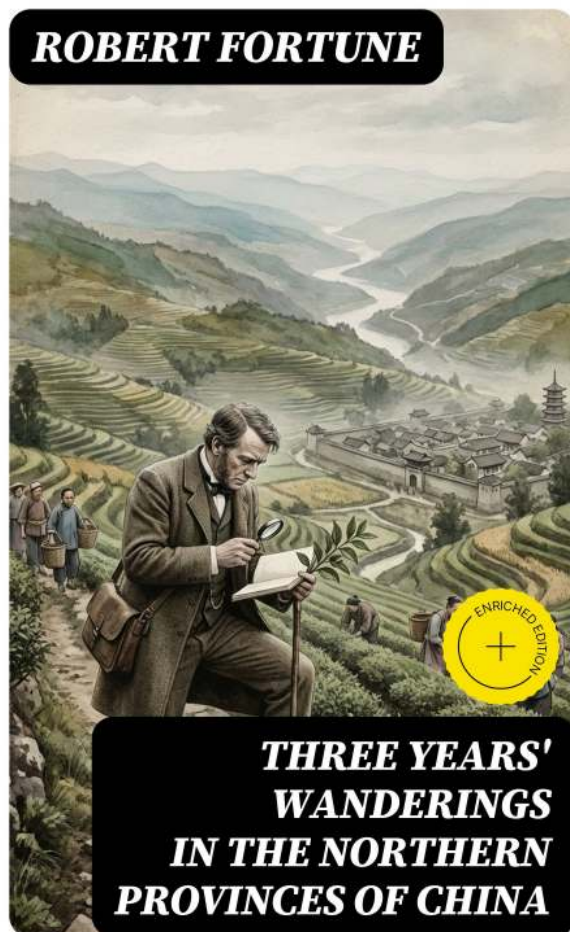


**ROBERT FORTUNE**



**THREE YEARS'  
WANDERINGS  
IN THE NORTHERN  
PROVINCES OF CHINA**

**ROBERT FORTUNE**



**THREE YEARS'  
WANDERINGS  
IN THE NORTHERN  
PROVINCES OF CHINA**

**Robert Fortune**

# **Three Years' Wanderings in the Northern Provinces of China**

**Enriched edition.**

*Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Liam Alcott*

EAN 8596547029366

Edited and published by DigiCat, 2022





# Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Synopsis](#)

[Historical Context](#)

**[Three Years' Wanderings in the Northern Provinces of China](#)**

[Analysis](#)

[Reflection](#)

[Memorable Quotes](#)

[Notes](#)

# Introduction

## [Table of Contents](#)

Poised between scientific curiosity and guarded frontiers, *Three Years' Wanderings in the Northern Provinces of China* traces how a botanist's desire to see, name, and collect life meets the realities of checkpoints, interpreters, treaty-port boundaries, river junks, mountain footpaths, monsoon weather, and the delicate etiquette of encounters, revealing that plants can cross oceans faster than trust, and that every garden gate, market stall, temple courtyard, and roadside hedge becomes both a threshold to knowledge and a mirror of the political conditions that make looking possible and, at times, perilous indeed.

Robert Fortune's book is a nineteenth-century work of nonfiction travel writing and natural history, set across the northern provinces of Qing China in the years after the First Opium War opened select ports to foreign residence and trade. Written by a Scottish botanist best known for his expertise with cultivated plants, the narrative follows extended journeys that begin at coastal entrepôts and range inland to towns, villages, and agricultural districts. It belongs to the tradition of scientific voyaging literature, combining practical observation with geographic description, and offers a portrait of landscapes and working life during a moment when contact intensified yet access remained tightly circumscribed.

At its core is the straightforward premise of a plant hunter traveling for roughly three years to study, acquire, and understand living collections, while learning how growers,

gardeners, merchants, and officials organize the cultivation and movement of plants and goods. Fortune describes routes by river and road, visits to nurseries and gardens, and scenes in markets and workshops, always grounding observations in the practicalities of climate, tools, soil, and transport. The voice is careful and empirical, occasionally wry, and the tone remains measured; readers encounter steady, lucid description rather than sensation, with the quiet drama of logistics, conversation, and close looking.

The style reflects the habits of a trained observer: terms of horticulture are explained as they arise, digressions on methods lead to concise comparisons, and the pace slows for detailed inventories of trees, shrubs, and household crops. He writes with an eye to utility—what thrives where, how a technique scales, which obstacles matter—and arranges chapters around particular districts or lines of travel. Scenes unfold through patient accumulation of detail rather than grand set pieces. The effect is immersive without ornament: modestly lyrical when encountering landscape, plainspoken in workshops and streets, and attentive to the small technologies that knit daily life together.

