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## Review

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (Sep., 1922), pp. 224-225

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1781063>

Accessed: 26-06-2016 02:09 UTC

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a century they may have become a dam rather than a dyke for the river of progress which is so rapidly shifting its course. Yet for their removal or re-novation the sanction of each of the sixteen Treaty Powers has to be obtained. It is in the power of the most paltry of these to thwart the wishes not only of China but of all the other Powers by adopting an obstructionist attitude. It bears resemblance to the ancient Assembly of Poland, so largely responsible for the vivisection of that unfortunate country, in which one hostile vote suspended reform. Brazil, with her microscopic interests, is legally empowered to defy by her isolated veto the aspirations of a united world; the British Empire may at times be compelled to use that nation's minister as its mouth-piece.

It is eloquent testimony to all this that Dr. MacMurray in his *Treaties* sees fit to include, as presumably providing legal precedent for subsequent transactions, engagements entered into between China and no less than forty-six other states. We find amongst the latter Uruguay, Peru, Nicaragua, Mexico, Siberia, Honduras, Hedjaz, Haiti, Guatemala, and other states of a like rank whose agreements are recorded. They form a kind of vast case-law against which there is no Supreme Court of Appeal either for foreigner or Chinese, nor is there legislative machinery that can be called into action to right obvious wrongs. Prior to the publication of MacMurray's two volumes the inquirer had either to search through dusty archives or remain in ignorance of a large portion of this scattered international code. He has now for the first time all its documents bound in a convenient form, and—what is equally helpful—fully indexed, the index alone occupying no less than 250 large pages of close type. The volumes are, of course, essentially intended for reference, and their accepted utility in this connection is shown by the fact that they are to be found on the shelves of every British Consulate in China.

One might have hoped that the compiler would have recorded his conclusions on the completion of his olympic task in an instructive introduction or preface, but we are given neither. All that is furnished is a section of two or three pages by an editor in America which reflect strange misconceptions. He informs us that the United States alone returned part of the Boxer Indemnity, and that "none of the Powers participating in the Chinese Indemnity, France, Great Britain . . . have seen fit to follow this example." In the case of Great Britain the reasons for her apparent greed are not far to seek. Her claim to indemnity merely made good actual losses incurred, it alone being severely scrutinized at the time it was presented. One would have expected that other impressions might have been left, after wading through this enormous mass of documents, than those of a purely hypothetical moral superiority of the United States in its dealings with China.

The main impression left on the reviewer is that of the hampering complexity of China's international engagements and the clumsiness of the machinery which can alone alter them. The signal success of the Washington Conference may perhaps be traced to the fact that four Powers only, instead of sixteen, controlled its decisions. If diplomats of the same Powers were given *carte blanche* to represent the outer world at Peking—if the dogma of equal status were definitely rejected—it is quite possible that a second Washington would be achieved.

R. H. H.

**Peking: a Social Survey.** Sidney D. Gamble and John S. Burgess. New York: George H. Doran Company. 1921. \$5 *gold*.

The scientific (as opposed to the philosophical) method, which by utilizing individual facts attempts to establish universal principles, is only too rarely

employed by writers on things Chinese. We are far too often treated to a list of generalizations which vary as widely in point of view as the natural bias of their authors. After reading Dr. Smith's 'Chinese Characteristics,' for instance, we are left with the impression that little that is too bad can be said of his subject, while if we turn to Prof. Giles' 'Civilization of China' we find it hard to realize that such a perfect race can really exist in the flesh.

'Peking: a Social Survey' acts as an admirable corrective to these two extreme views; it provides a mass of carefully arranged detail upon which one can found one's own opinions with conviction. Although the subject is strictly limited to China's capital, we know of no other work which enables the foreigner to obtain an equal insight into Chinese psychology and institutions. The chapter on commercial life is not only interesting but is worthy the attention of those concerned in the problem of harmonious co-operation between labour and capital in England. China has for centuries been faced with a similar question, her older guilds (or in modern terminology trade unions) dating back over two thousand years, but she has to a large extent profited by her longer experience.

"The Chinese have had so many centuries of experience," we are told, "that they know the exact strength of the different groups in the community and what would be the outcome of any struggle between them. As a result they very seldom resort to action; problems or disputes are talked out and demands compromised; . . . any trouble between employers and employees almost always arises because of dispute over wages; but these are rare, as the relationship between the two groups is so close that each is willing to recognize just claims of the other. . . . Then, too, both employers and employees recognize the fact that the public has certain interests in their work not to be disregarded. At present these are looked after by the Chamber of Commerce, which steps in and acts as mediator if an agreement is not reached within a short time."

The rules for apprentices in these guilds, who are normally bound over for three years, are written in a curiously earnest and ethical vein. "Young men should go first to a small shop, with small capital. You will have experience of hard work and learn that the making of money is not easy. If you go to a large shop after you have really learnt what trade is you will not do things in a wrong way. You apprentices should not sit down during the day except at the table, because the men in the shop are all your elders and teachers. You should hear but not speak," and so on.

On the other hand, a system of commerce in which regulation and co-operation tend to eliminate competition may perhaps be responsible for the widespread poverty in Peking. A chapter on this subject makes depressing reading. It is accompanied by a diagram which shows that in a large portion of the city no less than 37 per cent. of its inhabitants are written off by the police as "very poor." The latter expression judged by foreign standards is certainly no overstatement; it means, in fact, something far below the margin of existence for Europeans. Other chapters deal with the Social Evil, Health, Government, Education, Recreation, Prisons, and Religious Work in Peking.

R. H. H.

#### AFRICA

**The Agricultural and Forest Products of British West Africa.**— Gerald C. Dudgeon. Second Edition. Imperial Institute Handbooks. London: Murray. 1922. Pp. xii. + 176. *Maps and Illustrations.* 7s. 6d.

Conditions on the West Coast have changed a good deal in the ten years since the first appearance of this book. The war gave rise to a greatly

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