

but not averse to dispose of their own products, of which raw silk is the staple, but which include also silk stuffs, fine furs and iron of remarkable quality."

Mediaeval Europe knew China as Cathay and had good reason to know it for Jenghis Khan and Kubla Khan, his son, the Mongol conquerors who were by conquest emperors of China, carried their Mongol hordes down into the heart of Europe. The world-wide influence of these Mongols drew travellers and missionaries to Mongolia, and Carpini, a Franciscan monk who visited the court of the Khan in 1246, says of the people of Northern China: "Now these Kitai are heathen men and have a written character of their own. . . . They seem indeed to be kindly and polished folk enough. They have no beard, and in character of countenance are Mongoloid. They have a peculiar language. Their betters as craftsmen in every art practised by man are not to be found in the whole civilized world. Their country is very rich in corn, in wine, in gold and silver, in silk and in every kind of produce tending to the support of mankind."

Rubruk, another Franciscan monk, who visited the country in 1253, says: "The best silk stuffs are still got from them. . . . Those Cathayans are little fellows, speaking much through the nose, and, as in general with all these Eastern peoples, their eyes are very narrow. They are first-rate artists in every kind, and their physicians have a first-rate knowledge of the values of herbs, and an admirable skill in diagnosis by the pulse. . . . The common money consists of pieces of cotton-paper, about a palm in length and breadth, upon which certain lines are printed. They do their writing with a pencil such as painters paint with, and a single character of theirs, comprehends several letters."

Compare this with what a traveller to Great Britain could truthfully have said about the conditions there in the thirteenth century and you will understand something of the contempt with which, up to a few years ago, China regarded the Western nations.

But a new force had entered the crude and brutal civilizations of the West, and while China settled down to a complaisant worship of its past, Western civilization was slowly being saturated with the character of the Christ and the Western lands were slowly