Several themes interlace the journeys. The first is the exchange of knowledge under constraint: techniques circulate through conversation and demonstration even as formal pathways of movement are narrow and supervised. Another is the entanglement of natural history with commerce, since plants are never only aesthetic objects but staples, medicines, and commodities whose cultivation binds households to regional and imperial economies. The book also charts the tension between curiosity and the ethics of taking, underscoring uneven power and access. Finally, it observes the resourcefulness of growers and

artisans, insisting that expertise is local, contextual, and often collective long before it becomes cataloged science.

These pages matter for contemporary readers because they illuminate how global plant flows began to reshape environments, diets, and industries long before today's supply chains, and they offer granular snapshots of practices that still inform sustainable agriculture and horticulture. The narrative invites critical reading of perspective and bias, making it a useful document for thinking about representation, translation, and the limits of observation across cultures. It also prompts reflection on biosecurity, ecological exchange, and the responsibilities attached to collecting and moving living material. In an era of climate adaptation, its attention to resilience, seasonality, and technique retains practical and ethical resonance.

Approached as both field notebook and cultural document, *Three Years' Wanderings* rewards readers who enjoy careful description, methodical inquiry, and the way small facts accumulate into broader understandings of place. Fortune's itinerary offers a scaffold for thinking about mobility—of people, plants, and ideas—while the measured prose gives space to consider what can and cannot be perceived in moments of encounter. Without depending on plot, the book sustains momentum through curiosity and craft. Read with patience and with awareness of its historical context, it provides a steady guide to the northern landscapes it surveys and a lens on the conditions that shaped them.

# Synopsis

## [Table of Contents](#)

Published in 1847, *Three Years' Wanderings in the Northern Provinces of China* records the travels of Scottish botanist Robert Fortune during the mid-1840s, shortly after new treaty ports were opened to foreign access. Commissioned by the Horticultural Society of London, Fortune set out to collect living plants and seeds and to observe the natural and social landscape of coastal and riverine China. The book blends practical field notes with a traveler's narrative, outlining aims, routes, and the institutional context that enabled the journey. Fortune's opening chapters establish the climate, topography, and constraints that shape his work, as well as his methods for navigating them.

Fortune's itinerary moves among newly accessible ports—such as Shanghai and Ningbo—and nearby islands and waterways along the eastern seaboard. He details harbors, city walls, markets, and the bustle of trade, while describing lodgings, interpreters, and the logistics of outfitting expeditions. These chapters situate the reader in the rhythms of port life and the regulatory frameworks governing foreign movement. Fortune characterizes the texture of daily encounters with officials and merchants, noting procedures, permits, and the practical etiquette of negotiation. The scenes introduce a landscape in flux, where commercial expansion, local custom, and cautious diplomacy meet.

Venturing inland from the coast, Fortune describes agricultural districts linked by canals and rivers. He records



rice fields, mulberry groves associated with sericulture, and garden plots supplying regional markets, emphasizing irrigation, soil management, and seasonal labor. The narrative follows boat journeys through lock systems and towpaths, highlighting how waterborne transport shapes access and exchange. Temples, village festivals, and burial grounds appear as landmarks that organize space and community life. Throughout, Fortune balances observation with restraint, noting what can be seen and confirmed while acknowledging the limits imposed by language, permissions, and local sensitivities toward foreign travelers.

The botanical core of the book chronicles the search for ornamental and useful plants, visits to gardens and nurseries, and the selection of specimens likely to endure a long sea voyage. Fortune details the cultivation practices he observes—training, pruning, potting media, and seasonal care—and explains how climate and aspect influence plant form. He adopts Wardian cases to transport living material, outlining packing strategies, moisture control, and the risks of salt air and temperature swings. Alongside seeds and cuttings, he documents habitats and companion species, aiming to translate Chinese horticultural knowledge into guidance for British gardeners and institutions.

Beyond plants, Fortune records crafts and trades that intersect with horticulture and commerce, including silk production, dye preparation, timber work, and the marketing of nursery stock. He sketches urban guilds and rural markets, tracing how goods, expertise, and credit move through merchant networks. Municipal administration, tax collection, and local arbitration appear in vignette-like accounts of offices, granaries, and militia drills. Although the perspective is that of a nineteenth-century British traveler, the tone remains descriptive, with attention to practices

rather than abstract theorizing, and with care to distinguish witnessed processes from hearsay.

