

EAST ASIATIC WORKS IN THE LIBRARY.

BY JOHN T. BRAMHALL.

AN East Asiatic library in Chicago! Que bono? The Chinese Wall is being demolished, not by the Chinese, nor by the Mongols, but by peaceful scholars of the West. The barred gates of Lhasa have been opened also. Scholars are interchanging between Harvard and Chicago on the one hand and Peking and Tokio on the other. The Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893 was the academy of tonsured heads of all the world. *Om mani padme hum* was translated into Pope's Universal Prayer:

Father of all, in every age
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Ex orient lux. Out of the East comes light. Into the spiritual darkness that has fallen upon the West, covered with murky war clouds, comes a gleam of divine light from the East to a suffering world. Such is the hope of many, as it was aforetime to the shepherds who gazed from Bethlehem upon the star in the east when Herod ruled in Judea. The enthusiastic reception accorded to Rabindranath Tagore in Europe and America is not without significance, for it was not as a literary lion that he was received, but as a religious teacher. In Utrecht he was welcomed with an address in Sanscrit, which is taught in all the Dutch universities, and at Rotterdam he was invited to deliver his lecture, "The Meeting of the East and the West," from the pulpit of the principal church, an unprecedented honor. His reception at Christiania, where he was presented with the Nobel prize, outdid, both in honors and in popular acclaim, it is reported, any ovation ever given to king or commons in Skandinavia.

Nor can we mistake the meaning of the Eastward facing of Germany, in these post-war days, a spiritual *Drang nach Osten*. It

is possible that Goethe's *Westostlicher Divan*, like Fitzgerald's *Omar*, was not wholly inspired by the Sufi wine, but we have his own declaration: "All that I had preserved and cherished that was similar in sense and substance" (to the *Divan* of Hafiz) "came forth, and with all the more vivacity because I felt constrained to escape from the actual world which threatened fresh troubles into an ideal one, to live in which with satisfaction all my will, pleasure and capacity were pledged." And again: "The Mohammedan religion, mythology and manners allow to poetry a scope which suits



The *Ise Monogatari*, "Tales of Ise," Printed in 1608 during the period Keicho.

my years." (They were seventy!) "Unconditional submission to the immutable will of God, cheerful survey of the mobile affairs of earth which are ever returning spirally upon themselves, love and inclination oscillating between two worlds, all the real now clarified, now dissolving to symbols—what needs the Grandfather more?"

But we need not go back to the Germany of Goethe, or of Schopenhauer, of Max Muller, or of Neumann, to demonstrate the interest that Germany has taken in Oriental literature and religions. The recent publication of Spengler's "Decline and Fall of Western Civilization," and Paul Cohen-Portheim's "*Asien als Ersieher*" has

turned the attention of studious minds from the distraction of politics to the restful philosophies of the East. These works were recently reviewed in *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts Zeitung*. "Popular interest," said the reviewer, "is not turning so strongly toward the ideals and teachings of Asia out of mere weariness of the world and of life—which superficial thinkers are so ready to ascribe to Buddhism—but in search of satisfaction for positive spiritual needs."

Our scholars are not satisfied, and they should not be, with translations and abridgments, however faithfully made. They ask for sources, and of these we have, naturally, all too few. For the East is a strange world and its people are *sui generis*. They might indeed be likened to beings of another planet, so entirely have they been isolated these many centuries from the people of the West. It is not alone a matter of distances, of deserts, or of oceans. Their manner of thought and vehicles of expression are the antipodes of ours. Literally do they stand upon their heads to us and think and write reflexively. Like the nether side of the moon they have been concealed, and have concealed themselves from the enquiring gaze of the West. Nor can it be said that the West has displayed, until quite recently, an eagerness to know them. For countless millenniums life and culture have been expanding on the two sides of the globe, in each separately and diversely. Only but yesterday the Venetian merchant carried his pack to Cathay and the Portuguese sailors were thrown by a storm on the coast of Zipangu. Then appeared the cowed brothers, Francis and Dominic, carrying the cross, and sundry men in cocked hats with demands for trade in opium, rum, clocks and cottons. And so began our acquaintance with the East. But both commerce and religion necessitated a knowledge of the languages. For diplomacy, indeed, it mattered little (note "this is not grammar," in the British Yang-tse business). Have we a key that shall unlock the treasury of the East? How may we interpret them, and us to them?

