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A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER.



A TEMPLE OF ATHENA.

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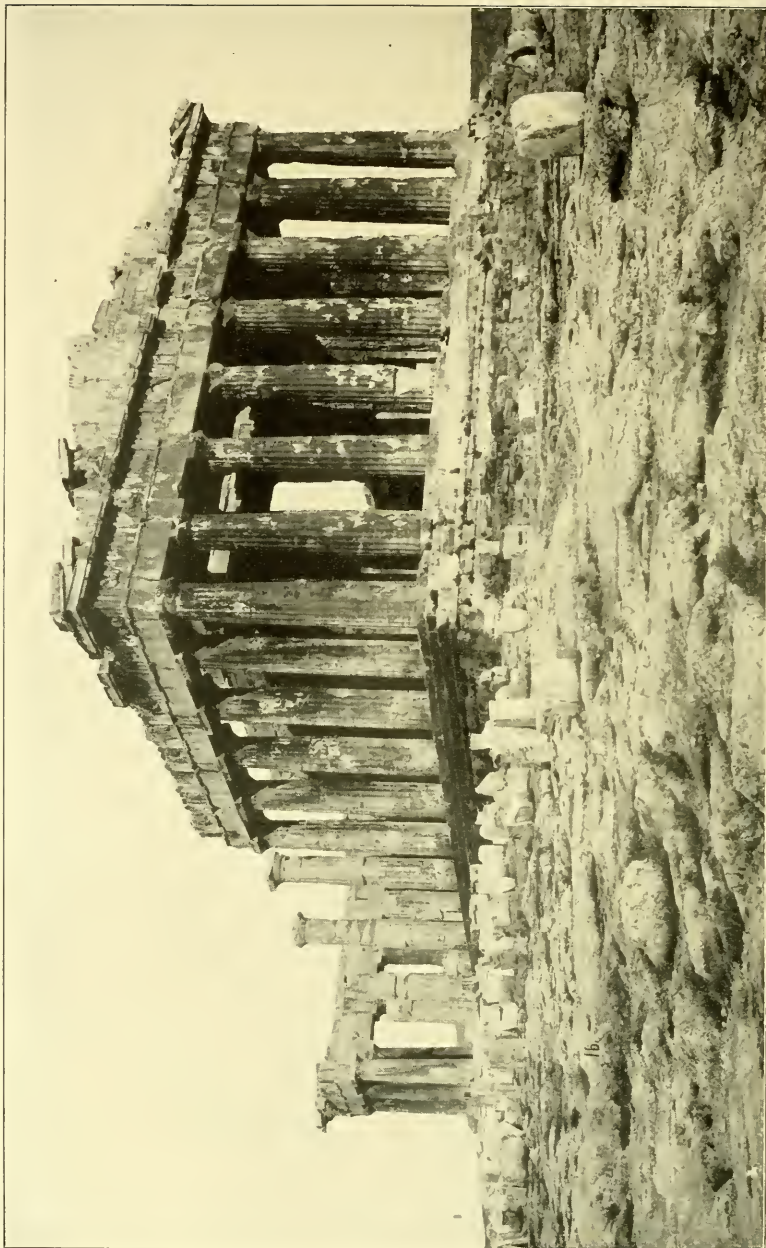
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"Traditions of parental past are we,
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A burning torch was passed from hand to hand,
And every hand was needed in the chain
To keep the holy flame aglow—the symbol
Of spirit-life, of higher aspirations."

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THE PARTHENON IN ITS PRESENT STATE.

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THE PRESENT PROSPECT OF CHINA.

BY GILBERT REID.

THERE are two policies in dealing with the affairs of China which are mutually antagonistic, the one known as the "open door" policy or that of equal opportunity, and the other that of domination and ultimate possession by some one outside power. Somewhere between, but more akin to the latter, is the policy of combination on the part of several, to retard the advance of others and to gain the control of China. In the political combination, to China's ruin, some one power will be supreme, all others will be pawns.

The policy of the open door has been professed by many powers, even by those who have been keen for more. To advocate such broad, fair, considerate and soothing conduct on the part of outside nations is good diplomacy. To consider one's own national interests is practical politics. In the former, China is always consulted; in the latter, never. In the former, one or more foreign nations leave it to China to work out her own salvation, agreeing to present no hindrances. In the latter, they take it upon themselves to preserve the peace, or the integrity, or the independence of China, and look to China for profuse expressions of gratitude.

