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CHINA FOR THE CHINESE.

The Times Correspondent in Shanghai in an admirably lucid letter calls attention to the spirit of unrest prevalent in the Celestial Empire at the present time. It was only to be expected that the military successes of Japan in the late war should have an immediate and unmistakable effect in the neighbouring kingdom. The power of the west, hitherto so dreaded, has been shown to be no longer invincible and the result has been a general awakening of the national instinct and the universal reiteration of the policy—China for the Chinese.

The extraordinary ignorance of the leading men in China, the men, that is, to whom the mass of the people look for guidance, and the deep rooted aversion felt by the whole people to European ideas and European Civilisation, an aversion which is as bitter today as it was long ago before the opening of the Treaty Ports, predispose them to welcome any change which may accentuate their national independence. They are quite incapable of understanding the real lessons of the Japanese War, but are content to reflect with great self complacency, that the beginnings of Japanese education came from China, and to believe that the mere establishment of an huge army will be sufficient to make their own prestige equal to that of the island kingdom. They ignore the patriotic single-minded policy which Japan has been willing and eager to adopt, forget that they themselves are quite incapable of any such self-sacrifice, and forget too that their whole administrative system is honeycombed by a corruption far greater than that rife in Russia. It is a mistake, common enough in western Europe, to class the Chinese and Japanese under one head, to imagine the aspirations and aims of the so-called yellow races are identical. While it is true that a greater sympathy exists in China for the Japanese, as for a people more akin to them in religion, language, and customs, than for Europeans, whose ideas, method of life, and culture, are obviously radically different, yet there is so great a difference in temperament between the two races as to preclude any lasting sympathy between them. The Chinese do indeed recognise that the successes of Japan have born fruits enviable enough, and to discover the secrets of those successes, thousands of students have been sent to Tokio in the last two years; but that, even were the same success achieved, the same results would follow as in Japan, that China would have to be regarded as not only powerful but highly civilised, is extremely unlikely. The explanation of the radical difference in the national characteristics of the two races lies primarily in their religious history "The Chinaman is essentially an individualist, his ethics and ideals stereotyped by centuries of Confucianism into a stiff code of social philosophy. In Japan the humanising influence of Buddhism has moulded the national life, bringing to a martial race new worlds of beauty and gentleness, and developing the national instinct for every form of aesthetic expression" with the patent result of progress in Japan, stagnation in China. The cry of Reform arises principally from the students who have returned to China from Harvard University and Tokio, and as is natural enough, their cry is all for immediate, wholesale, and therefore impossible reform, for a ready-made constitution, but this cry they raise so loudly, so insistently, that it is reflected in the Press, in imperial edicts, and in the attitude of officials, who can at least understand and sympathise with such portions of the reform programme as the abolition of foreigners' extra-territorial rights, of the acquisition by China of the management of her own railways and mines, and of the exclusion of all foreign influence. Chinese statesmen look on this uprising of young China with indulgence if not with favour, such necessary results as the American boycott and the recent riots in Shanghai are accepted without demur, and while the Anglo-Japanese Alliance practically guarantees China against partition, they realise

how unlikely it is that any power will support its strongest protest by open war or seizure of territory.

The immediate outlook is therefore, according to the *Times* correspondent, anything but promising, and the best hope for its amelioration lies in the very rapidity of its development. Were such incidents as the Shanghai riots repeated with any frequency, the maintenance of the integrity of China, under present conditions, would be impossible, but there is a hope of speedy improvement in the situation, if Japan will do all in her power, by the careful selection of the men she sends to China to carry on the work of education to turn Chinese public opinion into the right path.

In the mean time a step has been taken by China herself, which, even if it be misconstrued by western nations into an ardent desire for thorough reform, cannot fail to arouse interest. The Governor of Hu-nan, Duke Tsai, and some eighty attachés and secretaries, have been sent on a mission to Washington and London with the object of collecting information in regard to the political, financial, and administrative methods of western nations. But we have seen these Commissions sent forth on similar errands in former years, and the result has been of no benefit to any one except the Commissioners themselves. What was truly said of China, when a like Mission was sent out some 35 years ago, is true to day:

"There is nothing in the history of China since the beginning of foreign intercourse, to warrant the idea that the Imperial rulers have the slightest idea of entering into such relations as contemplated by the Law of Nations. What they really want is time, time to establish arsenals, build gunboats, poison the minds of the people throughout the provinces, and in the end, when no longer able to postpone the execution of treaties, make a final attempt to drive every foreigner out of the country."

