

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE WHITE PERIL

My friend Doctor Ting once said to me that the expression Yang Kuei Tze, foreign devil, should not be understood as an invective but as a zoölogical definition. Man is a creature with dark eyes and black hair; devils have red hair and green eyes. The foreigners therefore fall into the latter category, that is as simple and incontrovertible as to judge a flower according to Linné's sexual system.

The shrewd and learned doctor is certainly quite right in his way, but Yang Kuei Tze is still a term of abuse when it is flung after a foreigner by small boys in a crowded street or in an angry mob.

What are the reasons why the Chinese look askance at foreigners and why despite their admirable self-control, tact and cordial kindness they yet have a certain reserve toward these alien barbarians?

We must first realize clearly that till very recently the Chinese regarded themselves as possessing a universal culture, a Middle Kingdom, mighty in population and natural advantages, exalted through learning and art.

Outside this center of the universe lived barbarian tribes, troublesomely warlike at times, but greatly inferior to the people of the Middle Realm in writing, education and statecraft. The barbarian princes paid a regal tribute to the emperor, and when they or their emissaries received an audience before the Son of

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Heaven at Peking, they made a kowtow, i.e., they sank on their knees with their forehead to the ground.

The mobile nomads of the North, first the genuine Mongols, then the Manchus, fell upon China and founded the dynasties of Yuan and Ching, which governed China with power and skill till each in their time fell. But these barbarian dynasties soon assumed the culture of the Chinese, and their occupation was predominantly of a military and political sort with little encroachment upon the development of the national spirit.

The Chinese thus exalted their position successfully as a leading and central people of culture till they met the new and powerful factor which they with justification call the white peril.

In the chapter "The Manchus and the Revolution" we have indicated certain leading characteristics in China's groping and painful effort to fit herself to the new situation, which arose through the Western civilization of machinery and the advance of Europe's land-grabbing régime into the Far East.

A glance at the relations of America and the European powers to China in the eighteenth century and the first two decades of the nineteenth will show that England, Russia and France, who made their power felt in the East during the first part of the last century, were far inferior in technical equipment to the same nations to-day. The Western squadrons of the line which made demonstrations formerly in Chinese waters, and the English-French forces which undertook "punitive expeditions" to Peking were no

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doubt more effective than anything the Chinese could oppose to them, yet utterly inferior to the war equipment of to-day. With the speed of an avalanche, which perhaps foretokens a short life for the present occidental type of culture, new instruments and machines have been invented and perfected in every field. The white man's victory in overcoming the realm of nature rushes onward toward goals that loom wondrously ahead.

For the Chinese rulers of the old stock it must have been a strange and troubling question, this ever increasing might of the Yang Kuei Tze, this limitless capacity for devising ever-more-terrible machines of death.

But the Chinese have now learned their bitter lesson. The first bit of a railroad which the foreigners contrived to build in 1875 from Shanghai to Wootung was bought by the Chinese and the tracks torn up, but since then other ideas have prevailed. Germans and English were permitted to build the Tientsin-Pukow Road, Germans the Tsinanfu-Tsingtao, Belgians and Frenchmen the Peking-Hankow and Lunghai lines, the French a road in Yunnan, and the Russians and Japanese the railroads in Manchuria.

A Chinese engineer, Jeme Tien Yü, built the Peking-Suiyuan Railroad through the difficult Nankou Pass with such elegance and solidity that this specimen of Chinese engineering is universally admired by American railroad constructors.

The Chinese have eagerly acquired all the technical discoveries of the foreigners; machine guns and

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trench mortars, flying machines and wireless telegraphs, thermos bottles and cinematographs, hair-cutting machines and fountain pens.

On the spiritual side too the West is the object of lively interest. Students read Nietzsche and play Ibsen's "Doll's House" in Chinese. Bolshevism has won an enormous popularity in student circles. A school of painting in Peking is working along Western principles. The Chinese *jeunesse dorée* in the big cities worships jazz and bobbed hair. Opium is now often taken in the refined form of morphine injections, which are generally used in the great coast cities among rickshaw coolies and similar folk.

