessels with grain for the capital, we turned into the Eu-ho or Yun-leang-ho (the corn-bearing river), which flows from the westward and falls into the Pei-ho just below the city of Tien-sing, situated partly above the point of confluence and partly below it, thus partaking the benefit of the two rivers. The country through which the Eu-ho flows is perfectly level, yet the river runs with such a rapid stream as to require eighteen or twenty trackers to each yacht. We travelled slowly, and towns, villages, and cities, surrounded by walls higher than the roofs of the houses, were constantly in sight. The country wore a pleasing and cheerful aspect; it was harvest-time, and wheat, buck-wheat, and various kinds of millet were under the reapers' hands. Several cotton plantations

were observed with the pods well formed, but not yet ripe.

The usual ceremonies of the full moon delayed us some time. The noisy gong, the harsh squalling music, and the fireworks were continued through the night, and ceased only with the appearance of the sun. In addition to these noises of gongs, trumpets, and crackers, our ears were frequently assailed by the cries of persons under the punishment of the bamboo or whip, for claiming exemption from the service of tracking the barges. When brought together in the morning, it was impossible not to regard these poor people with an eye of pity.

A favourable breeze brought us speedily into the province of Shan-tung at a place called Lin-tsin, where the Grand Canal joins its waters to the Eu-ho, into which it flows with a gentle current, the bed of the river being consequently on a lower level than that of the canal, which appears to have been cut down in a sloping direction from the highest point of land where the river Luen-ho joins from the eastward. The projector would seem to have taken this summit level for the commencement of his undertaking, by which he had the advantage of obtaining two opposite currents, the one flowing towards the Eu-ho, the other towards the Whang-ho, or Yellow River, and of procuring a supply of water for both branches by means of the Luen-ho being made to strike against the western stone bank of the canal by which its stream becomes divided, and flows north and south.

These two currents thus flowing in opposite directions, required some management to make the canal navigable through both arms, on either of which, if left simply as it was, the craft could only be floated down the current

one way. To remedy this defect he caused grooves to be cut in the projecting stone piers of the banks, contracting the width of the canal at certain distances, for planks to slide in, and thus form so many dams, and also a succession of tranquil basins. To regulate and keep up a proper supply of water, openings are made in the two banks of the canal, at the most suitable places, according to the nature of the surface of the country, to let in or out such a quantity of water, as the deficiency or redundancy may require.

At the junction of the Grand Canal with the Eu-ho is the city of Lin-tsin, and near it a tall pagoda of eight or nine stories. These buildings are not of frequent occurrence in China; they appertain exclusively to the Budhists, the second in reputation of the three sects. Their doctrine is derived from the Hindus: their founder, Budh or Fo, was one of the avatars of Vishnu, was expelled by the Brahmins, and he and his followers spread their doctrines through Siam, Pegu, Thibet, and a great part of Tartary, whence it proceeded to China. They have a story, that when Budh withdrew himself from among the living, they burned his body and placed the ashes of his bones in eight vases or urns, and having built a pyramid of eight stories, deposited an urn in each story. Their common exclamation, *O-me-to-fo!* is written up in gilt letters in most of their temples.

We found no impediment or stoppage the whole way. A sufficient number of men are stationed at every dam to hoist up the planks, by windlasses, as soon as the barges intending to pass are collected close to the dams: and the navigation of the canal was as pleasant and agreeable as could be wished. The banks generally swarmed with people of all classes, chiefly

peasantry, when not in the neighbourhood of some city, which was of daily occurrence. The province of Shantung, in the vicinity of the canal, was observed on both banks to be well cultivated. I walked through several large fields of the cotton-plant; the full-grown and opening pods exhibited the wool beautifully white. I sought among the several beds for the yellow tinged which we call *nankin*, but found none; and was told by an intelligent farmer that it grew plentifully in Kiangnan. The wheat here had been cut, but three or four species of millet were very luxuriant; I observed they were all planted in rows, and single-stemmed, as if they had been dibbled. In the swampy grounds rice was the chief culture: the cyperus and the scirpus flourished in the dividing ditches. The musk and water melon, pumpkins, cucumbers, onions, and garlic, and the *pei-tsai* or white herb, were abundant near the farm-houses. Clumps of trees, more particularly large elms, willows, and ash, appeared only near the pagodas or temples, the cemeteries, and the officers' houses.

On descending from the summit level of the canal at *Luen-ho* to the south, we reached what appeared to be a vast extent of swampy ground or marshy country, in which was situated a city named Tse-ning, and near it a lake, of the same name, of considerable extent: and we found that, from this to the proximity of the Yellow River, the whole surface of the country, on both sides, consisted of lakes and canals, and stagnant rivers, which we should call ditches. Small villages and isolated hovels were visible on every elevation left free from the watery element. Boats innumerable were mostly employed in fishing, in all the various ways in which

the finny tribe are caught, and among others by the fishing-pelican.