While it is impossible to deny the right of the Chinese to refuse to Europeans permission to impose their unwelcome presence of them, to insist, in fact, on a policy of isolation, it is inevitable that sooner or later the treaty rights granted to foreigners must either be abrogated or enforced by the sword.

MR. BALFOUR IN THE CITY.

Mr. Balfour in his speech at the Merchant Taylors' Hall on Monday night declared that there was no reason that he should not speak out; and many of his hearers who cheered his statement must have reflected that it would have been better for the party if, while Mr. Balfour still occupied the position of Prime Minister of England, he had felt there was as little need for ambiguity of speech. The occasion was an interesting one for two reasons; in the first place the meeting, or rather banquet, was organized to congratulate the two Unionist members of Parliament, who had been chosen by overwhelming majorities to represent the City of London, but since its inception, one of the members has thought it consistent with his duty to the party to which it belongs, to resign his seat, much as he appreciated the honour done him, in order to make a place in the new House for the ex-Premier after his unexpected defeat in East Manchester; in the second place the banquet was attended by the new Member *in posse*, Mr. Balfour, whose first public utterance it was, since it was definitely known that the great majority at the disposal of the Unionist party in the House of Commons had been turned into an almost insignificant minority, by the verdict of the polls. Further piquancy was lent to the occasion by the fact that a distinct, if exaggerated agitation, had been going

on in a section of the party press, having for its object the deposition of Mr. Balfour from the leadership of His Majesty's opposition, and the substitution of Mr. Chamberlain. That this agitation was an unreal one, was shown by Mr. Chamberlain's letter to the Press a few days ago, but there still remained a curiosity to see whether Mr. Balfour, now that he, like Mr. Gladstone in the old days after his rejection by Oxford University, could consider himself unmuzzled, would justify or falsify the expectations of those who believed him to be very far from regarding the Fiscal Reform policy with the same eyes as Mr. Chamberlain. On this point after the speech of Mr. Balfour, the veriest Didymus in the ranks of the Fiscal Reformers can hardly any longer profess to be a doubter. Mr. Balfour drew an apt comparison between the position of his party towards Fiscal Reform and that of the Liberals some years ago towards that of Local Veto. On the details of any particular Bill to be brought forward there might be differences of opinion, in the principle there was unanimity. There were reforms, which, generated in a moment of enthusiasm, lost their cogency after a time, and were relegated unwept, unhonoured and unsung to oblivion; but there were, on the other hand, reforms the demand for which steadily grew, and though the granting of them might be deferred, their principle was so deep rooted a conviction that their triumph was certain in the end. To this category Mr. Balfour assigned Fiscal Reform. He pointed out that in the great reform era of the forties, it was hoped and believed that commerce was to be carried on in the future on cosmopolitan lines, not national lines. How these predictions have been falsified, history has shown. An instance in point, was the French policy with regard to Madagascar, when English commerce was excluded from the island or at all events faced with such restrictions as to be virtually excluded. The great wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had their ultimate origins in the struggle for fresh markets, or at least unrestricted markets. There is no reason for thinking that any considerable change has come over the nations in their feelings with regard to such markets. On the contrary the one subject which is agitating diplomatists at the present moment is being discussed at a conference avowedly called to prevent one country being overfairly treated at the expense of another. In his reference to Madagascar Mr. Balfour pointed out that to make the French action in the matter a pretext for a Franco-English war would have been wicked and absurd, but it is more than likely that France would have modified her attitude had England possessed a weapon of defence such as the Unionist party claim is ready to their hand in retaliatory tariffs. Mr. Balfour was at no pains to attempt to prove that Protection *per se* was good or bad, but he went as far as, surely, any Chamberlainite could wish in expressing his conviction that hostile tariffs would prove a remedy for a state of things for which no other remedy has been proposed. With regard to the question of a tax on corn, Mr. Balfour pointed out that a small tax existed even up to Mr. Cobden's death and had been imposed temporarily by the late Government. He was not, indeed, prepared to state what, if any, duty the Conservatives, had they been elected, would have imposed on imported foodstuffs, inasmuch as, in the first place the details of no great measure had ever been put forward until the Bill embodying it was before the Country, and in the second place, it would waste time at the present juncture, to discuss the details of a reform, be it good or evil, which cannot, in any circumstances be laid before the House of Commons, as long as the Liberals are in Power, which, with their present majority must be for several years. Both supporters and opponents alike, will rejoice at Mr. Balfour's open speaking, since it will undoubtedly tend to solidify the ranks of the Unionist party, and enable to form a united opposition, which, however strong the Government may be, is always a wholesome ingredient in the House of Commons.