

An Interesting Document.

Below we give a facsimile and translation of an essay on Life Assurance, written specially for the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada by the late Li Hung Chang. The recent death of this eminent Chinese statesman, adds interest to the essay.

趙仰御注孟子檢者欲發謂積豐歲之區
 注歲年之恤其義若稽長荆公之青苗孟子
 之社倉皆以此意惟奉法行令百得有大
 故或利或害耳也百年中泰西富強甲於五
 洲指原其故製器尚象之功居其半而西法理
 財之功亦居其半而所謂保險局者水火二險
 之外并及於性命驟聞其說此甚奇奇字極
 其理即孟子社倉之意豐歲主欲歲年主養無
 異於仰御之所蘇解也而中二月恭承
 簡命轉向歐美諸大邦上宣
 德意下固邦垂道及探風問俗之事同自洋人有何
 愚瞞者精於醫理管理喉部達永明保命公司
 事宜典之談論頓能發明仰御編卷之說以水
 合於子與之言並云時赴新加坡探攬保險之事
 新加坡流寓華民甚多臨別未以贈言者重板
 書此以貽之
 欽差頭等出使大臣文華殿大學士太子太傅一等
 肅毅伯李鴻章撰并書

(Translation.)

In ancient times, Chao Ping-Ching explained the meaning of the words Chein fa, used by Mencius, as meaning, to collect and distribute, that is, to collect in time of plenty in anticipation of days of want. The idea is an excellent one.

Ching-Kung said: "Do not consume the crop of the present year till that of the next is assured."

The philosopher Chu advocated the storing of grain against times of famine. There have been many schemes to this end, and some of them good; some have failed.

During the past century, the power and wealth of the world has centred in the West. What is the cause of this? It is partly due to the adoption of machinery, and partly to the growth of international law and the development of commercial institutions.

Take the matter of assurance. There is assurance against the risks of the sea, against losses by fire; and there is also life assurance. When I first heard of life assurance, I was unable to understand it, but upon giving the matter careful attention I realized that it was simply an exemplification of the philosophy of prepara-

tion, in the times of plenty, for days of adversity, as propounded by Chao Ping-Ching in his commentary on the words of the sage Mencius.

In the second moon of this year, I received imperial commands to visit the great countries of Europe and America, and on behalf of my Emperor express to the governments of those countries his continual friendship and good feeling, as well as to make a study of the chief institutions of the various countries.

Traveling on the same steamer, I met the Asiatic manager of the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada. We talked together, and I found him familiar with the ideas elucidated from the classics of Mencius by Chao Ping-Ching and our philosopher Chu. He informed me that he was going to Singapore on business for his Company, and when we were about to part he asked me to write a few words in commendation of assurance, and I have therefore personally composed and written the foregoing.

LI HUNG CHANG,

Ambassador of the Emperor of China,
Grand Secretary,
Grand Tutor and Guardian to the Heir
Apparent,
Earl of the First Grade