Although the military and technical equipment of the European powers has been gigantically improved in the last hundred years, the same can hardly be said of their political ideals. The same greed for land and power, the same disregard of relatively defenseless "colored" peoples which has always characterized their colonial policy seems to live on despite all official guarantees in the spirit of humanitarianism.

Japan's twenty-one demands, which won her such ill repute in 1915, were a direct corollary to the violent policy of the European great powers toward China in the 1890 period. England is quietly and methodically strengthening her influence in one of China's vassal lands, Tibet, and new Russia is "reorganizing" another dependency, Mongolia. Some years ago when the French authorities wished to have a

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certain section of land in Tientsin and their negotiations with the Chinese were unsuccessful, they arranged one morning a *fait accompli* by occupying the district in question with French police, a gesture which indeed roused a momentary coolness toward France but was then forgotten, while the French, according to their intention, retained possession of the land.

It is a striking fact that the two great powers, Russia and Japan, who as direct neighbors of China have unusual opportunities of getting a foothold among the Chinese by friendly means, have by their conduct lost much of the sympathy which otherwise would be near at hand.

Japan has a specially favorable position as regards China because of the racial ties between the two peoples. Japan, who had carried out her new development in such brilliant style and raised to the rank of a great power by her victorious arms, had a most rich opportunity of becoming the martially equipped Asiatic brother who should protect the less fully prepared China against the aggressive policies of the European powers. It is also quite certain that this great and inspiring task was clear to the minds of the Japanese statesmen, but it seems as if the need of finding an outlet for her excess population forced Japan to a line of conduct which in some respects surpassed that of all the other great powers in ruthlessness. It may also be noted that China's fertile plains and rich mineral treasures were an almost irresistible lure for the ambitious leaders of the

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island kingdom, which was so deficient in natural wealth. The consequence has been that Japan, discarding her great and noble rôle of protectress, has with armed force, diplomatic pressure, and an army of business and commercial agents carried on a policy of penetration. This policy has clearly given her control over wide territories suitable for agricultural colonization and over many of China's most valuable ore fields, but has at the same time fostered in the Chinese a deep mistrust and a smoldering hatred toward Japanese methods. The culmination of the Japanese policy of aggression came in 1915 and 1919; the former year made notable for the twenty-one points which were intended to make China a dependency of Japan, the second date significant through the collapse of the Chinese Anfu Party, which to keep itself in power by means of a Japanese loan had pawned to Japan many of the country's most valuable resources. On the whole the sound judgment of the Chinese and their unique faculty of passive resistance have been fairly successful against the efforts of the Japanese. Since 1919 it seems as if Japan had adopted a more considerate policy, in which she recollects the ties of blood between the two countries and seeks for friendship on the basis of Asia for the Asiatics.

The old Russia of the empire could hardly have given the Chinese any illusions. It was too well known how the Russian bear ate his way forward through the primeval forests of the Siberian plains till he reached the Pacific. But the coast he found

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there was an ice-bound shore and, desiring a warmer sea, he turned south and came down into Chinese Manchuria. Crippled by the unsuccessful outcome of the war with Japan, he lay comparatively inert, but that his disposition was the same the Chinese were quite certain.

Then came the Revolution of 1917 in Russia, that frightful cataclysm which threw the empire from its aristocratic state into a communistic experiment of fantastic dimensions. The Soviet régime took a wholly new attitude toward China. The new leaders freely gave up all extra-territorial claims and other advantages which had been given by treaty to Russia along with the other powers. They branded the policy of the other powers toward China as imperialistic and spoke fine and sympathetic words about Asia for the Asiatics. More than this, in 1924, when the new treaty between Russia and China was signed, the Soviet Government proposed, because of the size and importance of both the States, that on both sides the rank of the diplomatic representatives should be raised to ambassador, a proposal which greatly appealed to China's national self-esteem. Thus it came about by very clever Russian manipulation that China has an ambassador, and that the Russian emissary to Peking is the only ambassador in the midst of a circle who have only the rank of minister. The situation was very entertaining to an outsider. These proud foreign ministers, who previously did not wish to acknowledge the able and intelligent representatives of Russia, found themselves reduced by this bold

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move to a position secondary to that of the new ambassador.

