

duration. There has never been any such accumulated experience in the world's history; never such accumulation of custom, of ceremonial, of superstition. The early contemporaries of China have all fallen to pieces, some of them many times, and the continuity of tradition has been broken. But if we, instead of gathering their social history painfully from potsherds or paintings on tombs, or

the long life of the nation has probably also been the cause of its crystallization. And that is what gives so hazardous a character to all innovations forced on China from without.

It may be profitable and practicable to consider in what relation the Chinese people stand to the outward and workaday world of our own time. His predominant quality, that which marks the



HIGH CASTE MANDARIN.

their religion from survivals of poetical mythology, found the Assyrians, Babylonians, ancient Egyptians, and ancient Greeks alive at the present day, should we not expect to find the same maze of folk-lore as in China, the same confused and contradictory superstitions, layer upon layer, survivals from the oldest mingling with the newest accretions? Indeed, whatever may have been the cause of

Chinese, whether at home or abroad, is beyond doubt his industry. He has almost a passion for labour; in search of it he compasses sea and land. He seems born to be the hewer of wood and the drawer of water for humanity, but not as a slave. The Chinaman is always a merchant, and sells his labour for a price. In those countries where the race is persecuted, it is his industry which