

CHINA'S STERILE INHERITANCE.

Mr. Wu Tze-Hui, the veteran thinker of contemporary China, once gave this summary interpretation of the cultural history of China:-

"The ancient Chinese were characteristically simple farmers. They were not an imaginative people and were incapable of establishing religious systems. They prayed and worshipped fetishes as their descendants have been doing to this day. They worked hard and were contented with their lot.

"It was only after the rise of several great sages from their midst, such as Confucius and Mencius, that they were emboldened to become an urban people. And they succeeded in founding states and empires. But this life never suited the wishes of the vast majority of the agricultural population who only wanted good crops and no governmental interference. Probably out of respect for this class, the Confucianist thinkers, too, had to preach the blissfulness of contentment and joyous acceptance of fate.

"Before the age of Buddhism, Chinese society was a combination of the farmer and the country squire. The Taoist philosophers Lao-Tse and Chuang-Tse represented the laissez-faire psychology of the farmer, while Confucianism expressed the more active political desires of the country squire.

"But the introduction of Buddhism from India created a new atmosphere. It gave China a religion. At first, the Chinese Buddhists merely interpreted the Indian religion in terms of the nihilistic philosophy of Lao-Tse and Chuang-Tse, and the new