

CHINA  
YESTERDAY AND TODAY  
EDWARD THOMAS WILLIAMS

# CHINA

## YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

BY

**EDWARD THOMAS WILLIAMS**

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# CHINA YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

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TO  
MY WIFE  
**Rose Sickler Williams**

WHOSE ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE  
HAVE MADE POSSIBLE THE PRODUCTION OF THIS VOLUME  
IT IS AFFECTIONATELY  
INSCRIBED

## PREFACE

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Our interest in a foreign land fastens itself chiefly upon those features in which it differs from our own. When the writer first went to China he was told by Chinese acquaintances that all foreigners looked alike. He replied that to him all Chinese were so alike that it was with difficulty that he could tell one from another. In both cases, of course, it was the peculiarities of physiognomy and costume, shared in the main by all those of one nationality, that attracted the notice of men of the other nationality. The Chinese, however, are more uniform than Europeans in color and facial features, although there is considerable difference between the people of the northern and those of the southern provinces in physiognomy.

To most people in the Western World China is a far-away land of such strange customs that one is inclined to believe very readily tales told concerning its inhabitants that have no real foundation in fact. But we do rightly think of it as a land of mighty, walled cities, of lofty pagodas, of quaint, curved temple roofs, resting upon brilliantly colored bracket cornices, of curious costumes and strange products;—precious silks and satins, fragrant teas, beautiful porcelains and lacquered wares. We may think of it, too, as a sort of topsy-turvydom, where one's surname comes first and personal name last, where your friend when he meets you shakes his own hand rather than yours, where left, not right, is the side of honor, where one begins to read at the back of the book and at the right side rather than the left side of the page and finds the foot-notes at the top of the page. It is a land where dessert comes first at the feast and soup last, where the male man dresses in silk

and satin gowns of brilliant hues, and where, until the recent revolution, all men wore their hair in long braids, and the highest officials decorated their hats with peacock plumes and tassels, had strings of beads about their necks and carried fans in their hands, while on the other hand many women were seen on the streets in jacket and trousers.

These peculiarities of costume and custom and others that might be mentioned were universal features of Chinese civilization until the revolution of 1911.

Since that time China has been undergoing a great change. Architecture and dress are becoming Europeanized, and social conditions are in flux. When you receive a Chinese gentleman's card to-day you can not tell in many cases whether the first or the last character represents his surname. Some adhere to the old custom and others have adopted the Western style. An old gentleman of conservative tastes will remove his spectacles when he talks with you and will shake his own hands in salutation, but a young man of progressive spirit will stare at you through his glasses and hold out his hand to take yours in greeting.

Not all change is progress, but for good or ill, China is changing. The social and political transformation that is taking place is the result of a struggle between two great civilizations, those of the East and the West. The author has endeavored to show that these two civilizations had a common origin. In their development, however, they took divergent courses. After ages of separation they have met. To-day in the Orient they strive together for mastery. To describe this struggle, it has seemed advisable to review briefly the history of the intercourse between China and the West. The contest during the past century has for China been a losing one. The West has won victory after victory, but the end is not yet. The effects of the struggle have become most noticeable during the past thirty years, and the events of these years have therefore been given more detailed consideration in this volume.

The writer lived in China before the tendency to change became marked. He witnessed the downfall of the Manchu

Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic, and saw initiated the great reforms which have wrought such havoc with old-time manners and conditions. This volume is the outgrowth of his experiences and observations in thirty-five years of close association with Chinese affairs, supplemented by such research as a very busy life would permit. The aim kept constantly in view in preparing the book has been to describe the China of the past and the present, the China of yesterday as contrasted with the China of to-day.

It is impossible for men not to err, and the author cannot hope to have entirely escaped all mistakes. There may be instances in which he has unintentionally described as universal certain customs which were known only in the regions with which he is familiar, and there may be other cases in which the changes that have taken place are much greater or less than as described.

For the translations from the Chinese he holds himself responsible unless otherwise acknowledged. But he has not hesitated to avail himself of the assistance given by the work already done by others. He gladly acknowledges his debt to the monumental work of Dr. Legge in his translation of the Chinese Classics. The beautiful translation which Professor Soothill has given of the *Analects of Confucius*, and especially the valuable collection of notes in the commentary accompanying it, have been of great service. Acknowledgment is made also of assistance derived from the French translation of the *Shih Chi* by the late Edouard Chavannes, and of the French translations of Buddhist and Taoist works by Père Wiegner. Other acknowledgments are made in place.

