

offends, because it competes with the more desultory work of white men, who deem themselves entitled to dissipate half their time. Combined with the appetite for hard work the Chinaman has two highly important qualities—docility and temperance. The latter enables him to profit by a double economy—that of time and that of money; the former enables him to “stoop to conquer.” There is, indeed, no end to his patience. He is content to exploit worked-out claims for an infinitesimal gain, and as ready to be kicked out whenever it pleases his superior white brother to come along and “jump” them.

A valuable agent is the Chinaman, therefore, for sweeping up the “tailings” of human industry. He demands no comfort, still less luxury; but though he can do with rough and scanty fare, he never starves his body when he can afford nutritious and well-cooked food. He works outrageously long hours with very moderate inducement; the clink of the artisan’s hammer and the whir of the spindle are heard in the streets at all hours of the night, and the dawn finds the labourer already at work. However late the master or mistress may come home, the servants are in waiting, and are as ready for a call in the early morning as if they had had twelve hours’ good sleep. Such snatches of sleep as can be picked up at odd moments satisfy them.

In addition to robust muscularity the Chinese physique is endowed with great refinement. Their hands and feet are well made, and their fingers are remarkable for suppleness and delicacy of touch. Their skill in the minutest kinds of handicraft, such as intricate carving in wood or ivory, miniature painting and fine embroidery, is well known. Not only in workshops and building-

yards has the skill of their artificers been tested and approved, but in the responsible positions of engine-drivers on steamboats and locomotives the Chinese, under proper training, are found to answer all requirements.

The intellectual capacity of the Chinese may rank with the best in Western countries. Their own literary studies, in which memory plays the important part, prove the nation to be capable of prodigious achievements in that direction. It is stated in Macaulay’s *Life* that had “*Paradise Lost*” been destroyed, he could have reproduced it from memory. But even such a power of memory as he possessed is small compared with that of many Chinese, who can repeat by heart all the thirteen classics. A Chinese acquaintance of mine was able, at the age of sixty-five, to reproduce, verbatim, letters received by him in his youth from some of his literary friends famous as stylists. When pitted against European students in school or college, the Chinese is in no respect inferior to his Western contemporaries, and, whether in mathematics and applied science or in metaphysics and speculative thought, he is capable of holding his own against all competitors.

In considering the future of the Chinese race, therefore, we have this enormous double fund of capacity to reckon with—capacity of muscle and capacity of brain; and we have only to imagine the quantitative value of such an aggregate of nervous force, when brought into vital contact with the active spirit and the mechanical and mental appliances of the West, to picture to ourselves a future for China which will astonish and may appall the world.

In favour of the hypothesis of the latent power of the Chinese race, their mere numbers are a