

The cult of Orpheus was wide-spread among the people of Greece and Rome at the beginning of the Christian era, and we have reason to believe that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul taught in the Orphic Mysteries resembled to a great extent the Christian view of resurrection. At any rate the Christians adopted the picture of Orpheus as symbolising Christ at a time when they did not dare to make pictures of Jesus.

P. C.

A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON CHINA.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Chinese are in possession of a very ancient civilisation; they know it and are proud of it. But Chinese pride is outdone by European insolence, and thus resulted a lamentable state of affairs which led to the climax of the present disturbances. The distrust, hatred, and contempt which are mutual are not a recent affair but the product of centuries.

The situation is very sad for China, and the prospects of the country are gloomy. It is impossible to tell what will be the end and how the difficulties will be adjusted, but one thing is sure, that the Chinese will in future centuries become an independent factor in the history of the world. I say "the Chinese," not the Chinese empire, for the latter will probably break down and fall a prey to the struggling parties. The Chinese people are patient and industrious; they are modest, easily satisfied and meek. They are at a disadvantage in warfare and politics; but the main struggle for survival will be decided, not by guns and diplomatic treaties, but by sociological conditions; and when the Chinese people shall be drawn into the great whirlpool of the world's commercial interests, we shall discover that they will soon make their influence felt, and the probability is that their very virtues, their frugality and tenacious industrial habits will make them obnoxious to the white man, who kindly offers himself to bear the burden of governing the yellow race.

It will be easier to conquer China than to subdue it, and should a foreign power succeed in taking it (which is by no means an easy task), the conquerors will find out that the easiest way of holding the country would be by becoming Chinese themselves.

The Chinese government, we must remember, is in the hands of foreign conquerors of a different nationality, not much liked by the Chinese and positively hated by many of those patriots who still cherish the memory of the purely Chinese traditions.

The present situation is very complicated. Chinese mobs have killed the German ambassador and have threatened to destroy the lives of all foreigners residing in the embassies of Peking. The Empress Dowager, *de facto* ruler of China, has openly shown her sympathy with the rioters, and the Western powers were thus forced to send troops for the relief of the imprisoned families of the ambassadors. The imperial court withdrew from the capital, and Count Waldersee, generalissimo of the allied Western troops, established his headquarters in the forbidden city. Then a great part of the palace was accidentally destroyed by fire. In the meantime the Russians took possession of Manchuria, and the powers made out their bills of indemnity claims. Such is the present situation, and no one knows what will come of it.

Some blame the missionaries as being the cause of the trouble, others the greediness of the powers, still others would condemn the Chinese for their haughti-

ness and stupidity. Perhaps there is some fault all around. It is certain, however, that had our diplomats taken the trouble to study the Chinese character, many severe clashes and the spilling of innocent blood as well as the expenditure of enormous sums of money in a warfare that, far from redressing wrong only served to make matters worse, might have been avoided.

China is an interesting country; the landscapes are beautiful; its mountains are rich in coal and ores; its plains are as fertile as the prairies of Illinois, perhaps more so; its national traditions are curious; and it is certain that some time the currents of Chinese nationality and Western civilisation will be intermingled. China will be opened to Western civilisation, and perhaps the Chinese too will slowly but steadily gain a foothold in the territories of the West. It is difficult to predict the result, but one thing is sure, that while Western civilisation is bound to upset and revolutionise China, the Chinese will in their turn affect the habits, opinions, and the entire social and racial constitution of Western culture. There is never an action without its reaction. The Chinese are not war-like, they are not conquerors like the Saxons, but they possess qualities that in the struggle for existence are of greater importance still, viz., endurance, persistence, plodding patience, and industrious habits.

We propose to publish a series of articles, partly original and new, partly reproduced from relatively inaccessible sources, for the purpose of shedding some light on the relation of China to the Western world. The present number contains a brief sketch of the Opium War and a judgment of the Chinese character by Rev. R. Morrison, which will be followed up in the subsequent number by articles on the Tai Ping Rebellion, on Hung Hsin Ch'üan, the leader of the Tai Ping, a description of Gützlöf's influence in China, a translation of the Tai Ping canon, and kindred subjects.

P. C.

THE NEW JEWISH ENCYCLOPÆDIA, AND THE PROPOSED UNIVERSITY OF JEWISH THEOLOGY, HISTORY, AND LITERATURE.

On Tuesday, May 21, 1901, the "Judæans," one of the most scholarly of American Jewish organisations, entertained the publishers and editors of *The Jewish Encyclopedia* at a banquet in New York, as an expression of their appreciation of the indefatigable labors of the editors and publishers, and especially of the promotor of the *Encyclopedia* idea, Dr. Isidor Singer, formerly of Vienna and Paris, and now of New York.

The first volume of *The Jewish Encyclopedia* was published this month by the Funk and Wagnalls Co., of New York. The work is a monumental one, and is designed to be a complete history of the Jews and Judaism. All that has gone to the making of the Jewish people, its history and biography, its literature, philosophy, and sociology, is to be presented here authoritatively and completely.

Dr. Isidor Singer, the originator of the undertaking, had labored hard in Austria, Germany, France, and England, for the realisation of his project; but it was not until he reached America and until he pressed his case with the Funk & Wagnalls Co. that he was successful in obtaining the support to enable him to carry out his ideas.

The Board of Consulting Editors engaged by the publishers of the *Encyclopedia* number thirteen, and include the names of B. Felsenthal, Ph. D., Bernard Drachman, Ph. D., Gustav Gottheil, Ph. D., H. Pereira Mendes, M. D., Joseph