

Memoirs of Li Hung Chang

CHINA'S VICE ROY TELLS OF WORLD TOUR
Series of Remarkable Articles by Greatest Statesman Ever Produced in Chinese Kingdom. No. 4

Next Day, Hour of the Drake.—This day I will exclude myself from all calls, in order that I may devote myself to thoughts of my celestial mother, who died 44 years ago this day, and who for that long time has been thinking of my coming to the Peaceful Springs of the Nine Springs. With all the incidents of my life, its trials and lamentations, its moments of joy and pride, with all and every affair of life I cannot forget my celestial mother, and all she was and is to me.

My father died many years before my mother, and his grave is great and hallowed. Many hundreds of times did my mother bless it and ask my father's spirit to hurry the time when her own might join his in the Happy Vale of Ancestral Longevity. My mother could never think of taking her own life. It is thought great and glorious to do such a thing by many of the ignorant—and many of the intellectual too—but my father's beloved helpmeet could never think it was right nor that it pleased the spirits of the gone before.

In my early days I was possessed of many ideas that I now know were foolish and wicked and not at all in agreement with common sense or philosophy; and one of these is suicide, and another is the putting out of the way of infants. If a man or woman has lost his or her face (that is, is disgraced) so badly that it is impossible to retrieve it, then perhaps it is better to be buried deep in the earth than to live and see shame all the rest of one's days. Or if a government official, with many honors bestowed upon him, is caught stealing the money that belongs to the throne and cannot pay back all that he has taken, even to the last cent, it is better that he take poison. For by doing so he will be thought better of by his family and friends and by the government. But if he will persist in living, even when the law of his punishment do not reach him, he is each day a greater disgrace than he was the day before; and upon his family the burden is heavier as each hour passes.

Or if a great official when he finds that his country is humiliated through him, even though personally he be not at fault, it is a true sign of great love of country if he put an end to his life. For what happiness can a man have when he knows that his name which he so proudly bore is the name to be forever linked with some defeat or degradation of his country's?

I can bless the name of my great and noble friend Admiral Ting, and can bow before the grave of the illustrious Gen. Chang. And I can burn in cease to the spirit of the gallant Commodore Liu (officers who committed suicide following the capture of Wei-hai-wei by the Japanese in January, 1895). Yes, they are honored by all the world even in defeat, and their spirits are sweetest and happiest among those of our noble ancestors! Yes, even the Japanese, in their hour of material victory over our brave men on land and sea, did not refrain from doing great honor to these glory laden officers of our army and navy.

The writer here refers to the honor paid the suicide by Admiral Ito, the Japanese commander, who restored one of the captured Chinese vessels to be a ship of honor for the conveying home of their bodies.

I did not ever care much for the Japanese, and a deadly hatred was in my heart against that nation when it forced China into war over Corea, which for 2,900 years had been ours; but I loved Marquis Ito for this noble action, and I was ready to treat with him in the arrangement of peace.

Such causes for self-destruction are sufficient, but many people take their lives for less reason that would be necessary to send a vagrant to jail for two days. They are silly people; they act only from silly and selfish motives; they have much pride and self-love, and they want others to think they are brave. Many widows cut their throats or bind twine tightly about their necks or their bosoms, or swallow large doses of poisonous herbs in an attempt to show what affection they have for their departed husbands.

What a silly thing, especially if that was the reason, but the truth is that the widow has become lazy or she fears no other man will want to work for her support. In this she does not deceive herself, neither does she fool the many thousands who are glad to come and witness her death. Let the widow marry again and rear up more spirits to honor the spirits of those gone before, of course if she is too lazy to do this suicide is good enough for her.

When I was a very young boy in Antin I was accused of something wrong and some of my youthful friends told me that I could only save my face and the face of my family by jumping into a well. I was guilty of the wrong—the taking of two ducks from a pond, which I cooked and ate—and I was very sorry, even without the severe punishment administered to me by my father and mother, as well as by the owner of the fowl. But I did not want to die, although my father could not pay for the ducks, and was himself given 200 strokes of the bamboo.

If he had been able to pay, or at least if he had been able to bribe the magistrate so as to escape the public beating, it would not have been so bad. Still I thought my father and myself had suffered enough, and I went to my mother to ask her if I should jump into the well. She said no, that it would not be right; but that the better thing for me to do would be to earn enough in the next harvest time to pay for the ducks and give an extra duck and nine eggs besides. This advice I followed, paying my debts and more for I gave a fine rabbit to the magistrate who had my father whipped, and ever after that he was the friend of our family.

My life's greatest grief was the death of my mother, and I died a year of mourning, but the throbs had been so bad that I was unable to go to Corea and I was compelled to be in constant communication with the Taung-ley-amen.

A letter from Von Moltke has just been handed me by Song. I shall read it tomorrow. Tonight I must read long into the hours from the philosophers, in memory of my mother.

The little battery of artillery, all its mouth pointing east-north (northeast) seem to say that if we ever fight the Japanese again we shall be better prepared. The toy guns please that part of nature which is of the boy. But the business battery present is a joy indeed!

I now (8 P. M.) take up the Mang-tze for a five hours reading.