Adversities shape the narrative's momentum: monsoon weather, river floods, and the fragility of living cargo demand careful timing and contingency plans. Fortune notes crowd dynamics—curiosity, suspicion, and hospitality in varying proportions—and the paperwork and escorts that accompany forays beyond familiar routes. Illness, equipment failure, and missed sailings punctuate progress, prompting adjustments to collecting priorities and transport schedules. These practical chapters show how botanical exploration depends on local pilots, craftsmen, and assistants, and how patience, method, and improvisation can convert precarious circumstances into successful shipments and reliable field notes.

In closing movements, the book reflects on what these journeys yielded for European horticulture and for readers seeking a grounded view of regions only recently described in English. Fortune's account connects plants to places, labor, and exchange, offering one of the period's clearest portraits of coastal and lower-river China as seen through a working naturalist's lens. While marked by its time and access limits, the narrative endures for its meticulous observations, its documentation of techniques that transformed plant transport, and its contribution to a broader, still-evolving understanding of how knowledge and species circulate across cultures.

# Historical Context

## [Table of Contents](#)

Robert Fortune's *Three Years' Wanderings in the Northern Provinces of China* (1847) arises from his first collecting mission for the Horticultural Society of London, undertaken from 1843 to 1846. He arrived just after the First Opium War and the Treaty of Nanjing (1842) had opened selected ports and ceded Hong Kong to Britain. Using Hong Kong and the treaty ports as bases, Fortune ranged chiefly through the lower Yangtze and Zhejiang regions that Britons then called the "northern provinces" in contrast to Canton. His narrative records encounters with officials, merchants, and nurserymen as he sought living plants and seeds for transport to Britain.

His travels unfolded within the new treaty-port regime. The Treaty of Nanjing, augmented by the Treaty of the Bogue (1843), established British consuls at Canton, Amoy (Xiamen), Fuzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai; fixed a tariff; and granted extraterritoriality to British subjects. Movement inland remained restricted and subject to local permission, so itineraries radiated from these coastal nodes. Chinese authority continued through provincial officials such as the daotai and magistrates, while the old Canton Cohong monopoly dissolved. Compradors and interpreters mediated trade and daily transactions. Fortune's routes, protections, and occasional impediments reflect this legal framework, which both enabled access and circumscribed his contact with the interior.

The commercial setting was dominated by tea and silk exports, rising private British enterprise after the East India Company's China monopoly ended in 1834, and the lingering opium traffic that had helped precipitate war. Fast clippers and steam-assisted shipping tied the treaty ports to global markets, while Chinese coastal junks linked hinterlands to each port's customhouse. Shanghai rapidly grew as a commercial hub after 1842, and Ningbo retained influence in regional trade. Within this environment, Fortune arranged transport, hired local crews, and negotiated purchases. His observations of warehouses, markets, and shipping practices mirror the reorientation of Qing coastal commerce during the early treaty-port years.

Fortune's mission exemplified nineteenth-century botanical exploration tied to imperial networks. The Wardian case—an innovation of the 1830s that allowed plants to survive long sea voyages—made his goal of moving living specimens feasible. British horticulture prized Chinese ornamentals and useful plants, and the Horticultural Society sought new varieties and cultivation knowledge. Fortune documented nursery districts, propagation techniques such as layering and grafting, and the organization of gardeners and plant dealers around the newly opened ports. He also attended to the tea shrub as a botanical subject and observed processing methods, connecting scientific curiosity with commodities that already anchored Anglo-Chinese trade.

Late Daoguang-era society framed his encounters. Qing bureaucratic routines, temple patronage, guilds, and lineage institutions shaped town life, while coastal dialects and writing mediated exchange. After 1842–1844 treaties with Britain, the United States (Wanghia), and France (Whampoa), small missionary and merchant communities established chapels, schools, presses, and hospitals inside the treaty ports. Foreigners relied on Chinese intermediaries

—compradors, boatmen, carpenters, and “linguists”—and on pidgin English or interpreters. Fortune navigated this milieu while purchasing plants and traveling by boat and road. His descriptions of festivals, markets, and crafts reflect an observer working at the intersection of official constraints and expanding cross-cultural contact.