In 1907, Dr. Berthold Laufer, while conducting investigations in the Far East for the Field Museum of Natural History, of which he is the distinguished curator of anthropology, was commissioned by the Newberry Library to gather for them a representative collection of East Asiatic works on religion, philosophy, history, etc., and by the John Crerar Library to collect works on geography, law, the natural sciences, etc. The result of this commission, for the Newberry Library, was the acquisition of over a thousand

works, making a library of over twenty-one thousand volumes. And while the collection cannot be presumed, says Dr. Laufer, "complete in any section, so much has been attained by including the majority of all important works that the student will be able to carry on serious and profound research work in any of the branches of knowledge enumerated, and it may therefore be considered a truly representative collection of the Chinese, Manchu, Tibetan, and Mongol literatures." As to language, the Japanese is represented by one hundred and forty-three works, Tibetan by three hundred and ten, Mongol by seventy-two, Manchu by sixty:

<p>重祭柳負外文 爲鄂州李大夫祭柳負外文 祭柳侯文 祭柳侯文 永州柳先生祠堂記 舊本柳文後序 四明新本柳文後序 柳州舊本柳文後序 柳文年譜後序</p>		<p>外集下 太府寺李鄒外婦馬淑誌 百官請復舊號表 賀正至微光表 謝賜新祭表 賀啟表 賀裴桂州啓 答鄭負外賀啓 附錄 舊開楚詞天問今散入十四卷天對篇內</p>	
<p>唐書本傳 祭柳柳州文 祭柳負外文</p>		<p>天論三篇 唐書本傳 祭柳柳州文 祭柳負外文</p>	
<p>劉禹錫 劉禹錫 曹輔 黃翰 許尹 汪藻 穆脩 沈晦 李昉 文安</p>		<p>大會議聽政表 舉裴亮表 賀破更平表 賀太子啓 賀衛淮南石琴薦啓 諸州賀啓 劉禹錫 皇甫湜 宋祁 劉禹錫</p>	

The *T'ang Liu sien sheng wen tsi*, block book of the Sung period, 1167 A. D.

the rest are in Chinese, the most extensive and important literature of the East and the one from which the light of the others (Tibetan possibly excepted) radiate. In Manchu literature, says Dr. Laufer, Chicago has one of the richest collections in existence. Among the most notable works (no other copies being known), may be mentioned a commentary on the Four Classical Books (*Se shu*) by the Emperor K'ang-hi, in twenty-six quarto volumes (the Palace edition of 1677), a commentary on the Book of Mutations, *Yi king*, also by K'ang-hi (Palace edition of 1754), and a commentary on

the Ancient Book of History, *Shu king*, by the Emperor K'ien-lung (Palace edition of 1754). These are all in Manchu, in its most elegant style, which is radically different from the Chinese, being a Turanian or Ural-Altaic language allied to the Mongol and Turkish. These works, it is said, seem never to have been placed on the book-market and to have come out of the Palace in consequence of the panic following the death of the Emperor Kwang-su and the Empress Dowager in 1908. It is a curious circumstance, comments Dr. Laufer, that just at that time the Peking book-market, which offers no customers for Manchu literature, was flooded with rare Manchu books. It was evident, however, that they were not "loot," being regarded by the ignorant Chinese authorities as valueless and were publicly sold by them for quite a nominal sum. Among other treasures in this unique Manchu library is a Palace edition (1741) of the Four Classical Books, *Se shu* (not the K'ang-hi commentary mentioned above); the Manchu translation of the historical work, *Tung kien kang mu*, a great rarity, in the Palace edition of 1681, in ninety-six volumes, and a collection of Buddhist charms and prayer formulas (dharani), in Chinese, Manchu, and Tibetan, in ten volumes, a splendidly printed book with fine large wood engravings executed in the Palace during the K'ien-lung period (1736-1795). This K'ien lung, it is to be noted, besides being a valiant soldier who cleared the empire of the Mohammedans, was a devoted scholar who wrote incessantly, both poetry and prose, collected libraries and republished ancient classics of great value. His campaign furnished him with themes for his verses, and in the Summer Palace was found, when the allies entered Peking in 1860, a handsome manuscript copy of a laudatory poem he composed on the occasion of his victory over the Gurkas.