Morning—The letter from Von Moltke is simply one expressing his desire to meet me when I arrive at Potsdam. He was to have been at Schonenberg. I can scarcely write that horrible name.

But I shall never forget the wonderful display of sky fire (fireworks) the people of that place prepared for me. We have many kinds of colored sky fires in China, and they are truly wonderful, but what I saw at S. (a mark in the diary) was as if all the spirits of the air had combined to make a home show for me in Europe. There were real battles of men and ships. I know, because I have seen them. And there were great representations of the Golden Dragon, a picture of the Emperor's Grand Dowager (Tsu Hai) and of the emperor.

At last they had, with the booming of cannon and the blare of many military bands, a picture of his Excellency Li Hung Chang in his yellow jacket! And, without knowing, of course, what kind of a show I was to witness—although I had been informed in advance that it was in my honor—I had donned my yellow jacket early in the evening, and was attired in it

when the army committee, headed by General von Getner, and the city committee, headed by Burgomaster Sanders, called.

(On a marginal note, written some time later, the viceroy explains that he was interrupted in his description of the "feast of S." by the arrival of one of his party with a number of important cables, one of them being from President Cleveland inviting him to America in the name of the American people. This message also inquired on behalf of the state department, the probable time of the viceroy's arrival in the United States.

The diary continues: Bremerhaven (Three or four days after leaving Potsdam).—From all that I have seen, I am more than ever convinced that the Kaiser and Prince Bismarck meant what they said when they averred that the German empire was destined to become a dominant factor in Europe. I am wonderfully impressed with the way this nation seems to be working as a unit. The army is upon a business basis, the navy is on a business basis, and the whole machinery of government works smoother than our best Canton timepieces.

I arrived here this morning, accompanied by a host of high officials, and others met our party here. The whole place is in gala attire, and I have all I can do to make myself believe that I am only a foreigner visiting the country instead of a king in this land. I am told that hundreds and thousands of foreigners are here today, and a great number have been introduced to me; some English, some French and some Americans—the latter said to be so rich that they could buy the fleet of magnificent warships lying in this fine harbor.

It is a long time since I was engaged in any fighting, hand to hand, and I am now getting too aged to think of engaging in it; nevertheless my eyes never tire of regiments of soldiers nor of great warships that can do things.

In answer to my questions I have learned the approximate cost of most of the German ships. There are great shipyards here, and Germany intends to build all her navy for all time at home. I could wish for nothing better than that China should build her own fleet and have every man and officer in it a true son of the Middle Kingdom. But our people are not sailors, except upon the rivers, and they do not know how to handle machinery. But they will learn in time, I hope. Anyway when I return I shall make it my duty to urge advancement in all western arts and crafts. We have our beautiful literature, far ahead of that of the western nations, but they have the money and the guns.

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much of German foods. Maybe it is the wines that trouble me, for I have been taking much of their white wines and like them so well that Count Hatfeldt said he would ship many casks to Tientsin for me.

Seventy-five thousand Frenchmen surrendered to the Germans just where we crossed the river.

HOW THE PRICE GREW.
(Toronto Star.)
An Ontario man grew in his orchard three bushels of apples which a farmer in Winnipeg wanted to eat. A man here had them; a man there wanted them. The grower was paid 75 cents; the farmer cost 50 cents; the railway charged 75 cents freight; if you like, let it be assumed that other handling at both ends cost 75 cents. The consumer pays \$5.25. This means that the farmer for his apples and his profit got 75 cents; the railway for its transportation and its profit got 75 cents; the handlers for their work and the profit got 75 cents. And the two middlemen got \$1.75 each for the part they played in the transaction—if they divided equally, which is most improbable. The retailer in Winnipeg probably got only 75 cents. These two men neither produced, transported nor consumed the apples. They financed and directed the transportation.

CHILD LABOR IN CANNERIES.
(Brandon Expositor.)
There is more danger of child labor in connection with canning factories than anywhere else. The work is such as children can readily be employed at, and this fact is recognized even in our own province. Hence ex-

ceptional privileges are conceded to these factories in the matter of hours of labor, etc. It is to be said of most of these factories that, in the past at least, they have been the chief sinners against proper sanitation, and have not been as careful as they might have been with regard to the moral and hygienic conditions under which the people in their employ live. It is certain that no such condition of affairs exists in Ontario today as has been found to prevail in the neighboring state of New York. Rather through the efforts of the factory inspectors there has been a great improvement, which, it is to be hoped, will steadily continue.

An Oak Mine.
(Harper's Weekly.)
Mines of wood are found in the south of Russia, where they were discovered very recently when the bed of a river was dragged. Not very deep in the earth but covering an extent of 200 square kilometers a forest of oaks was found where it had been buried by some unknown cataclysm centuries ago. The wood is in perfect preservation. The man who found the entombed forest has drawn from his mine many trunks of trees measuring from 40 to 60 metres high and at least 18 inches in diameter. The mine is worth a fortune, for the wood is of the first quality and as a result of its long rest underground, it has taken the most varied colors, ranging from dark brown to pale rose and running through all the shades of blue and yellow. One hundred and fifty thousand of the ancient oaks have been turned over to the cabinet makers.