Travel in the mid-1840s carried risks that shaped his itinerary and tone. Coastal piracy troubled shipping lanes; epidemics and fevers affected port populations; and rumors or local tensions sometimes gathered crowds around foreigners. British naval patrols and consular authority offered limited protection, but compliance with regulations and tactful dealings with magistrates were essential. Fortune notes the importance of permissions (“chops”), port clearances, and securing reliable escorts and guides. These practicalities color his account of journeys between rivers, canals, and islands, and help explain his occasional use of Chinese dress to move inconspicuously while collecting in districts beyond the usual foreign circuits.

The geography of his “northern provinces” centers on the Yangtze delta and the Zhejiang littoral, including waterways around Shanghai, Ningbo, and the Zhoushan (Chusan) archipelago. Chusan had been occupied by British forces during the war and, though slated for return under the 1842 treaty, was not fully evacuated until 1846. Canal networks and courier roads enabled movement between market towns and temple complexes, while new consulates and customhouses marked the treaty presence along the waterfronts. The juxtaposition of long-established Chinese urban life with newly internationalized harbors provides the spatial canvas for Fortune’s horticultural and ethnographic observations.



Three Years' Wanderings reflects an early, transitional moment when scientific collecting, commerce, and diplomacy were newly entwined on China's coast. Fortune admires the skill of Chinese gardeners and artisans, documents the sophistication of nursery production, and critiques bureaucratic obstacles or miscommunications that impeded travel and trade. The book's attention to tariffs, permissions, consular routines, and shipping logistics anchors its descriptions in the realities created by the 1842–1844 treaty system. As such, it offers a contemporaneous lens on Qing society under external pressure, revealing both adaptation and friction, while demonstrating how botanical inquiry moved within—and sometimes challenged—the boundaries of the new order.

# **Three Years' Wanderings in the Northern Provinces of China**

[Main Table of Contents](#)

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

THREE YEARS' WANDERINGS IN CHINA.

CHAPTER I.

CHAP. II.

CHAP. III.

CHAP. IV.

CHAP. V.

CHAP. VI.

CHAP. VII.

CHAP. VIII.

CHAP. IX.

CHAP. X.

CHAP. XI.

CHAP. XII.

CHAP. XIII.

CHAP. XIV.

CHAP. XV.

CHAP. XVI.

CHAP. XVII.

CHAP. XVIII.

CHAP. XIX.

CHAP. XX.

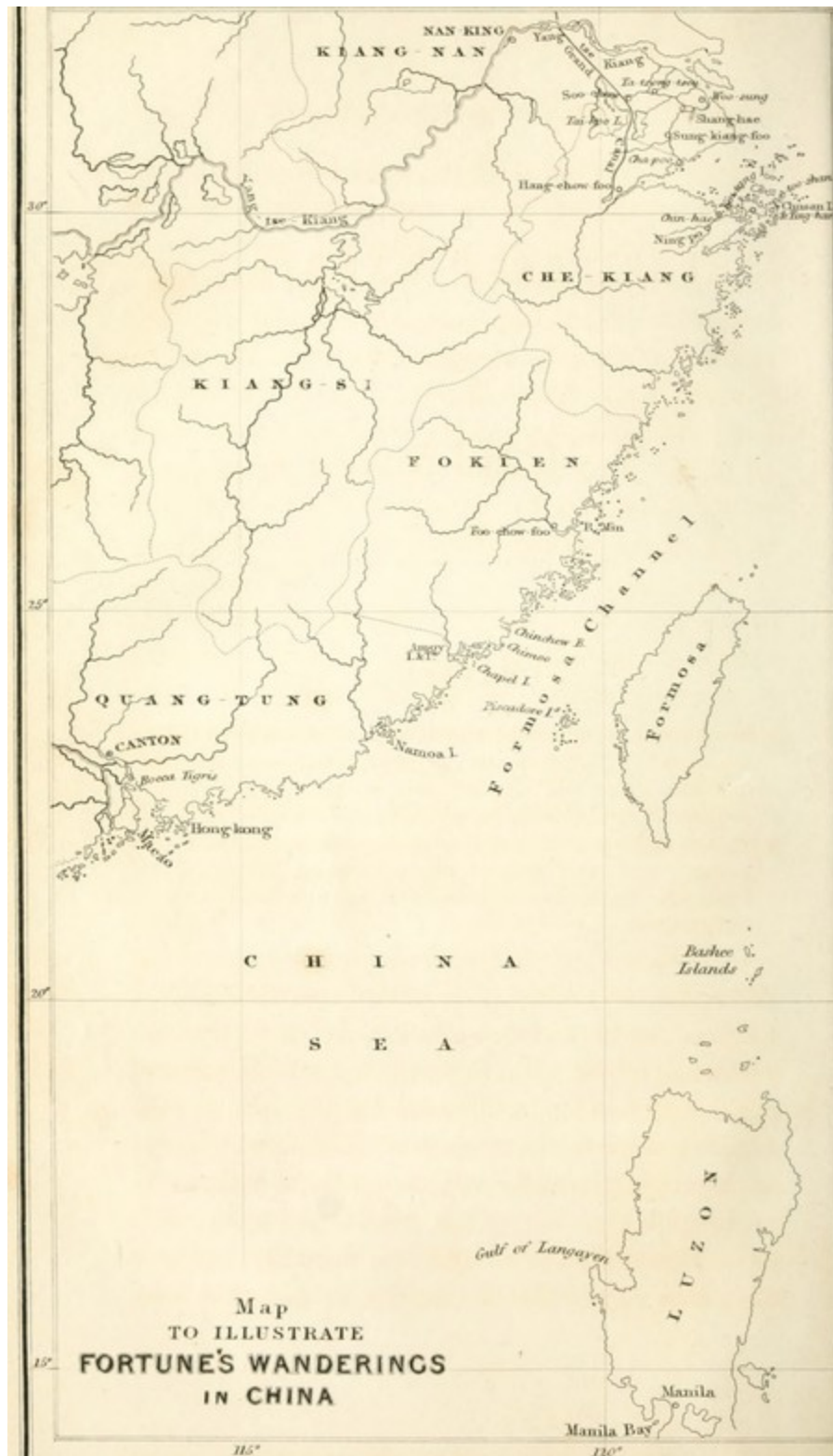
CHAP. XXI.