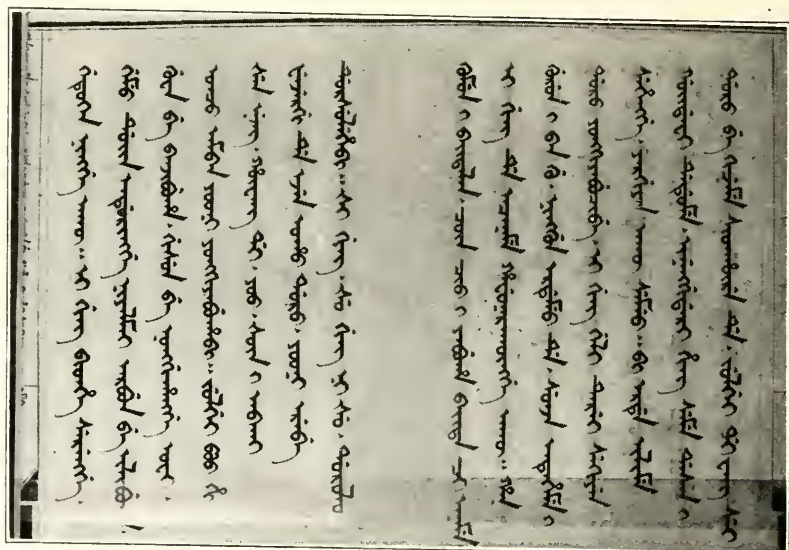
The richest harvest of Tibetan books was made in the ancient Buddhist monastery of Derge in eastern Tibet, and others were picked up in Sze-ch'uan and in the Kuku Nor region which was visited by the Abbé Huc on his way to Tibet. The only serious attempt at a Tibetan bibliography, as pointed out by Dr. Laufer, was the work of the celebrated Hungarian scholar, Csoma de Koros, consisting of an analysis of the Kanjur, or collection of the sacred books of Lamaism made by King Kri Song Tsan in the Eighth century. The Newberry copy of the *Kanjur* was printed at the monastery of Narthang (Tashilhunpo) in central Tibet in 1742. Tibetan books, we are told, are not ready-made, but printed only as ordered by the Abbot and the printing blocks are kept under lock and key

in the temple and the shop is opened but once a year. There is, accordingly, a great variety of paper and ink in the editions and the Newberry copy is, fortunately, of the best in every particular.

The Tibetan translations (of the Buddhist scriptures) are almost literal (I again quote from Dr. Laufer) and prepared with the greatest care and accuracy, and as most of the Sanskrit originals are lost, they become a primary authentic source for the study of Buddhism; even in those cases where the Sanskrit texts are preserved the Tibetan documents always provide considerable assistance in making out the correct Sanskrit reading. To one equally versed in Tibetan and Sanskrit and familiar with Buddhist style and terminology, it is even possible to successfully restore the Sanskrit original from the reading of the Tibetan text. The vast stores of this collection (the *Kanjur*) have in part been repeatedly ransacked by scholars interested in the history of Buddhism. Franz Anton Schiefner, the Russian linguist, and Leon Feer, the French orientalist, have made extensive use of it, and H. A. Jaeschke was enabled to make a version of the New Testament in Tibetan. W. W. Rockhill, American traveler and diplomat, has skilfully utilized it for a life of Buddha and a history of Khotan, but the bulk of its contents still remains unstudied.

The minds of men, providentially, differ, and there is no such thing possible as uniformity in religion, either in the Jewish, the Buddhist, Roman Catholic, or the Mohammedan church. Buddhism does not form an harmonious unity in China, in its cradle country India, nor its nursery Tibet, nor in Japan where it is exotic and where claims are actively put forth to send missionary coals to Chinese Newcastles. As for Buddhism, which casts its influence over all of eastern Asia, the key is found in the study of the sectarian formations of the Lamaism of Lhasa and Urga. So it is that Dr. Lafer urges that only by a thorough investigation of the history of these various sects can we ever hope to penetrate into the mystery of Lamaism. The history of the collections embodied in the *Kanjur*, "The Translation of the Word" (of Buddha), can only be fully understood through the history of the sects, and the latter subject will shed new light on the formation of the Canon. What is hoped for, therefore, is a critical concordance of the various editions of the *Kanjur*, the literary history of which is recorded in their lengthy prefaces, and finally a collation of the works in the Tibetan with those in the Chinese *Tripitaka*, a Tibeto-Manchu-Chinese concordance.

Besides a large collection of the writings of the Dalai Lamas, the Newberry has secured a number of beautiful Tibetan books printed at the imperial press of Peking in the reigns of the Emperors K'ang-hi (1662-1722) and K'ien-lung (1736-1795). Especially noteworthy is an ancient and splendid copy, written in silver on a black polished background, of the famous *Mani Kambun*, "The Collection of Precious Laws," a treatise chiefly on religion, but which also contains an account of the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet and of the closing years of the reign of Srong Tsan Gampo (to use the simpler spelling of Prof. Davids), the first his-



Commentary to the *yi king*, (Book of Mutations). Written by the Emperor K'ang-hi, Manchu.

torical Tibetan king and the founder of Lhasa. As the copying of sacred books is considered a great religious merit, writing in vermillion insures a higher merit than work with black ink, while silver and gold writing surpass both.