E. T. W.

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA,  
January 13, 1923.



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# CHINA YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

## CHAPTER I

### WHAT IS CHINA?

God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation.—St. Paul.

God gave all men all earth to love,  
But since our hearts are small,  
Decreed for each one spot should prove  
Beloved over all.

—Kipling.

What is China? The question was asked at the Conference on Limitation of Armament recently held in Washington. It was not answered. An attempt to do so would probably have provoked a controversy.

The Nine-Power Treaty, signed at that Conference, in its first article stipulates that the powers other than China shall respect the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China. But what does that mean?

#### TERRITORIAL BOUNDARIES

Does it, for instance, require the eight powers concerned to respect China's claim to sovereignty in Tibet? Does it mean that these powers recognize Tibet as an integral part of China? The question is important, for, although Tibet has belonged to China for many centuries, during recent years both Russia and Great Britain have manœuvred for position to control the future of this forbidding land, which

a British writer describes as "rich in gold . . . enormously rich, possibly richer than any other country in the world."<sup>1</sup>

#### TIBET

In 1912 the British Government objected to the provision of the Chinese constitution which gives Tibet representatives in the Parliament at Peking. Objection was made also by the same Power to China's proposal to send a small military force to Lhasa to protect the Chinese Resident there. Warning was given that, should troops be sent as proposed, Great Britain would withhold from the new Republic of China the recognition which it was then asking.

In 1913, at the request of Great Britain, a conference was held at Simla to consider the relations of the three countries—Great Britain, China and Tibet.

The British delegation drew up a treaty which proposed to divide Tibet into two parts—Outer Tibet, adjoining India, and Inner Tibet, bordering on China. The former was to be autonomous under a shadowy suzerainty of China, and it was further provided that in case of difficulties arising between autonomous Tibet and China, the questions at issue should be referred to Great Britain for equitable adjustment. This proposed treaty would thus have put Great Britain in the position of protector of Tibet. It is interesting to recall that it was by similar arrangements that the British Government came gradually into control of Northern India. Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan, once tributaries of China, are now under British control. In 1913, however, China refused to sign the proposed treaty; Tibet was willing to accept it. The question therefore remains unsettled: Is China sovereign in Tibet?

#### OUTER MONGOLIA

In 1911 Russia encouraged Outer Mongolia to declare its independence of China, although it had been a part of the empire since A.D. 1691. Under this encouragement ad-

<sup>1</sup> Holdich, "Tibet the Mysterious," p. 329.

vantage was taken of the revolution in progress in China to establish an independent Mongol government under the rulership of the Hutukhtu of Urga, who was elected Emperor and crowned in December, 1911.

Subsequently by a tripartite convention signed in 1915, the suzerainty of China and the autonomy of Outer Mongolia were acknowledged, and Russia was given a voice in the settlement of questions affecting the foreign relations of the country.

After the disappearance of the Tsarist régime in Russia, China reasserted her authority and compelled the Hutukhtu, in 1919, to rescind his declaration of autonomy. He yielded only under pressure of the military occupation of his capital. When Urga was attacked and captured in Feb. 1921 by a Russian force commanded by Ungern von Sternberg, a reactionary leader, the Mongols gave him support. Japan, which was believed to be anxious to see a conservative buffer state between Korea and Siberia, was also popularly credited with giving assistance to Ungern, and was reported to have offered a loan to the Hutukhtu, if a non-communistic government should be maintained by him.

After a few weeks, however, Ungern was overthrown by the army of the Far Eastern Republic, and Urga was turned over to the troops of the Russian Federated Soviet Republic, which set up there the Peoples' Revolutionary Government. This government still holds the place.

What then is the status of Outer Mongolia? What is its relation to China? Does the Nine Power treaty bind the signatories to respect China's sovereignty and administrative integrity in Outer Mongolia?