We were now running parallel with, and at no great distance from, the Yellow River; and the nature of the country, through which its waters were carried into the Yellow Sea, was a sufficient indication that the labour and expense, as well as the perpetual source of terror to the natives, were no exaggerations; and that the anxiety on the part of the government was to obviate, as far as possible, the threatened destruction of millions of acres, and with them of no less a number of human beings, by the overwhelming irruptions of this mighty river which so frequently take place. On a nearer approach to it, the current of the canal, on account of the entire level of the country, had altogether ceased.

In one place the projectors of the canal had apparently deviated from the direct line, to obtain an immediate communication with an extensive lake, the object of which was, as we soon found, to give to the canal the advantage of a large bay, for the accommodation of shipping requiring to pass and repass its mouth, at the point of junction with the Yellow River. On the western bank they had caused to be erected across a portion of the said lake a long causeway, on stone arches, which answered the double purpose of a free boat-passage between the canal and the lake, and also that of a firm road for the trackers employed in tracking the barges on the canal. The vast surface of water and of swampy ground, with which we had for some days been surrounded on all sides, had a sensible effect on the temperature of the air; the thermometer, towards the end of October, having descended in the mornings and evenings to 39° and 40°.

On the 31st of October, having got clear of the lakes, swamps, and morasses, we entered suddenly upon a different and most delightful country, crowded with cities, towns, and villages; the first rarely wanting the usual embellishments of pagodas and high turreted walls. The surface of the country was now picturesque, broken into hill and dale, both well clothed, the summits of the former generally crowned with forest-trees, and the latter smiling with cultivation. The canal, too, from the time we had passed the arched causeway, had begun to put on an appearance of increased magnificence, being here not less than a thousand feet in width, and bordered with stone quays, composed of large blocks of grey marble, intermixed with others of granite. Soon, however, by the contraction of the canal, we found the current, setting towards the river, to be from two to three miles an hour: and the bustle and activity among the multitudes that crowded the banks, and the number of imperial barges on the canal, some moving and others at anchor, gave strong and certain indication, that we were fast approaching the point for launching into the Yellow River, which was confirmed by an uninterrupted town extending for two or three miles on each bank of the canal, to the point of confluence with that river.

Previously, however, to committing our barges to this powerful stream, which rolled along in a rapid torrent, certain ceremonies were deemed necessary to propitiate the ruling deity. An animal of some kind was to be sacrificed—generally a fowl or a pig, with cups of oil, wine, and salt; the last article never omitted. Our little fleet amounted to thirty sail of barges; and, when crossing about the middle of the



stream, the gongs struck up a tremendous noise, accompanied by volleys of squibs and crackers, which ceased only when all were safe on the other side.

Whatever credit we may be disposed to give the Chinese for their ingenuity, in facilitating a communication between most parts of the empire, by canals, it is not easy to comprehend what could have restrained them from affording the same facility by means of good roads, more especially in those parts that have no navigations, and in the northern districts towards the capital, where, for three or four months, all the canals and lakes are bound up in ice. The misery experienced by the Dutch embassy, which travelled to Peking by land, would be almost incredible, even in the least civilised of all countries. From a MS. journal lent to me, the state of the country they were carried over was wretched in the extreme—thrust into little mean bamboo chairs, each borne by four men, so weak and tottering, as to break down with fatigue, frequently in the middle of the night, where not a hovel of any description was to be seen, to shelter them in the midst of winter from the inclemency of the weather; their lodgings, where any, were so miserable, admitting the wind, rain, or snow on every side, that they generally preferred to rest in their bamboo chairs. But many of the details are too disgusting to repeat. Van Braam, a jolly fat fellow, who, from the luxurious life of Batavia, underwent a state of starvation in China, writes to his friend that he had returned as thin as a shotten herring.

Whether such ignoble and ungenerous treatment of a complimentary embassy was occasioned by some ancient dislike to this nation, or by its following so eagerly and

closely after that of the English, and was intended as a discouragement to any further missions of the kind from other nations, we have no means of knowing; but the reception of a second English embassy was not much better, in some respects, than that of the Dutch.

All I can say is, that nothing could be more comfortable or commodious than the whole of the inland navigation on the Grand Canal, and on the rivers of China, from the northern to the southern extremity of this vast empire; and nothing could exceed the unremitting care and attention of those great officers of state, to whom the charge of the embassy was entrusted, not to mention that of the Emperor himself.

We found, as expected, that the influence of the Yellow River, on the south side, with its inlets and outlets, had covered a vast extent of country with swamps and marshes. Beyond these, however, the province of Kiang-nan, in which we still were, rose into hills, and gave the indication of fertility, prosperity, and an abundant population. We were told, indeed—and we experienced it—that the part of the country which we had now reached, and as far as Hang-choo-foo, a distance of 250 miles, was the most beautiful, the best cultivated, the wealthiest, and the most populous of any district, of equal extent, in all China; there being not fewer than four celebrated cities of the first rank close to the banks of the Grand Canal, two of which, Sao-choo-foo and Hang-cho-foo, are among the finest and the most wealthy cities of China.

The face of the country now became enchanting, both before and after passing the great river of Yang-tse-kiang in its south-eastern course to the sea. I may at