These antagonistic conceptions as to the way China should be treated did not really come into being till after China was defeated by Japan in 1895. China's defeat opened the eyes of the world as to her comparative weakness. She lost in prestige and also in money. She began to borrow money, first to carry on the war and then to pay an indemnity to Japan. Ever since, China has become more and more hampered and throttled, while Japan has become strong like a giant and free like the birds of the air.

Hardly had the China-Japan war come to an end, when Chinese officialdom, the older as well as the younger men, confessed the need of reform. At first nearly every outside nation watched the pulsations of life with a degree of sympathy and admiration. China's failure to accomplish at once all that she professed or desired soon aroused contempt on the part of the strong, and with this came the open declaration that internal reform could come only by outside interposition. Spheres of influence, or spheres of interest, were the talk of the day on the part of Great Britain, France, Russia and Germany. Japan was silent; she was abiding her time. Some, like Lord Charles Beresford, after being fêted by the Chinese, spoke of the break-up of China. A mild, if not drastic, dismemberment of China was freely discussed in Europe, without thinking of the probable effect on Chinese susceptibilities.

From experiences which the writer enjoyed during a part of the years 1897 and 1898 in Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Russia, he must acknowledge that while the general sentiment was on the side of spheres of influence in China and possible dismemberment, there was an open mind to the reasonableness of the opposite theory, namely that China's sovereignty should be maintained and that she should be helped or advised in reforms which she herself should decide to initiate.

In 1899 Mr. John Hay, being transferred from the ambassadorship at St. James's court to the position of secretary of state at Washington, proposed to all the governments having relations with China common support of the policy of equal opportunity with maintenance of China's independence. No government dissented. In 1900 and after, this policy was reiterated by the government at Washington and received stronger confirmation by all the great powers. The Boxer cataclysm had shown the futility of all dismemberment theories.

In the very midst of the siege of the legations, on July 3, 1900, Mr. Hay urged the powers to "seek a solution which might bring about permanent safety and peace to China, preserve its territorial and administrative entity, protect all rights guaranteed by treaty and international law, and safeguard to the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese empire." Mr. Hay's high politics have been called the politics of the Golden Rule.

For these fourteen years but little has been heard of spheres of influence, and no nation desirous of influence has been so imprudent as to talk any longer of the break-up of China. The most

that has been done has been to insinuate that some one else was plotting this break-up.

The United States has continued to advocate the Hay doctrine with no diminution of sentiment. To use force for the carrying out of the doctrine—practical politics—has been contrary to the spirit of our people and is also inconsistent with the very idea of equal opportunity for helpfulness to China. Thus if China is going to have her integrity preserved America alone cannot be relied upon to see that it is done. *All the powers on an equal basis and in an equal spirit must work for its consummation.* The present war has knocked this beautiful idea in the head.

Equality of opportunity, equality of influence and equality of helpfulness have no meaning when any one outside nation is dominant or even predominant. *The only predominant influence in China should be China.*

Up to the present the predominant influence in China, at least among outside nations, has been Great Britain. Even when theorizing in her most persuasive tones for fair play and equality to all, she has unconsciously affected the predominant attitude. This war has brought much into the light of day. Woe to the man who thinks differently from an Englishman, whether such a one lives in "merry England" or out here in foreign communities of the Far East! Down with the nation that is a rival of Old England!

An Englishman, writing from Bristol to the New York *Evening Post* as far back as August 29, used these words:

"Our London papers contained report yesterday that 'Nine-tenths of Americans were on our side' in this great European war. Britons are deeply grateful for such warm sympathy and encouragement on the part of our American cousins. Once we have swept the Germans from the seas, our navy will command the vast expanse of the ocean, and our great mercantile fleet, augmented by captured ships, will do the carrying trade of the world. Our merchants and manufacturers will control the markets of Africa, South America, China, India, Japan and Russia. Britain should be permitted to reimburse your government to the amount of one-half of the cost of that magnificent work, the Panama Canal, and unite with you in protecting and keeping open this great waterway."

How stands Britannia in China? Has any German, any American, yea, any Japanese or Russian or Frenchman, in days gone by, been so impudent as to claim first place? From descent my prepossessions are for Britain, but I also study the facts. No sooner did the war, like electricity, come flashing into our midst, than war was

made not only on German militarism but on German trade, German culture, German character. Some of the shot fell into the American camp, unless speedy escape was made into the loving embrace of the temporarily loving allies.