This was an enviable starting point, from which Russia might continue to advance to an unique position in the favor of China. Later, however, the Chinese have had many reasons to deplore the outcome. Over the Chinese Eastern Railroad up in northern Manchuria, where the Russians have far-reaching interests, have arisen serious discords.

In Outer Mongolia, a Chinese dependency, the Russians of the new régime have taken a deep hold on the government and the defensive arrangements. At the beginning the Red invasion of Outer Mongolia was fully explicable, since it was a question of rooting out the bands of White Russians who had made this their final rallying place and who had not been disarmed by the Chinese. It seems, however, as if the Soviet Russians in Urga, the capital of Outer Mongolia, had established themselves for a long stay. The old Mongol Government was replaced by a "Young Mongol" ministry, which works hand in hand with the Red Russians, and a new Mongolian army has been created under the leadership of Russian officers.

All this would signify little if it concerned itself merely with events which occurred far out on the border of the Chinese realm. But with all allowance for the traffic of lies carried on by the other powers to discredit the Soviets, the fact cannot be reasoned away that Bolshevist propaganda has been conducted on a wide scale in China proper. Sun Yat Sen and his

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party in Canton openly worked with the Russian communists. Red propaganda was also carried on in Shanghai, and it is said that Feng Yü Hsiang and his army, who are now fighting north of Peking against Chang Tso Lin and Wu Pei Fu, are receiving help from Russia, where Feng himself was recently entertained at Moscow. As a consequence of all this the situation is very tense between Russia and the Chinese leaders, who seem now to have made it their primary object to eliminate Feng.

And as Feng is actively supported by Soviet Russia, so Japan is supposed to be assisting Chang Tso Lin, though it is done under more discreet forms than the Soviet-Feng alliance. Behind the conflict between Feng and Chang lurks the antagonism between the two traditional rivals for the mastery of the East, Russia and Japan.

At all events there is nothing more exasperating to the educated and patriotic Chinese than the participation of foreign powers in the civil wars of China. Support in the form of money and war material has more than once helped a beaten general to get back on his feet. Thus the foreign intermeddling has prolonged the civil war by making impossible the "fight to a finish" which alone can make a strong leader the master of the entire land.

Among the foreign powers the United States takes an honorable position, thanks to the justice and consideration which have been shown toward China by the American diplomats.

At the period just before the close of the century,

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when the great powers of Europe took each its bit of the Chinese coast region (*cf.* the chapter "The Manchus and the Revolution"), and their "spheres of interest" rested as a menace over the whole Chinese realm, the American statesman, John Hay, proposed in a circular note to the European powers and Japan that China's national independence should be internationally guaranteed and that all the powers should be assured equal rights in relation to China. The principle behind Hay's gesture has been called "the open door", and although it obtained full recognition only from England, his note must have helped substantially to combat the plans for "spheres of interest."

In 1908 the United States Government resolved to restore to China nearly eleven million gold dollars of the indemnity apportioned to America because of the Boxer rising. With this money was built outside the northwest corner of Peking the college of Tsing Hua, which is intended to prepare Chinese students for higher university studies in America. From the time when this school began in 1911, some nine hundred of its students have been sent to America and it need hardly be said what this means in spreading interest and love for American culture in China.

America has also taken the lead in the movement recently started to give back entirely this indemnity money which is constantly being paid to make good the damage to foreign property during the Boxer troubles of 1900. The United States Government has already restored to China all the indemnity assigned

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to America, to be devoted to scientific and other cultural purposes in China under the direction of a committee; this committee to consist of eleven members, of which eight are Chinese and only three Americans.

The other nations too, England, Japan, France and Russia, have declared their willingness to renounce the installments still due on the Boxer indemnity, the sum preferably to be devoted to education in China. But these governments have shown a tendency to keep control of the funds to a greater extent than the United States has done. England, for instance, will only admit one or at most two Chinese into a committee of numerous Englishmen. The Japanese wished to put the direction of the proposed institution in China under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo and only after long negotiations have agreed to a committee composed equally of Chinese and Japanese.

