

new, if that should happen to vary in the smallest particular from the orthodox writers, he will be severely punished. Thus is knowledge and civilization in China at a stand still.

*Government.*—According to the theory of the constitution, if we may so speak, the emperor is absolute; his will is law, and he is not responsible to any earthly tribunal for any of his actions. In China as in ancient Rome, fathers have full power over their families, and on the same principle, the emperor is held to have entire control over the Chinese people. The Chinese is emphatically a government of precedent, and his celestial majesty, is, in reality, the creature of custom and etiquette. The penal laws of the empire are printed in a cheap form, and widely diffused. The emperor is called “the son of heaven,” (Teen-tsyé) and the mandarins and other natives not only prostrate themselves when in his presence, but also before a tablet with the inscription “the lord of a myriad years (Wan-suy-yay). Every device is employed to create the impression of awe. Dressed in a yellow robe, the color worn, say the Chinese, by the sun, the emperor is surrounded by all the pageantry of the highest dignity in the world. All must bow the head to a yellow screen of silk. In the great man’s presence, no one dares speak but in a whisper, though his person is too sacred to be often exhibited in public, and an imperial dispatch is received by the burning of incense and prostration. But with all this he is not allowed to lean back in public, to smoke, to change his dress, or in fact to indulge in the least relaxation from the fatiguing support of his dignity. Next to the emperor, the court is composed of four principal ministers, two Tartars, and two Chinese, who form the great council of state, assisted by certain assessors from the Han-lin, or Great College, who have studied the sacred books of Confucius, which form the basis of Chinese law. These may be considered as the cabinet. The police is said to be vigilant and efficient. Corporal punishment is very frequent—the bamboo is in universal requisition from the emperor down to the meanest of his subjects. Sedition is punishable with a lingering death; and there is in use a sort of pillory called the *cangue*, and torture is employed to extort confession. It is believed that the entire revenue is £12,000,000 sterling, £10,000,000 in money, 2,000,000 in produce, which is raised as taxation but as rent, the emperor uniting the character of landlord with that of king and father.