these, so Chao Keng invited Hsüehiang Hsü to sit by him and help in the conversation. They discussed the right way of carrying on the affairs of state and what place prayer and the worship of the Spirits had in administration. After much interchange of views and various meetings at different places the conclusion of the Conference was reached at Chuilung when the Earl of Ch'ing entertained Chaomeng. The latter was gratified with his reception and the success of the Conference and asked the gathering to sing an ode. Tsechen led the singing of the Ts'ao Ch'ung ode:

"Yaou-vaou went the grass insects,  
And the hoppers sprang about.  
While I do not see my lord,  
My sorrowful heart is agitated.  
Let me have seen him,  
And my heart will then be stilled.  
I ascended that hill in the south,  
And gathered the turtle-foot ferns.  
While I do not see my lord,  
My sorrowful heart is very sad.  
Let me have seen him,  
Let me have met him,  
And my heart will then be pleased.  
I ascended that hill in the south,  
And gathered the thorn-ferns.  
While I do not see my lord,  
My sorrowful heart is wounded with grief  
Let me have seen him,  
Let me have met him,  
And my heart will then be at peace."

So ended this famous Conference. But it never came to anything. It became a dead letter. A critic said, "This conference can't come to anything. Military things are one of the essentials of existence. It is ordained by heaven that war must be. In this way: The five elements are a sine qua non. Iron is one of the five elements and iron is the symbol of war. War can no more be eliminated than its symbol, iron". That's the end of it. Let us hope that wiser counsels will prevail in Europe.

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GENERAL SURVEY OF STANDARD CHINESE HISTORIES

By JOHN C. FERGUSON

For the purposes of this Paper the six Great Periods of Chinese History suggested by Mr. Liang Ch'i-ch'ao in his Paper read before the Peking Historical Association, the 16th February, 1924, may be used as landmarks. These periods were as follows:—

(1) From the time of Confucius and Mencius down to 221 B.C. (2) From 221 B.C. when the Ch'in dynasty was founded to A.D. 220, the end of the later Han dynasty. (3) A.D. 220–581, the period of the warring states. (4) A.D. 581–960, the glorious period of the T'ang dynasty, including the subsequent Five Dynasties. (5) A.D. 960–1644 which includes the Northern and Southern Sung, the Yuan and the Ming dynasties. (6) From 1644, the founding of the Manchu dynasty, to the present time. This is the modern era.

It is safe to commence Chinese history with Confucius and Mencius, though in the Tzu Chih T'ung Chien, Ssü-ma Kuang who is generally credited with fixing the ancient chronology, carries it back to 841 B.C. Chu Hsi is quoted in a note on Book III of the Bamboo Books (Legge, Vol. III, 1, Proleg. 83) as stating that when Ssü-ma Kuang first made a chronological scheme his first date was the first year of Wei-lieh, i.e., 425 B.C. Afterwards he extended his dates to the time of Kung Hsü (who acted as Regent for Wang from the 13th year of his reign reckoned according to the system of the Bamboo Books, i.e., 841 B.C.). It was not until the time of Shao Yung, A.D. 1011–1077 that this system was extended backwards to the first year of the Emperor Yao. As far as our present records go we must content ourselves with re-
searches into the events from the time of Confucius down-
ward leaving chiefly to archaeological students the preced-
ing San Tai period and to students of mythology all the rest of ancient lore. We shall learn much from archeologi-
cal surveys during the next generation and may be, as a result, to carry accurate history back through many centuries previous to Confucius and to separate historical facts from legendary myths, but up to the present the necessary studies are only in their prelimin-
ary stage. In Lettres Édifiantes, XIX, p. 451, Father Premare (probably 1666-1734) one of the best students of Chinese literature among the early Jesuit missionaries, distinguishes the fabulous age preceding Fu-hsi and Wei Lieh Wang. He even goes so far as to say that the sure and certain period is posterior to this date (425 B.C.) This opinion of the learned Father Premare is now generally considered to have been over-
cautious.