Whereas the conduct of the United States has won the warm approval of the Chinese, there is no small mistrust as to England's and Japan's method of handling these questions.

As John Hay by his open-door policy has made his name honored among the Chinese, American statesmanship has recently celebrated another great victory in China.

To reward Japan for her help in the World War, the Allied Powers assigned to Japan the German possessions in Shantung which the Japanese took by force. China, though a late addition to the Allies and not a direct participant in the fighting, yet by her

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voluntary army of coolies gave valuable assistance behind the lines. She therefore considered that she had a right to the Tsingtao district which Germany had wrested from her, as well as to the German mines and railroads in Shantung. China's embitterment at the decision in favor of Japan was so great that the Chinese delegates refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles.

At the disarmament conference in Washington, 1921, the United States assisted China to a better solution. Japan pledged herself to restore to China the former German possessions in Shantung, an agreement which has since been performed in an exemplary manner.

England pledged herself at Washington to restore to China Wei-hai-wei, which has not as yet been done, in spite of lengthy negotiations.

When I used in this chapter the expression *the white peril*, which must have been startling to many readers, I had in mind partly the predatory policy of the great powers toward China in the period of 1890, partly the maladministration in the Chinese "concessions" under the control of foreigners which led to the deplorable incidents of the past year described in the chapter "Shanghai and May 30th, 1925."

The victorious march of the white man through the world is paved with the bleaching remains of the peoples whom the invaders have annihilated.

The rich and flourishing settlements of the white man in North America have crowded out races which certainly stood low in culture but which in their wild

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and active life developed some of their faculties very highly and had at least a right to existence.

The Spaniards' conquests of large portions of the American continent are some of the darkest pages in the white man's occupation of the earth. America's highest native culture, the realm of Montezuma and the Incas, was devastated with frightful ruthlessness.

The ancient culture home of India, Australia's remarkable stone-age world, Africa's savannahs and rainy forests, not to mention the white coasts of the polar regions, all have echoed to the advance of the terrible invaders. "Colored" races, as well as the larger wild beasts of land and sea, have been decimated and forced out. The volleys of the war of conquest in Morocco have just become silent. Even to the sunny islands of the South Seas the foreigner has come with his sinister gifts: alcohol, syphilis and consumption.

It is remarkable that the peoples of the Far East, Japan by her quick and successful transformation and China by her astonishing power of passive resistance, have best of all the "colored" races withstood the white onset. Despite the civil wars and incredible chaos which now prevails in China, no foreign power any longer thinks of dividing the land. In the midst of his impotence the Chinese giant can be seen winning back his independence step by step. In the Shanghai fracas the foreigners have found it advisable in the end to make certain concessions, as for instance with regard to the tariff. Even the doing away

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with extra-territorial rights has been discussed, especially from the direction of America.

The sooner foreigners perceive the only possible way with respect to China, the better will it be for settling the whole infinitely difficult problem of east Asia. The most important thing is that the Chinese be left to fight out their own fights to the bitter end. Furthermore the foreigner in China must remember he is there only as a guest, and as such must show respect and consideration for the customs of the country. The earlier and more completely all the powers unite in supporting this broadminded and humane policy, which hitherto has been represented by the Americans alone, the sooner will one of the greatest and hardest problems of world politics approach a solution.

In this argument of mine for fair play toward the Chinese I am by no means blind to the fact that the foreign embassies at Peking have important interests to represent and protect.

One of these is to guard the security of the foreign loans to China. First among these is the great reorganization loan in 1913 for twenty-five million pounds sterling, which was guaranteed by a salt tax under united Chinese and foreign control. This has in recent years been confiscated to an increasing degree by the "independent" generals. A second and greater task is to determine the question of extra-territorial rights. This ponderous phrase expresses the special position which foreigners have acquired in China by treaty, which among other things puts them outside of

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Chinese jurisdiction and assures them the privilege of being tried and judged by the consular courts of their own countries.

The same situation existed for a time in Japan and until quite lately in Turkey, where, however, these "capitulations" have been unceremoniously revoked by the vigorous Kemal Government.

