

"adult male wage-earners"; on page 178 nothing is told us of the rank which Italians hold in the preference of the southern contractor, although the Italians are said to be the most numerous workers; and on page 216 the "total of 6,800" might refer either to domestic servants or the Chinese race.

This enumeration of faults, however, must not be allowed to obscure the merits of the book, which are many. It contains a large amount of data, for the most part conveniently arranged and reliable, and if used with discretion should be of great value to all students of social subjects.

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Lowell, Percival. *The Soul of the Far East.* Pp. x, 266. Price, \$1.60. New York: Macmillan Company, 1911.

Hart, Albert Bushnell. *The Obvious Orient.* Pp. x, 369. Price, \$1.50. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1911.

The unlikeness between the Far-Oriental and the Western mind can hardly seem greater than that another dissimilarity, also exhibited by Mr. Lowell—the mental unlikeness of the physical scientist to the specialist of economic or political science in his method of dealing with social questions. The man of mathematical habit tends to regard social concepts as being more precise than they really are, and to reason from them with a confidence in his abstractions better suited to the simplicity of astronomical investigation. This habit of simplifying what is really complex is frequently noticeable in the discussion of current political questions, by mathematicians and physicists.

The "Soul of the Far East" is said to be characterized by "impersonality." "Individuality, personality, the sense of self are only three different aspects of the same thing." This characteristic is indicated by an extreme of filial piety—the subordination of the individual to his parent—a neglect to observe the individual's birthday (New Year's Day serving as a general birthday), and courtesy, which is a sort of belittling of oneself. In language, impersonality is shown by the lack of gender ("indifference to woman is but included in a much more general indifference to mankind") by the placing of nouns before verbs, as nouns denote facts, while verbs express action, and action as considered in human speech is mostly of human origin. This constitutes "a precedence accorded the impersonal element in the language over the personal." In religion, Buddhism is the *cri du coeur* of pessimism. This personality, this sense of self is a cruel description and a snare. "The mythological creations of the Oriental are feared, not loved. His ideal world remains as utterly impersonal as if it had never been born." The lack, among Oriental peoples, of individuality and imagination, which is to mental life "what variation is to material organization," has arrested these developments. Like the moon, "their vital fire had spent itself more than a millenium ago." The Japanese only copy; the Chinese will not even do that.

This characterization is not without elements of interest, but its main thesis fails to convince. "Impersonality" has not the definite significance, for

example, of "rectangle" or "gravitation." We wonder in fact what it does mean when we are told that the Japanese, most aggressive of peoples, nationally and individually are "lacking in the sense of self." The practices or race qualities which the astronomer, in his habit of sweeping generalization, attempts to submit to this one explanation, spring doubtless from many causes, mostly unexplored by our present knowledge.

If there is, indeed, a law of senile decay for nations, it is scarcely exemplified in China; the oldest of nations is in these weeks the most youthful. If the mythological creations of the Orientals are "feared, not loved," so were those of our own ancestors. Did not even Martin Luther, for instance, fill the very air with malicious devils, which buffeted him in a storm, or disturbed him in his work by malicious noises? The best peoples have copied much. It is too soon, perhaps in some fields too late, to decide that the Japanese will do no more. As to this whole question of a special creation of different races, a somewhat intimate acquaintance with the Soul of the Far East as represented by a large number of Chinese young men, has impressed me, as it has other teachers, with the essential similarity of their minds, under similar training, to our own. Men of Chinese families, born and reared in America, are young Americans in their tastes and manners.

"The Obvious Orient" is an account, well worth reading, of things seen by a traveler, moving rapidly but well qualified to observe. He commends, for the most part, our rule of the Philippines, defends the Japanese against the charge of commercial dishonesty, describes with admiration the "Japanese system" of education and government, makes some guesses at the future of the various Oriental nations described, and denies that the Japanese military power is a menace to the United States. The book is much superior to most of the recent somewhat abundant writing on that quarter of the globe.

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Reed, A. Z. *The Territorial Basis of Government under the State Constitutions.* Pp. 250. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1911.

At a time when public attention seems focused, perhaps to an excessive degree, upon the machinery and functions of national governments and upon general issues, national or international in scope, it is particularly valuable to read such a treatise as this excellent volume of the Columbia University Studies in Political Science, and to remember that our political system, with its rules of suffrage and representation, rests essentially on the basis of local government, and that the laws that chiefly affect the great majority of citizens are created by commonwealth legislatures, chosen from local districts.

After a brief historical chapter on political subdivisions during the colonial period, the author treats at length the constitutional provisions in American commonwealths determining the makeup of the county, of urban districts, and of districts for special administrative purposes. On this basis the systems of representation in the upper and lower houses of the common-