The edition of the Chinese *Tripitaka* which the Newberry has the rare good fortune to possess is that which formerly reposed in the temple at Wu-chang and known under the designation of the Buddhist Canon of the Ts'ing or Manchu dynasty. Until the close of the Tenth century the Chinese Canon was preserved in manuscript only, but was finally printed (*nota bene*) in A. D. 1772 by order of the Emperor T'ai-tsu. Thereafter it was printed

repeatedly from wooden blocks which were as often destroyed by fire or in the course of wars. A few copies of editions coming down from the Ming period have survived in some temples of northern China and one preserved in a monastery in Shan si is said to be complete. The K'ien-lung Palace edition now in the Newberry was drafted in 1735 by the Emperor Yung-cheng and on his death was completed by his son and successor, the indefatigable editor and publisher, K'ien-lung. The printing of the work extended over three years and was completed at the end of 1738. The printing blocks are still preserved in the temple of Po-lin-sze, near the great Lama temple in Peking. The temple record says that it required 28,411 blocks to engrave the entire work, which is composed of 55,632 leaves. It consists of 7,920 oblong flat volumes bound in 792 wrappers. Each volume is illustrated with a fine wood-engraving of delicate tracing and elegantly bound in silk brocade of various designs of peculiar rarity and artistic value.

A work of great importance, and at the same time the earliest printed book in the Newberry Library, is the *T'ang Liu sien shêng wên tsi*, dated 1167, in twelve volumes, containing the poems and essays of Liu Tsung-yüan (A. D. 773-819), one of the most celebrated poets of the T'ang dynasty. This edition, in forty-three chapters, is fully described in the Catalogue of Lü t'ing and has a commentary by Shi Yin-pien. The margins of the pages show the peculiar black ornament, or "stamp" of the Sung period (called "black mouth"). The pages have twenty-six lines of twenty-three characters and are printed, of course, from a single block, three centuries before Gutenberg.

Another work of the Sung period of which the Newberry boasts (figuratively, of course), is the *Tse chi t'ung kien* (Laufer) by Se-ma Kuang (A. D. 1009-1089), which corresponds with the *T'ung Chien* of Dr. Giles of Cambridge University in the Encyclopædia Britannica. To quote Professor Giles: "There is one (work of history) which stands out among the rest and is especially enshrined in the hearts of the Chinese people. This is the *T'ung Chien*, or Mirror of History, so called because 'to view antiquity as in a mirror is an aid in the administration of government.' It was the work of a statesman of the Eleventh century, whose name by a coincidence was Ssu-ma Kuang.* He had been forced to retire from office, and spent nearly all the last sixteen years of his life

* Ssu-ma Ch'ien (145-87 B. C.), grand astrologer and historian edited the *Shih Chi*, or Historical Record and other works recovered by the first Han emperor, after the burning of the books.

in historical research. The Mirror of History embraces a period from the Fifth century B. C. down to A. D. 960. It was revised by Chu Hsi, the famous commentator, who flourished A. D. 1130-1200, and whose work is now regarded as the standard history of



Title page from the Tibetan *Kanjur*. Block printed at the Buddhist monastery at Narthang, Tibet, 1742.

China." It was first published in 1172 under the title *Tung kien kang mu*, and it is a complete copy of this edition, says Dr. Laufer, that the Newberry now possesses. It is a rare and fine specimen of Sung printing and perhaps the most extensive work of that period now known. The Newberry also has a beautiful Manchu translation in a Palace edition of 1681 in ninety-six large volumes.



Characteristic Frontispiece to Buddhist Works.

Dr. Laufer, wisely no doubt, makes no allusion in his monograph on the collection, to the suspicion which has been cast by Allen and Giles upon the genuineness of the Book of History, the Confucian Canon and the Tao Te Ching and other works edited by Ssü-ma Ch'ien in the First century B. C. Perhaps some of the monumental works in this great library of original sources may shed some light on the story of the Burning of the Books, the secret repository of forbidden books in the wall of Confucius'

house, and the studious inaction of the Board of Erudite Scholars in those shadowy days now nineteen centuries past.

Limitations of space forbid even brief mention of the literary and artistic treasures of Japan and Korea contained in this collection, the extent of which has merely been hinted at in the foregoing sketch. It is a door opened into another world, whose historical, anthropological, literary and religious wealth is not easy for us to comprehend. With such facilities for research, together with those now possessed by the John Crerar Library and the Field Museum, it is quite reasonable to say that Chicago may offer better opportunities for scholars in Oriental research than can now be offered in either Lhasa, Peking or Tokio.