The remarks made in the preceding paragraph are not meant to cast discredit upon such written records of China's early history as exist but only to point out that 841 B.C. is the earliest date concerning which there is general agreement. Beyond that are two divergent systems, one of Shu-ma Kuang and the other that of the Bamboo Books. The former gives 2937 B.C. as the begin-
ing of the reign of Yao, while the latter places it 2145 B.C. The chronicle made by Confucius in the Ch'un Ch'iu does not go so far back even as 841 B.C., but commences in the year 721 B.C. Shortly after 721 B.C., one date can be fixed with accuracy on account of astrono-
mical references. The first of the 36 eclipses mentioned in the Ch'un Ch'iu actually occurred on the date given, i.e., February 14, 719 B.C., according to modern calculations. The usual method of reckoning time in ancient China was by the years of the reigning sovereign, so that if we only had a list of all the rulers and the number of years each reigned the task would be easy, but these do not exist. Ssii-ma Ch'ien, in the early part of the Han dynasty, gave the names in sequence of the Shang and Hsia rulers and filled in the length of their reigns to the best of his ability, as was done in the history of Rome. He had little help even from Confucius or Mencius. The Tso Chuan comment on one of the state-
ments made by Confucius in the Ch'un Ch'iu says that the nine tripods, i.e., the Empire, passed to Shang for a period of 600 years. In the last chapter of his work Mencius states that "from Yao and Shun to T'ang" there were more than 500 years. This was what is now known as the Hsia dynasty. He continues that "from T'ang to Wen Wang" it was more than 500 years. This was the Shang dynasty. The last statement of Mencius in this connection is that "from Wen Wang to Confucius" it was more than 500 years. We know that Confucius was born in 551 B.C. and according to the vague calculations of Mencius we need to add three periods of more than 500 years each to 551 which would place the time of Yao and Shun about 2200 or 2300 B.C. From that period down-
ward we have many undoubted historical facts but no continuous accurate history till the date 841 B.C., or if you please, 721 B.C.

The chief source of authority for the early history of China is the Shih Chü (Historical Record) by Ssii-ma Ch'ien, circa 145-74 B.C. This Record was begun by his father, Ssii-ma T'an. Both father and son held the hereditary position of Grand Historographer. The Record commences with the reign of Huang Ti—the Yellow Emperor—and extends to the period of Wu Ti of the Han dynasty (140-84 B.C.). It is divided into five sections (a) imperial records; (b) chronological tables; (c) eight branches of knowledge; (d) hereditary families; (e) biographies. About ten chapters of this Record having been lost it was restored from other sources by Chu Shao-sun who lived during the reign of the first Emperor of the Yuan dynasty. The comments of P'ei Yin of the 5th century, A.D., the Exegesis of Ssii-ma Cheng of the 8th century, A.D., and the explanations of Chang Shou-chieh were included with the original text up to the publication of the Ming dynasty imperially approved text (Chien Ting) when these were deleted. This Record was translated into French by the late Edouard Chavannes and published under the patronage of the Société Asiatique in 1895, in five volumes by Ernest Leroux, Paris. It is a scholarly work of high order and supplies and its notes most valuable information on subjects allied to the narrative of the Record. The
Ancient History of China, by Dr. Friedrich Hirth, published in 1911 by the Columbia University Press and Giles' Ancient History of China are invaluable aids to the study of this period. A complete bibliography of the foreign literature on this period up to 1904 is given in the Bibliotheca Sinica by Henri Cordier under the heading "Histoire." The prelogomena of Vol. III of Legge's Classics contains a critical survey of early chronology together with an essay on the astronomy of the ancient Chinese by Dr. Chalmers, and a chapter on the annals of the Bamboo Books. These three contributions by Chavannes, Hirth and Legge are sufficient to give any foreign student a complete and reliable survey of early Chinese history.*

The Shih Chi (Historical Record) of Su-ma Ch'ien belongs to the first class (Cheng Shih) or histories of the government, usually called dynastic histories. The Bamboo Books which I have already mentioned and which were translated by Mr. Edouard Biot, 1841, belong to the second class, i.e., Pien nien or annals. In this class is the great Work, already mentioned, of Su-ma Kuang (A.D. 1019-1086) called Tzu Chih Tung Chien which, starting with 841 B.C., covers the period from the commencement of the fourth century, B.C., to the end of the Five Dynasties, A.D. 960. Chi Ku Lu by the same author is a complement to his other book and carries his narrative back to the mythical period of P'u-hsi. About a century later the Work of Su-ma Kuang was condensed by Chu Hsi, aided by his pupils, and published under the name of Tung Chien Kang Mu. This learned Work together with later emendations, criticisms, explanations and supplements was brought in 1708 into the form in which it is now usually found; and received at that time Imperial approval as a correct standard interpretation of history. This work of Chu Hsi formed the basis for the work of Mailla Histoire Générale de la Chine ou Annales de cet Empire (1777-1785) in 13 volumes. A compendium of Chu Hsi's book was published in 1711 by Wu Ch'en-ch'yan with the title Kang Chien I Chih Lu, i.e., "The Mirror of History made Easy."

