

Every mandarin may tell the emperor of his faults, provided it be done in a respectful manner; and if his majesty has any regard for his reputation, the manner in which the Chinese histories are written, is alone sufficient to keep him within the bounds of his duty. A certain number of men who, from their learning and impartiality, are selected for this office, observe all his words and actions; and having separately written their remarks, without consulting each other, on a loose slip of paper, each puts it through a chink, into an office appointed for that purpose. "Such a day, say they, his behaviour was unseasonable and intemperate; he spoke after a manner unsuitable to his dignity. The punishment he inflicted on such an offender, was rather the result of passion than of justice."—Or else, "He gave such and such marks of his love for his people. Notwithstanding the praises of flatterers, he was not puffed up; but behaved with his usual modesty: his words were tempered with sweetness."

That these monitors may neither be biased by hope nor fear, this office is never opened during the prince's life, or while any of his family sit on the throne; but when the crown goes to another line, those loose memoirs are collected, and, by comparing them, they compose the history of that emperor, to propose him as an example to posterity, if he has acted wisely; or to expose him to public censure, if he has proved negligent of his duty, and the interest and happiness of his people.

The emperor has two sovereign councils; one composed of the princes of the blood alone, and another into which the ministers of state are admitted. Besides these are several other courts of very extensive powers; and in each is a censor, who