That Chinese capitulations will also disappear is beyond doubt, but it is also plain that China, with her defective and arbitrary system of justice and her present lack of settled government, is not now capable of giving to foreigners the secure legal protection which their own countries provide. The abrogation of extra-territorial rights should be accomplished in many stages, in proportion as the efficiency of justice in China progresses. The solution of the problem demands moderation on the part of the Chinese and good will on that of the foreign powers.

If I have strongly condemned certain features in the conduct of the foreign powers toward China, I am of course not unaware that in the last fifty years the white man has enormously widened the spiritual horizon of the Chinese and has put into their hands mighty levers for material improvement. One of my best Chinese friends once said to me that the best gift of the occident to Chinese culture was scientific method, the ability to gather data systematically and to analyze them with the aid of all possible means of comparison. In this respect the modern educated Chinese is very willing to acknowledge his deep indebtedness to our culture.

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But beyond this the Chinaman is most sceptical. Many of our so-called axioms of life are for him either dried leaves or, what is worse, objects of his discreet but therefore more unerring satire.

At any rate we may assert with pride and pleasure that no small number of foreigners who have worked out in the East have won the affection and respect of the Chinese by their skill, incorruptible honesty and enthusiasm for their duties. Even among the diplomatists, whose task is naturally very delicate, are a number of names that are spoken of with warm appreciation by the natives.

Nearly all foreigners who have been in the service of the Chinese Government have won the reputation of being immune to bribes and of having a strong sense of the sacredness of duty. Many of them have been men of but moderate ability, others insufficiently prepared for the tasks they made bold to undertake, but many stand out as great figures, men who are an honor to our race and a valued memory among the people whom they served.

Possibly the foremost of these foreigners in China was the Irishman, Sir Robert Hart, 1835-1911. He reorganized the Chinese excise system and made the maritime customs a pattern, so that it was the most reliable source of income for the central government, the financial prop that could be depended upon, even in the most troublous times. Hart's reorganization work was not confined to the customs tariff. He also organized the Chinese postal service to an astonishing efficiency and was for a

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long time head of both these difficult departments. This uncommon man also helped in scientific matters. He was active in instituting Tung Wen Kuan, a high school at Peking. The excellent statistical publications which the tariff control publishes, and which provide one of the best sources for knowledge of China, was also founded by this diligent and far-seeing man.

The present Inspector General of Customs, Sir Francis Aglen, is not a man of Hart's inspiration, but he represents finely another good British quality, that of absolute honesty and an invincible steadfastness to what he considers his duty. Aglen's work in consolidating the internal government loan and keeping the customs free from irresponsible influences makes him one of the finest examples of a foreigner who is serving China well and judiciously.

When in connection with the reorganization loan of 1913 the salt tax was to be rearranged partly under foreign control, this difficult undertaking was entrusted to the Englishman, Sir Richard Dane, who carried out his work in brilliant fashion. Dane, who had previously served in England, was already an old man when he came to China, and his step was heavy, almost limping. But he walked daily the long stretch to and from the Ministry of Finance, where he had his office, and when he was out on his long official tours, he surprised his young subordinates both by his endurance and by his passion for the exacting sport which Englishmen call big-game hunting. Sir Richard was a Kiplingesque type, one

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of those Indian civil service men who thrive as well *in the jungle and the desert as in the club and office*. The old man naturally won the respect of the Chinese, although in his reorganization work he dealt severely with deep-rooted economic interests.

By the side of many mere fortune hunters with little education one finds in the list of foreigners who have worked for the Chinese Government a large number of exceedingly able men, men who have assuredly done China great service. Partly for the pleasure of being able to honor an admired and beloved colleague, partly because the man is such an interesting and original type, let me dwell a moment on a person who has not, to be sure, adorned any prominent position of leadership but who has had the skill to carry out a great work under many disadvantages. The man to whom I allude is Professor Grabau, palaeontologist of the Chinese Geological Research Bureau and professor of palaeontology at the national university at Peking.

