

## Memorial Arches Erected to Chinese Women.

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REV. D. MACGILLIVRAY.—We are all too apt to judge by appearances. The stranger might easily be convinced that China was the most virtuous nation on earth. How? If he could read all the texts and mottoes which greet the eye everywhere. The doors, the lintels, the signs, the shop walls are ablaze with the most flaring protestations of virtue. These are sometimes permanent on wood, sometimes are transitory on paper, which require renewal every New Year's. But who needs to be told that such declarations, as "We regard righteousness as gain," "Strictly one price," have quite the significance of the Pharisee's phylacteries. Appearances fair—but inside! So, young missionary, hold your hand, and be sure you write by the book. The traveller in China is often struck with the beauty and solidity of memorial arches which span the roads in many places. These are built to last. They are no salt-barrel, snowshoe, lacrosse arches, that rise in a day and perish in a day. They last a few hundred years perhaps, and that is long enough to keep dinning into the ear of the Chinese world their story, and they all have a story and a lesson. They are erected in honor of some great man or woman. Well, well, do they bestow on a woman such a magnificent mark of respect? Surely, then, what we hear so often about the degradation of heathen women is all a mistake! Softly, sister, till you learn *why* these piles are erected. The young missionary reads books in Canada, comes over the ocean, and for a year thinks those books painted things all too black. But presently, if he have the open eye and ear, the darkness settles down again, and it is night. Some writers on China, on the other hand, have such a poetical soul that a tumble-down temple on a hillside becomes a fairy palace, and every woman's quarters becomes a boudoir, library or zenana. But the fact remains that we have only a dirty, idol-tenanted house, and still dirtier "hut" or "pen" of a Chinese compound. Why do the relatives secure from the Emperor the privilege of erecting at their own expense these massive arches? The honor is great, surely, when it must come by sanction of the imperial vermilion pencil alone. The *Peking Gazette* is the receiver of all royal