But Britain's predominance in China, it is said, is hers by right, as it is o'er all the waves. The claim has been sound. In 1842 and 1860, whatever the name of the wars, whether called "opium war" or some better name, England (as she was called in those days) took the lead. Long before Prussia became Germany, Hongkong was made English with no thought of restoration to China. Not even now is there such a thought. After Prussia became Germany and leased Kiaochow, England, not to be left behind, leased not only Weihaiwei but Kowloon Extension opposite Hongkong, 400 square miles or more.

The British business houses in China have never relished a competitor worthy the name. They made no tirade against such interlopers till the war gave them a chance. German competition has been taken meekly, all the more when German firms were pushing English goods. Still the shoulder has been shrugged and considerable thinking has been done. The American competitor, and the Japanese too when real enterprise began to be shown, affected badly the easy flow of the stream of fortune which the English had opened up. Still, so long as German merchants spoke English and sold English goods, and American houses had English agents, and Japan was an ally, there was nothing as yet to fear, Great Britain was still predominant. So long as no one disputed this, she was friendly to all. In certain lines of goods (opium) the British, if India and Bagdad may be included, have succeeded by rare persistency and with ever-growing favor to hold their own. Thus in some things the British are actually dominant.

Even in educational matters German technical schools have caused some worry. Lord William Cecil, to consummate his Oxford University scheme at Hankow, has had to stimulate latent English generosity by pointing out the greater energy of Americans and Germans in China. Latterly both English and American missionaries have taken fright at a German scheme, suddenly disclosed, for uniting commercialism and missions, in a mistaken conception of the modern American policy. Such things only show that British influence has heretofore been first, and for it to become second anywhere is intolerable if not unthinkable.

Life in any treaty port in China has been predominantly British. Every one of course speaks English. The American at least tries

to do so, "with variations." The variation will always prove an impediment to *entrée* into good society. For an American to speak either French or German is merely an accomplishment. To know Russian is to be an exceptional linguist. This being the case, it is axiomatic that the English people as well as language are predominant. The newspapers too were English until a piece of impertinence was perpetrated by an American, and the *China Press*, published in Shanghai, entered on its weary existence. The Shanghai Club, the Race Club, the Country Club, the three popular clubs of Shanghai life, all breathe English atmosphere. Other clubs are permitted, but they are looked upon as subsidiary or insignificant. Other ports are less favored with such large popular clubs for the élite. In those places language, etiquette, ideas, religion, are also all determined by the predominating English factor.

The average American in the treaty port, who wants to come in with the band wagon, is more English than American. To go with the current is for the American to speak, feel, think, hope, believe and pray as does his first cousin of Anglo-Saxon stock. To agree with the Anglo-Saxon's second cousin, the Teuton, is in time of emergency an impossibility, unless reasons to substantiate are irrefutable. The average American coming to China, be he merchant or missionary, instinctively lines up with the British portion of the community. The prepossession is nothing if not for Britain. In times of crisis as the present, when Britain's predominance throughout the world is put to the test, to venture an opinion other than that to which the predominant element has given its stamp, is anathema, marenatha. A good word for the Germans, even as they are in China, deserves martial law. Not to speak the good word for the English and their part in the drama does not merit martial law; a social boycott is sufficient.

In all this we have only spoken of Britain's purpose to be predominant. She has hardly dared to demand from China or other powers the lofty position of dominance. Other aspirants to the predominant place have come forward both in the political and commercial life of China, and more than once have they appeared too threatening. Outside of Manchuria the greatest menace has come of late from Germany. Thus the war has proved a veritable God-send to Great Britain; the chance has come and been eagerly seized to crush the dangerous rival.

As for China the eradication of this German rival is not viewed altogether as a blessing. Germany was a kind of check on too great onesidedness on the part of other powers. Now by the

elimination of Germany China finds herself in the hands of the five allies, the new political combination composed of Great Britain, France, Russia, Japan and Belgium. Anything that a neutral nation like America can do to help China is realized as almost futile in the face of this combination. China thus views the future with feelings of trepidation. Both one-sided domination and dismemberment have heretofore been warded off by the presence of a strong and active competitor like Germany. For the future the question is, whether the old policy of the open door can be maintained, with America's pious blessing, or whether the five remaining powers will again advocate between them China's dismemberment, or whether Japan will succeed in becoming dominant as well as predominant and treat big China as she has treated little Korea.

In any case the *predominance of Britain in China is gone* as is that of Germany; it now passes to another, and that other the reader will surmise is Japan.