

FOREWORD

by

GENERAL SIR ARTHUR W. CURRIE, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., LL.D.

*Principal of McGill University
Montreal*

DR. BERTHOLD LAUFER of the Field Museum of Natural History at Chicago is an erudite student of the Orient. His expeditions to China and Tibet, his love of anthropological research, the breadth and depth of his culture have made him a world-known figure, and when he writes of the Gest Chinese Library, he speaks with authority.

The institution of this remarkable collection coincided with the awakening in Canada of a new interest in China and things Chinese. No change caused by the Great War is more important than that which has affected Canada and China. Canada has acquired new weight in the councils of the nations and in the Empire of which she forms a part; China, freed from the deadening influence which accompanied the Manchu rule, is evolving a new national structure and creating new relationships. Both nations come to the forum of world politics with distinctive viewpoints. They are neighbours, joined rather than separated by the Pacific, and their common interests are yearly increasing.

It is recognized that the influence of education tends to create mutual understanding between nations. The great inheritance of the world's literature and culture is the common property of every country. The man who knows something of the history, the environment and the philosophy of another people tends to look upon that people from a friendly point of view, and in the minds of University students national barriers are breaking down.

It was with these thoughts in mind that we at McGill undertook to develop studies bearing on China; when at the same time we were given the opportunity of adding to our library a collection of Chinese classics, we accepted with enthusiasm, and so in McGill University the books of China have taken their place beside the literature of the western world. We look forward to a time when Chinese as well as western students will make full use of the Gest collection, and we believe that it will prove a real factor in the drawing together of East and West.