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

## [Table of Contents](#)

- [1.](#) The City of Foo-chow-foo and Long Bridge
  - [2.](#) Marriage Procession
  - [3.](#) Map
  - [4.](#) City of Ningpo—Bridge of Boats
  - [5.](#) Old Pagoda in Ningpo
  - [6.](#) Ice Houses
  - [7.](#) River at Shanghae
  - [8.](#) Mountain Chair
  - [9.](#) Pans for drying the Tea
  - [10.](#) Bamboo Table for rolling Tea
  - [11.](#) Opium Pipe
  - [12.](#) Water-wheel on the Island of Chusan
  - [13.](#) Chusan Tombs
  - [14.](#) Tomb of a Mandarin's Wife
  - [15.](#) Pagoda on the River Min
  - [16.](#) Anemone on the Tombs
  - [17.](#) Chinese Funeral and Family Tomb
-



Map to illustrate Fortune's wanderings in China

# **THREE YEARS' WANDERINGS**

## **IN**

### **CHINA.**

[Table of Contents](#)

#### **CHAPTER I.**

[Table of Contents](#)

INTRODUCTION.—ERRONEOUS NOTIONS REGARDING CHINA.—NO CORRECT SOURCES OF INFORMATION.—INFORMATION GLEANED FROM THE CHINESE NOT TO BE DEPENDED UPON.—IMAGINATIVE POWERS OF AUTHORS ON CHINA.—PECULIAR TRAITS IN THE CHARACTER OF THE CHINESE.—REMARKS ON AGRICULTURE AND SOIL.—ON GOVERNMENT AND LAWS.—CHINA HAS BEEN RETROGRADING FOR MANY YEARS.—MY OWN EXPERIENCE.

When the news of the peace with China first reached England, in the autumn of 1842, I obtained the appointment of Botanical Collector to the Horticultural Society of London, and proceeded to China in that capacity early in the spring of the following year. In laying my travels and their results before the public, I beg to say at the commencement, that I have no intention of writing or "making" a "book on China." By this I mean such books as have often been issued from the press, professing to give a faithful and true account of the history of the Chinese from the earliest ages, and their



earliest kings down to Taouk-wang[1] and the present day, of the arts, sciences, religion and laws, and the social and moral condition of the people; whose authors, with true Chinese "*Oula Custom*," stand manfully by what the writers of other days have told them; and faithfully hand down to posterity, by the aid of the scissors and the pen, all the exaggerations and absurdities which have ever been written on China and the Chinese.