*It would be interesting to follow subsequent dynasties in their chronological order and to call attention to the literature of each particular period, but that would be done at the cost of losing the main point of the history, which is continuity. It would also be difficult to distribute the parts of many important books to various periods. Therefore it seems wiser to approach the topic from the viewpoint of the divisions into which Chinese history is usually classified by cataloguers.

The third type of histories is called Chi su pên mo, complete records. In this class the work which is probably the most important is I Shih "Interpretation of History," written by Ma Su (17th century) of Tsou Ping, the district of Shantung province in which Confucius was born. This book of 160 volumes divides history into five periods: (a) early antiquity, t'ai ku, to which ten volumes are devoted; (b) the three dynasties of Hsia, Shang and Chow, i.e., San Tai, of 20 volumes; (c) the period covered by the Ch'un Ch'i'u, of 70 volumes; (d) the period of the contending states, Chan Kuo (circa 473-221 B.C.), of 50 volumes; (e) memoirs, Wai Lu, of ten volumes. The genealogical tables in the first volume show great ingenuity. In the text there are abundant quotations from early sources with explanatory notes by the author. As an example of this method, the first chapter on creation opens with a philosophical quotation from Lieh-tzü under which are comments taken from the Pai Hu T'ung, written by Pan Ku of the Han dynasty, from Po Ya (i.e., Kuang Ya), an early book of the Wei dynasty which was annotated by Wang Nien-sun and published during the reign of Ch'en Lung, and from the San Fen which records the doings of the Five Sovereigns and the Three Rulers, San Huang, Wu Ti. The second quotation is from Huai Nan Tzu and these two examples are sufficient to illustrate the method of this scholarly book. As far as I know it has never been translated.

The three classes of history already mentioned, viz. (1) dynasty histories, (2) annals and (3) complete records, are the most important of its divisions. They are supplemented by other classes such as (4) histories of special periods (P'ieh shih) which are not considered to be as important as dynastic histories and yet more valuable than the next division which is called (5) miscellaneous histories, Tsa shih. One of the most noted examples of (4) histories of special periods is the Lu Shih written by Lo Pi, 12th century A.D., of the Northern Sung dynasty. This Lu Shih confines itself to

*By this method details are arranged under a certain number of headings, each of which is treated exhaustively, i.e., the record concerning any particular subject is complete.
the most ancient period of China down to the end of the 18th century B.C., and is filled with legend, myth and imaginative tale. It is arranged, however, according to approved historical divisions, and therefore is classified as history though in reality it should be placed in the category of mythology. A good account of this book is found in the *China Review*, Vol. XIV, p. 23. Other treatises coming under this fourth heading are the History of the Khitan Tatars, *Ch'i-tao Kuo Chih*, and the History of the Early Part of the Ming dynasty, *Wu Hsin*.

The best known example of (5) miscellaneous histories, *Tao shih*, is the tale of the contending States, *Chan Kuo Ta's*. which was brought into its well-known form by Liu Hsiang. 80–9 B.C., of the Han dynasty. This book has been most popular; it gives an account of the squabbles of the feudal princes of the Chow dynasty. Books of this division are in the form of memoranda on particular subjects or periods and do not claim to be more than the exposition of the viewpoint of an author.

Other classes of history are (6) official documents, *Chao Ling Tsou-i*. These documents were governmental or imperial mandates together with memorials to the throne or recommendations to the government. One of the most recent and important books under this heading is the collection of discourses called "Sacred Teachings," of the first Emperors of the late Manchu dynasty, *Ta Ch'ing Huang Ti Sheng Lin*, published under Imperial patronage in 1739 and later brought down to the reign of T'ung Chih.

There are also (7) biographies, *Chuan Chi*. This is a very large class commencing with the biographies of noted women of antiquity, *Ku Lien Nü Chuan*, written by Liu Hsiang, mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Among biographies, one of particular interest to foreigners is a biography of mathematicians, *Ch'ou Jen Chuan*, published in 1799 under the name of Yuan Yüan. The last three volumes of this book contain lives of Aristarchus, Euclid, Newton, Ricci, Aleni, Rho, Schaal, Verbiest and other Western and Jesuit mathematicians. There are also biographies of noted Buddhist priests such as *Chih Yi Kueh Lu* and *Kao Seng Chuan* and others.