Doctor Ting, the first chief of the Geological Research, made inquiries during a trip in Europe and America with the object of obtaining an able foreign palaeontologist for the Chinese Geological Research Bureau. The choice fell upon the Professor of Palaeontology at Columbia University, Amadeus W. Grabau, an investigator with an international reputation, who declared himself willing to leave his prominent place at one of the world's largest universities to take a not too well salaried extra position at Peking.

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When he landed in China, Grabau was nearly fifty-two and much troubled with rheumatism, which greatly hindered his physical activity. But in this tortured body lives a soul of fire: work into the late hours of the night seems to be the breath of his life, and in between he enjoys going out or having friends at his own home for delightful little dinners. For even the youngest student he has personal interest and encouragement. The result of Grabau's years in Peking up to now is that, on the foundation of the material which geologists and his own pupils have collected for him, he has completed a scientific masterpiece and is worshipped by his students. When the chief of the Geological Research wished to send two of Grabau's pupils on a, to them, very advantageous mission to Yunnan, the two young men begged to be allowed to stay in Peking. "Our teacher is so ill just now that we don't know how long we can keep him. We wish to stay and work under him as long as we have the opportunity."

A very prominent business man, Doctor C. Y. Wang, member of one of China's best families, was formerly a pupil of Grabau's at Columbia. A year ago he donated a sum of money to have a Grabau medal executed in gold, to be given every year to the student who had done the best work in research on the geology of China, and that year the first medal was given to the revered professor for whom the medal was named.

The foreigner who perhaps all in all deserves to

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stand as China's greatest benefactor, is, oddly enough, a man who, so far as I know, has never set foot in China. I allude to the old American oil king, John D. Rockefeller. It is said of him that he made his gigantic fortune by relentless pertinacity, and he seems to have used some of this same fixity of purpose in the distribution of his gathered wealth.

Instead of, like many other multi-millionaires, making donations at random to left and right, Rockefeller, if I am correctly informed, went methodically to his goal. He invited a large number of men prominent in various fields to help him discover how he could most benefit mankind with his riches.

Among the various plans, he fastened upon one suggested by a doctor for the purpose of creating a world-wide organization for the standardizing of medical instruction.

From this cardinal purpose originated the mighty Rockefeller Foundation, which undertook systematic investigations in various countries and offered its help wherever it seemed to be required.

The need for good medical assistance in densely populated China was very great. The Rockefeller Foundation has there created two great medical institutions, which coöperate intimately. One is the Chinese Medical Board, which undertakes to follow the medical situation over the whole country and take a helpful part in such a way as its great, relentlessly consistent plan requires. The other is the Peking Union Medical School, where the Chinese Medical

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Board has its headquarters and where Chinese doctors and nurses are trained. This school is remarkable in many ways. It was completed in 1921 at a cost of three million dollars, and nothing was spared to make the institution first class. The mighty group of buildings which occupies the place of an old princes' palace, Yu Wang Fu, was built by an American architect in what might be called Chinese renaissance style, the style of the old palaces applied to modern buildings of two or three stories. This daring experiment has succeeded wonderfully well. The extensive hospitals and laboratories repose under their green glass roofs with rows of old Chinese ridge turrets in such tranquillity that the Chinese themselves gladly acclaim this work of a foreigner as a signpost on the way which must be followed if their old, quiet, distinguished style of architecture is to be preserved.

In this beautiful temple of science and philanthropy works a great staff of American specialists in all departments of medicine, men chosen on the strict principle that they shall be well paid but not take private practice in any form. Assistant and subordinate medical positions are already to a large degree filled by Chinese, and it is Rockefeller's intention to hand over the whole institution to China fully and unreservedly, as soon as the country has men capable of using adequately this wonderful gift.

From this medical school large bands of doctors with modern training are sent out over China every year. They take with them not only an admirable medical equipment but along with it the humane and



UNION MEDICAL SCHOOL
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far-sighted spirit which stamps the personnel of the school.

John D. Rockefeller's staff of medical teachers in China fills the greatest demand upon the foreigner in the Far East: to teach the four hundred million Chinese knowledge, respect and affection for the white man.