This celebrated country has been long looked upon as a kind of fairy-land by the nations of the Western world[1q]. Its position on the globe is so remote that few—at least in former days—had an opportunity of seeing and judging for themselves; and besides, those few were confined within the most narrow limits at Canton and Macao, the very outskirts of the kingdom, and far removed from the central parts or the seat of the government. Even the Embassies of Lord Macartney[2] and Lord Amherst, although they went as far as the capital, were so fettered and watched by the jealous Chinese that they saw little more than their friends who remained at Canton. Under these circumstances much that was gleaned from the Chinese themselves relating to their country, was of the most exaggerated description, if not entirely fabulous. They, from the highest Mandarin down to the meanest beggar, are filled with the most conceited notions of their own importance and power; and fancy that no people however civilised, and no country however powerful, are for one moment to be compared with them. As an instance of this I may mention the following:—When the first steamer visited the coast of China, the Chinese in Canton and Macao did not exhibit the least surprise, but merely said "*Have got plenty, all same, inside*," meaning that such things were quite common in the interior of their country. Moreover, they cannot appreciate statistical inquiries; but always fancy that we have some secret motive for making them; or that the subject cannot be of the

slightest importance, either to ourselves or others, and consequently do not trouble themselves about obtaining correct information.

I have been often much annoyed with this propensity of theirs during my travels in the country; and have had frequently to travel many a weary mile, merely because they did not think it worth their while to give me correct information. In fact, latterly I made a practice of disbelieving every thing they told me, until I had an opportunity of seeing and judging for myself.

Shut out from the country, and having no means of getting information on which we could depend (for independent of Chinese statements, the accounts written by the Jesuits were in many instances grossly exaggerated), it is not to be wondered at if the works in our language were more remarkable for the exhibition of the imaginative power of their authors, than for facts concerning China and the Chinese. We were in the position of little children who gaze with admiration and wonder at a penny peep-show in a fair or market-place at home.—We looked with magnifying eyes on every thing Chinese; and fancied, for the time at least, that what we saw was certainly real. But the same children who look with wonder upon the scenes of Trafalgar and Waterloo, when the curtain falls, and their penny-worth of sights has passed by, find that, instead of being amongst those striking scenes which have just passed in review before their eyes, they are only, after all, in the market-place of their native town. So it is with "children of a larger growth." This mystery served the purpose of the Chinese so long as it lasted; and although we perhaps did not give them credit for all to which they pretended, at least we gave them much more than they really deserved.

Viewing the subject in this light we have little difficulty in accounting for the false colouring which has been given to

every picture drawn by authors who have written on this country, and who have extolled to the skies her perfection in the arts, in agriculture, in horticulture, the fertility of the soil, the industry of the people, and the excellence of her government and laws. But the curtain which had been drawn around the celestial country for ages, has now been rent asunder; and instead of viewing an enchanted fairy-land, we find, after all, that China is just like other countries. Doubtless the Chinese were in that half-civilised state in which they are now, at a very early period, and when the now polished nations of the West were yet rude savages. It is long since they discovered the art of making the beautiful porcelain, lacquer-ware, and silks, which have for centuries been so much admired in Europe; but these very facts—their civilised condition, their advancement in the arts, and even their discovering a magnetic power in nature, which they could convert into a compass for the purpose of navigation—instead of telling in their favour as an active and intelligent people, do the very reverse when we consider what they might have been now and what they really are.

A great proportion of the northern Chinese seem to be in a sleepy or dreaming state, from which it is difficult to awake them. When a foreigner at any of the northern ports goes into a shop, the whole place inside and out is immediately crowded with Chinese, who gaze at him with a sort of stupid dreaming eye; and it is difficult to say whether they really see him or not, or whether they have been drawn thereby some strange mesmeric influence over which they have no control: and I am quite sure that, were it possible for the stranger to slip out of his clothes and leave a block standing in his place, these Chinese would still continue to gaze on, and never know the difference. The conduct of the Chinese peasants during the war was very remarkable in this respect. I have been told by some of the military officers,

that, when the whole fleet of sailing vessels and steamers went up the Yang-tse-Kiang<sup>[3]</sup> in 1842, many of the agricultural labourers on the banks of the river used to hold up their heads for a few seconds, and look with a kind of stupid gaze upon our noble fleet; and then quietly resume their labours, as if the thing was only an every day occurrence, and they had seen it a thousand times before. When the "Medusa" steamer went up the Shanghai river for several miles above the city, the river became so narrow that they had some difficulty in finding a place wide enough to allow the steamer to come round. A peasant was standing on the bank smoking his pipe, and looking on with the most perfect unconcern when, the helm being put down, the little vessel in coming round shot right across the stream, and came in contact with the bank, just under the very feet of the Chinaman. The shock was of course considerable, and the man who all at once seemed to awake from a trance, set off in the utmost terror, like an arrow, across the fields, without once looking behind him; and, as Captain Hewitt who related the story, remarked, for any thing he knew, the man was running until this day! Many of the Chinese are of course very different characters from those I have just described; and are as active men as you find in any part of the world: but the above are striking features in the character of the inhabitants of the northern parts of the country which I have had an opportunity of visiting.

