

CHINA LIFTS THE VEIL OF CENTURIES

BY C. H. WETMORE.

AFTER shadowy centuries China is about to lift the veil at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition and divulge to the world the life and manners of a nation as ancient as the daybreak of man. From the cradle to the present the whole fabric of her national existence will stand, a mighty lesson of the greatness of the Orient. Her gorgeous drama of poetry, art, science and industry is now to be unfolded with the full authority, and at the imperial command of the Emperor. The expense of the unprecedented display comes from the royal treasury, and a prince of the blood is the custodian.

At the Chicago Exposition and elsewhere the Chinese exhibits were made under the direction of the custom's department, at the head of which was Sir Robert Hart, an Englishman. The imperial government had nothing to do with these displays.

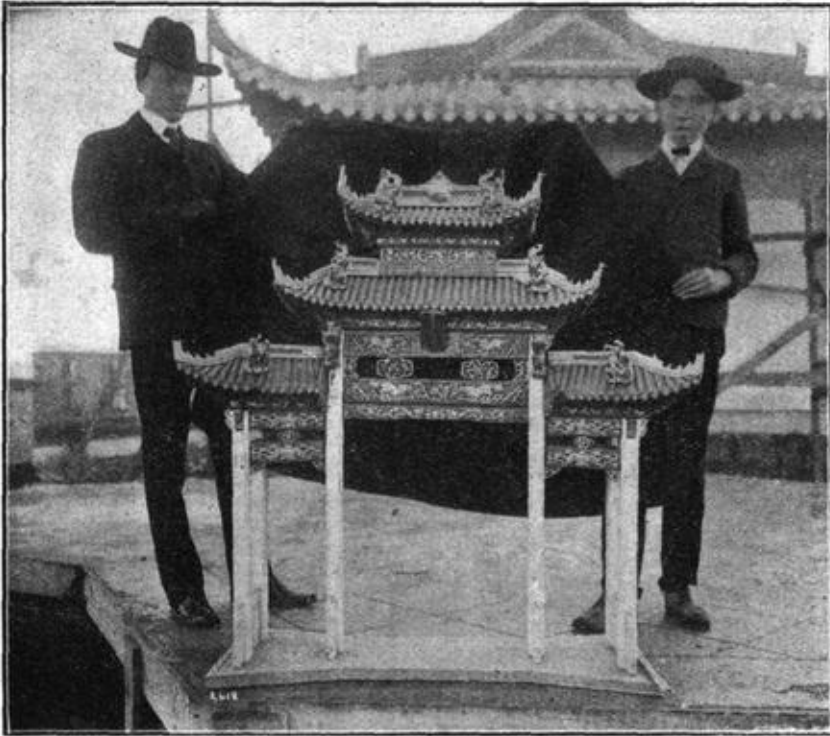
A change comes over the face of the celestial dream. The Son of Heaven receives in royal audience the special envoy of the Exposition. The ruler of 400,000,000 people speaks warm words of the great western republic. He commands. China shakes off the silence of ages. The Dragon wakes.

The nephew of the Emperor is appointed his personal representative at St. Louis, the first member of the royal household who has ever touched foot on American shores. A polished Chinese gentleman and accomplished diplomat, educated at Yale University, is sent to prepare the way for the won-

ders new to the hemisphere of later times.

Suavely and courteously this gifted Chinese, Wong Kai Kah, who speaks golden English with a silver tongue, has predicted at many American banquet boards, that his country will arise out of the ancient East in 1904 and astonish christendom with a cry for recognition that would shake the world. At this moment he is on the Pacific, returning to Peking, to escort Prince Pu Lun to the United States. On the eve of his departure there has arrived the remarkable programme which has been made possible by the imperial decree. So far does it exceed the most extravagant hopes of the Exposition management that it becomes a distinct achievement in the march of progress. It welds the interests of this country so closely to China that it seems not fully to predict as its outcome, an alliance leading to an open door of perpetual amity between the oldest and the youngest nations.

Twenty-four ports of the Flowery Kingdom have poured their wealth into the great pantomime, covering 26,280 square feet in the Palace of Liberal Arts where the entire exhibit will be installed. American ears are familiar with some of these human hives. Tientsin of Boxer fame and New Chwang, in the disputed territory of Russian occupation, ring with recent history. Canton, Chefoo, Amoy, Shanghai, Hankow and Ningpo are names steeped in the flavor of tea and glitter with lacquered glories.



Main Gateway to the Chinese Reservation.

Four centuries that precede the Nazarene yield their tribute in a fine replica of Ngo-Yang-Lan pagoda, weird echo of fantastic religion, standing today on an island in the Yang-tsz-Kiang river, opposite the old city of Wuchang. It is the hoary parent, this Buddhistic temple, of much Chinese architecture, to be shown at the Exposition.

Ningpo sends an elaborately carved reproduction of the temple erected there in honor of Cheng Hwang Miao, the patron god of the city. Peking supplies a city gate and part of the wall scaled by the American troops who relieved the besieged legation of the United States from the Boxer hordes in the year 1900.

Shells of social and industrial life appear in replicas of jewelers and carpenters' shops, shoes, boots and umbrella shops. A gentleman's residence is contrasted with the dwelling of the laborer. Official rank looks forth from the Yamen, the home of power. Justice salutes you from the Examination Hall, with its suggestions of the snickersnee, and a touch of religion and philosophy shines in the resplendent shrine of a Confucius temple, bearing its gold chased tablet inscribed in letters of gold and pearl: "The sacred tablet of Kung-fu-tsz, (Confucius), the Great Completer, the Perfect Sage and Reverend Teacher." Bridges spanning rivers laden with curious freightage, the homestead of the



Pagoda of the Imperial Chinese Pavilion.

farmer, school houses, the Cha Kuhn or typical tea houses, a lime kiln, a salt factory, an ice house and the grave of the wealthy and the humble run the bewildering gamut of architecture from the palace to the last human tenement.

The people who live in these varied habitations are shown with the same

fidelity in models of the best workmanship. Caste, as marked by apparel, is the theme of 40 life-size figures in costumes of the finest embroidered material. They come from Peking, Shanghai, Ningpo, Foochow, Canton and Yumen. A Manchu lady minces in her summer and winter attire. Manchu maidens, women and men of the