Another class of histories is that composed of (8) excerpts, *Shihch'ao*. These quotations may be from one only or from many histories and the value of this class is found in the comments made by the author or in the method of his selection. It has always been recognized that these excerpts should be used with great caution on account of the danger of mis-quotation.

The next two classes of (9) contemporary records, *Tsai Chi*, and of (10) chronography, *Shih Ling*, are of minor importance. Contemporary records are those of various independent states which were in communication with China, such as Wu and Yüeh in ancient times or of the Southern T'ang at the beginning of the Northern Sung dynasty, or of Annam or of Corea. Chronography is a record of events according to the season in which they occurred. An example of this class is the *Ch'i Shih Erh Hou Kao*, in which there is an investigation of observations of nature as found in ancient records divided into seasons of five days each. The next division (11) topography, *Ts Li*, calls for special attention. Under this heading China has the most complete records of any nation. There is the national geography, *Ta Ch'ing I Tung Chih*, of 500 volumes, published about A.D. 1750, which gives province by province an account of the boundaries, divisions, products, administration, methods of taxation, noted persons and places of each part of the country. Then there are the topographies of each province, *Sén Chih*, of each prefecture, *Fu Chih*, and of each county, *Hsien Chih*. It has always been customary to devote special editions to the environs of the various capitals. As an example of these there is the account of Peking and its environs, *Ch'i Fu T'ung Chih*, modelled on the description of the ancient capital Ch'ang-an (modern Hsi-an) as found in the *San Fu Huang Tu*. These topographical records must be used with discretion as it is not infrequent to find in them statements similar to those made by "booming" campaigners in newly opened countries. Wylie in his *Notes on Chinese Literature* gives extended notices to this class of histories and many of those mentioned were presented by him to the Library of this Society (N.C.B. Royal Asiatic Society), where they may still be found.
In the class of (12) official duties, Shih Kuan, the only kind of historical information provided is accounts of the duties of various officials in successive dynasties. One of the most important classes, and one worthy of being placed immediately after the dynastic histories is that which treats of constitutional government, Cheng Shih. The earliest book of this class, T'ung Tien, was written by Tu Yu during the last years of the 8th century A.D. It commences with the earliest period of history and comes down to the time of the author. This T'ung Tien considers the problems of government under eight heads:—National Finance, Education, Civil Service, Public Ceremonies, Music, Military Training, Topography and National Defence. Five centuries later, viz., in the 13th century A.D., the renowned scholar Ma Tuan-lin used the T'ung Tien as the basis for his monumental work Wen Hsien T'ung K'ai, expanding the eight sections into nineteen, and adding five more. He also covered the period between the 8th and 13th centuries. This large work of 348 volumes has been considered that Wang's treatment of the northern tribes was too cavalier and that his purpose was the same as that of the Wen Hsien T'ung K'ai. This work was originally compiled under the direction of Hsieh Chin, with whom were associated four other directors, twenty sub-directors and a staff of 2,169 subordinates. When their work was completed under the name of Wen Hsien Ta Ch'en, the Emperor was not satisfied and he appointed a still larger commission at the head of which he associated the former Buddhist priest (Tao Yen) Yao Kuang-hsiao with Hsieh Chin as co-director. The results of their subsequent labors were embodied in the Yang Lo Ta Tien which contains twenty-two thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven sections and was published in A.D. 1407. After a fire in the palace, in which unfortunately this work was not destroyed, the Emperor Chia Ch'ing ordered the Grand Secretary Kao Kung to prepare an extra copy so as to avoid possible loss. This provision was not sufficient to ensure its preservation and at the present time only one hundred and forty-nine sections of the original work are all that remain. Sixty of these are preserved in the National Library, Peking, under the care of the Board of Education.*

Another book under this general heading is the Ta Ch'ing Lu Li, which Sir George Staunton, who translated it, describes as "the fundamental laws and supplementing statistics of the Penal Code of China; originally printed in Peking, in various successive editions, under the sanction, and by the authority of the several Emperors of the Ta Ch'ing dynasty." This translation of Staunton was published in 1810. Further explanations of these laws and statistics were given in Notes and Commentaries on Chinese Commercial Law, founded on the writings of Sir Chaloner Alabaster, by E. Alabaster, published in 1899.