In the knowledge and practice of agriculture, although the Chinese may be in advance of other Eastern nations, they are not for a moment to be compared with the civilised nations of the West. Perhaps more nonsense has been written upon this subject than upon any other connected with China; and we can only account for it by supposing the writers to have been entirely unacquainted with the subject, and led away by the fancies and prejudices above alluded

to. How ridiculous, for example, for them to speak in such glowing terms of the fertility of the land, when we bear in mind that they judged from what they saw at Canton and Macao! Had they seen the glorious scenery amongst the mountains at Tein-tung near Ning-po, or the rich plain of Shanghae, then indeed they might have written in the most glowing terms of the fertility of Chinese soil; but what terms could they have found to describe it, after giving the barren soil of the south such a character?

Although it is not my intention to devote any part of these pages to the history and government of the Chinese, I must still notice, in passing, what has been so often said about the perfection of their government and laws. And here, too, I must differ from those who have such high notions of the Chinese in these respects. I think no country can be well governed where the government is powerless, and has not the means of punishing those who break the laws. China is very weak in this respect, compared with European nations, and the only thing which keeps the country together is the quiet and inoffensive character of the people. Everybody, who has travelled in China, knows that, wherever the natives are enterprising and bold, they set the government at defiance whenever it suits their purpose to do so. For example, what can the government do if the natives on the coast of Fokien—a bold and lawless race, choose to disobey its mandates?—Positively nothing. Even further north, where the Mandarins are more powerful—in Shanghae for example—the Chinchew men, as they are called, often fight pitched battles with fire-arms, in the streets and in open day; and the Mandarins, with all their soldiers at their backs, dare not to interfere. Surely no government worth any thing would tolerate this state of things. The system of apprehension and punishment is so curious, and so characteristic of the Chinese government, that I must not omit to mention it. The belligerents are allowed to fight as long and as fiercely as

they choose, and the soldiers never interfere: but when the weakest side is over-powered, and probably a number of lives lost in the affray, they come down in great force and seize and carry off to punishment the most defenceless: and, in circumstances of this kind, they are not over particular about seizing the most riotous, or those most implicated in the disturbances, provided those they seize are the weakest and least able to resist. Such conduct in the Chinese government I have been an eye-witness to, again and again, in the north of China; more particularly in Shanghai. What should we think if such a state of things existed in England? and yet this is a specimen of the government which has been considered so perfect, and which has been so highly eulogised.

There can be no doubt that the Chinese empire arrived at its highest state of perfection many years ago; and since then it has rather been retrograding than advancing. Many of the northern cities, evidently once in the most flourishing condition, are now in a state of decay, or in ruins; the pagodas which crown the distant hills, are crumbling to pieces, and apparently are seldom repaired; the spacious temples are no longer as they used to be in former days; even the celebrated temples on Pootoo-San<sup>[4]</sup> (an island near Chusan) to which, as to Jerusalem of old, the natives come from afar to worship, show all the signs of having seen better days. It is very true that these are heathen temples, and the good in every land will hail with delight the day when these shall give way to others which shall be erected to the true God: but nevertheless such is the fact, that these places are not supported as they used to be: and from this I conclude that the Chinese, as a nation, are retrograding rather than advancing.

Although I have considered it necessary to expose in this manner the prejudiced opinions which have been from time to time given out to the world by authors on China, I am far

**22** A transliteration of a Chinese name meaning 'flowery land' referring to well-known nursery/garden estates near Canton (Guangzhou) famous for cultivating and selling ornamental plants and dwarf trees.

**23** An older botanical name for the Maiden-hair tree now known as *Ginkgo biloba*; its edible seeds/fruits were sold in Chinese markets (referred to in the text as 'Pa-Kwo').

**24** The name used in the text for a large Buddhist monastery near Ningpo; the author calls it the "Temple of the Heavenly Boys" and describes its buildings, priests, and role as a local religious centre.

**25** A temple dedication rendered here as "Tein-how," described as the "Queen of Heaven"; this likely corresponds to the Chinese deity often called Tianhou or Mazu, a popular protective goddess in coastal regions.