#### MANCHURIA

When the war between Russia and Japan came to an end in 1905, the Treaty of Portsmouth stipulated that both powers were to evacuate Manchuria completely and simultaneously, except the leased territory of Liaotung. The two powers were also to restore entirely and completely to the exclusive administration of China all portions of Manchuria then in occupation or control of Japanese or Rus-



sian troops, except the leased territory just mentioned.<sup>2</sup> The two powers also engaged to exploit their respective railways in Manchuria exclusively for commercial and industrial purposes.<sup>3</sup> Again in the treaty of July 30, 1907, these same governments recognized the independence and territorial integrity of the Empire of China and the principle of equal opportunity there for the commerce and industry of all nations.<sup>4</sup>

Yet in the secret treaties of 1907, 1910 and 1912 they delimited their respective spheres of special interest in Manchuria and Mongolia, and each agreed not to interfere in the consolidation and future development of the special interests of the other in the spheres mentioned.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore in 1915, by the treaties of May 25, Japan after landing troops and issuing an ultimatum, obtained special privileges in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia.

<sup>2</sup> Treaty of Portsmouth, Article III.

<sup>3</sup> Treaty of Portsmouth, Article VII.

<sup>4</sup> Treaty between Japan and Russia, July 30, 1907, Article II.

<sup>5</sup> See Treaty of 1910, Article III. The secret treaty of 1907 defined the boundaries between Russian and Japanese spheres of special interest by a succession of straight lines, which began at the Russian-Korean frontier, continued via Hunchun northwestward to the north end of Lake Porteng (also written Pilteng—Chinese name Nan Hu), thence northwest by west to Hsiu Hsin Chan (Chinese Hsin Ch'eng), near Petuna, thence down the Sungari River to the mouth of the Nonni, thence along the course of this river up to the mouth of the Tola River, and thence up the Tola to the crossing of the 122 meridian east of Greenwich. The treaty of 1912 extended the line from this point along the course of the Hulunchuerh and the Mushihsa to the watershed that divides the Mushihsa from the Haldatai, about the point where the boundary of the Amur Province crosses the 119 meridian, and from that point along the boundary of the Amur Province to the boundary between Inner and Outer Mongolia, thence southwestward along the boundary between Inner and Outer Mongolia to its intersection with the meridian of Peking (116° 27' E.) and thence along this meridian to the boundary of the Province of Chihli.

Russia recognized Japan's special interests in the territory of Inner Mongolia east of this meridian, and Japan recognized Russia's special interests, not only in Outer Mongolia, but in Inner Mongolia west of the meridian of Peking. This arrangement assigned to Japan for exploitation all that region of Inner Mongolia and Manchuria in which she had planned to build the Ssu-p'ing-k'ai—T'aonan and the T'aonan—Jehol railway lines. The line from Ssu-p'ing-k'ai is already completed as far as Chen-chia T'un.

At the recent Washington Conference Japan withdrew certain of the Twenty-one Demands of 1915 which had been reserved for further consideration, and agreed that the option which had been obtained on loans for railway building in Eastern Inner Mongolia and South Manchuria, and on other loans secured upon taxes in the regions mentioned should be "thrown open to the joint activity of the international consortium recently organized." She also surrendered the preference obtained in the appointment of advisers to the Chinese Government in South Manchuria. But Japan refused to rescind the whole of the Twenty-one Demands as requested by China. Baron Shidehara said:

If it should once be recognized that rights solemnly granted by treaty may be revoked at any time on the ground that they were conceded against the spontaneous will of the grantor, an exceedingly dangerous precedent will be established, with far-reaching consequences upon the stability of the existing international relations in Asia, in Europe and everywhere.

To this Mr. Wang Chung-Hui replied that—

A still more dangerous precedent will be established, with consequences upon the stability of international relations which can not be estimated, if without rebuke or protest from the Powers, one nation can obtain from a friendly, but in a military sense weaker neighbor, and under circumstances such as attended the negotiations and signing of the treaties of 1915, valuable concessions which were not in satisfaction of pending controversies, and for which no *quid pro quo* was offered.

It was through the Twenty-one demands of 1915 that Japan compelled China against her will to cancel her right to redeem the South Manchuria Railway in 1939, as provided in the original contract. It was by means of the treaties of May 25, 1915, extorted from China in connection with the Twenty-one demands, that Japan was enabled to extend her lease of the Liaotung Peninsula from 25 years to 99 years. The twenty-five-year period would have terminated in 1923. By means of these same treaties the leases of the South Manchurian and Mukden-Antung Railways were also extended to 99-year periods.

In view of all these facts what is to be said of the status