**26** The author's spelling for an island in the Chusan (Zhoushan) Archipelago noted as a centre of Buddhist temples and pilgrimage (commonly rendered today as Putuo or Putuo Shan).

**27** An older romanization of the name Kong Fuzi, better known as Confucius (551–479 BCE), the Chinese philosopher whose teachings form the basis of Confucianism.

**28** An older spelling of Tao (Dao), here referring to Taoism (the indigenous Chinese philosophical and religious tradition often rendered as "Reason" in 19th-century texts).

**29** An ancient Indic language in which many early Buddhist scriptures are preserved; the author cites a contemporary (Gutzlaff) who reported that some temple chants were performed in Pali, a liturgical language used in parts of Buddhism.

**30** A Chinese name (from the province of Chekiang/Zhejiang) for green tea that is finished by heating and drying in a pan; literally described in the text as “the tea which is dried in the pan.”

**31** A contrasting style of tea mentioned as dried in flat bamboo baskets over a slow charcoal fire; described as less green in colour and usually prepared more slowly than the pan-dried Tsaou-tsing.

**32** A plant (used historically in East Asia) that yields an indigo-like vegetable dye; the author notes a dye by this name—Tein-ching—used in northern districts and possibly applied to teas for colour.

**33** A synthetic blue pigment historically called prussiate of iron (iron ferrocyanide) that the author reports being used to impart a bluish ‘bloom’ to some exported green teas; it has been noted historically as a colouring agent rather than a food ingredient.

**34** A term for cast silver ingots or bullion used as currency in imperial China; merchants and buyers in the text are described as paying with strings or lumps of silver (Sycee) and foreign silver dollars.

**35** A long-stemmed smoking instrument used in 19th-century China to vaporize and inhale prepared opium; it was a common implement in opium-smoking practice and trade of the period.

**36** An older spelling for tree peonies, woody ornamental peony plants (group often treated as *Paeonia suffruticosa*) grown in Chinese gardens, with large, showy flowers distinct from herbaceous peonies.



**37** A transliteration of the Chinese name for tree peonies (moutan or moutan peony), used in older western horticultural literature to denote these cultivated woody peonies.

**38** A Chinese name in the text for a cruciferous plant used to produce a blue dye for cotton; the author later indicates the plant was identified scientifically and used locally for indigo-type dyeing.

**39** Historical romanization for the city now commonly written Suzhou (in Jiangsu province), a famed commercial and cultural center noted for canals, silk, gardens and handicrafts; 'foo' (fu) indicated a prefectural city in older transliterations.

**40** An older romanization of a Chinese term meaning 'great wind' (literally 'big wind'), used here to refer to what foreigners called a typhoon — a severe tropical cyclone affecting the Chinese coast.

**41** A traditional imperial title (Tianzi) used by Chinese emperors indicating their role as mediator between Heaven and the people; commonly invoked in ritual and state ceremonies.

**42** An older Western name for the port city now romanized as Xiamen in Fujian province, long known in 19th-century sources as a major coastal trading port.

**43** A 19th-century Western romanization of Fuzhou (also spelled Foochow), the capital city of Fujian province on China's southeast coast.

**44** An older form of romanization for Zhejiang province on China's east coast; 'Chekiang' appears frequently in 19th-century English accounts.

**45** Refers to the Min River (闽江) in Fujian province, the principal river flowing through the Foo-chow/Fuzhou region and mentioned here as the river Min near Foo-chow-foo.

**46** A historical Chinese unit of weight cited in the footnote; the text gives a pecul as equal to 133¼ pounds (about 60.5 kg), used in 19th-century trade accounts.

**47** Rendered in the text as the "white cabbage of Shantung and Peking," Pak-tsae denotes a northern Chinese leaf cabbage (commonly associated with what is now called napa or *Brassica rapa* var. *pekinensis*) widely grown and transported in the 19th century.

**48** Historically the English name for the Zhoushan archipelago off Zhejiang province, China; the area was notable in the 1840s and was occupied by British forces during the First Opium War (early 1840s).

**49** A British writer referenced here as the author of 'Campaign in China', a mid-19th-century account relating to British operations and observations during the First Opium War era.

**50** A Chinese expression literally meaning 'red-haired people', used in 19th-century sources to refer to Europeans (especially the English) encountered by Chinese communities.

**51** Portable glass-fronted plant cases (Wardian cases) invented in the 19th century for transporting and protecting living plants on long sea voyages.

**52** A long, narrow Philippine boat with outriggers (an outrigger canoe) commonly used for lake or coastal transport in the Philippines.