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*According to an article which appeared in the February number, 1924, of the Critical Review there are 83 sections in the Congressional Library, Washington, five in the Columbia University Library, six in the British Museum and others in various European libraries.
The last class of historical writings is (14) catalogues of books. Among these the most noted is the *Ssu Ku Ch'uan Shu*, which was completed in 1790, after eighteen years of preparation by a special commissioner appointed by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung. This large work is in four sections, viz., Classics, History, Philosophy, and Belles Lettres. The history of each book quoted is given in detail together with a criticism of it. It is in 68,000 odd sections and seven copies of it were originally prepared. One copy is kept in the beautiful *Wen Yuan Ko*, the two-storied building immediately in rear of the *Wen Hua Tien*, which is now the part of the Government Museum in which paintings are exhibited. The name *Su Ku tao* means “Four Depostories,” signifying that all copies were deposited in the Forbidden City, Peking, one at Mukden, one at Jehol, and the other in the Yuan Ming Yuan Summer Palace. The copy in the Summer Palace was destroyed when the Palace was burned by the Allies in 1860, but those in the other three depositories are extant. There were three additional copies of which one was deposited in the Ta Kuan T'ang at Yangchow, one in the Wen Tsung Ko on Golden Island, Chinkiang, and one in the Wen Lan Ko on Orphan Island in the West Lake, Hangchow. The Yangchow and Chinkiang copies were destroyed in the Taiping rebellion but the Hangchow copy has been preserved and is now in the Chekiang Provincial Library.

Four years ago the then President of China, Hsi Shih-ch'ang, encouraged a movement for the printing of this encyclopedia for the purpose of presenting copies to various foreign libraries. The preface was printed in beautiful form and has been presented to the Library of Congress, Washington, and to various libraries in Europe and Japan. Under an arrangement with the Government this valuable work is to be reprinted by the Commercial Press, Shanghai. The edition is limited to 100 copies on special paper and 400 on ordinary paper.

This rapid and inadequate survey of the usual 14 divisions of Chinese history will not have served its purpose if it has not disclosed the immensity of the field. In the historical studies of the ordinary investigator the first three divisions are all that need to be worked over, *i.e.*, dynastic histories, annals and complete records, although the fourth division, *i.e.*, history of particular periods is the most fascinating of all. While these four divisions may be sufficient for the purposes of foreign students for many years to come it is also true that we cannot expect to arrive at a true standpoint from which Chinese history can be correctly viewed until all of the fourteen sections have received adequate consideration by translation into English.

In his interesting paper in Vol. XLVII (1916) of the *Journal of the N.C.B., Royal Asiatic Society*, “A Survey of the Work by Western Students of Chinese History” by Kenneth Scott Latourette, he suggests on page 114 that the energy of men who might do splendid work on particular phases of history should not be dissipated in attempting to write outlines or general histories. Much can be said in favour of this opinion as long as co-operation among foreign scholars has not been made possible. And yet it is my conviction that no scholarly treatment of special periods is possible without a sound knowledge of the general outlines of Chinese history. The long periods of separate dynasties do not resemble the histories of the small independent countries of Europe in which different racial types were contending for the mastery or at least for independence; the history of China is of a homogenous race, gradually extending its borders and giving its civilization to surrounding inferior tribes. Its various phases of development have been caused by internal forces acting upon outside surroundings and are not the reaction upon the body politic of external forces. In view of the national homogeneity of China general histories are of the greatest importance, but the vast expanse of the field is beyond the power of any man to cover even if one could be found with the qualifications suggested by Professor Latourette. There should be a commission of scholars, all of whom should have a knowledge of the Chinese language adequate for translation and with them should be associated good Chinese experts. This commission should take some one book, for example, the *I Chih Lu*, divide it section by section, among the members of the commission and translate the whole book. These scholars should work together in one bureau under a competent Director. There should be frequent consultations so that the work could be carried along on uniform lines. Is such a scheme wholly Utopian? Those who observe what is
being done in medical education in the Peking Union College and in missionary education in the North China Language School need not despair. More has already been spent by foreign agencies in the translation of the Bible into Chinese than such a commission would cost and money has always been found ready to hand for Bible translation. It can also be obtained for such a commission as has been suggested.

The periods which have been most fully covered, up to the present, are the ancient and the modern. Down to the opening of the Ch'in dynasty 255 B.C. we have a vast fund of available information as already indicated. Also the events from the conquest of China by the Manchus in A.D. 1644 down to the present time have been narrated in foreign writings. The intervening time between 255 B.C. and A.D. 1644—a period of 1900 years—remains without adequate systematic treatment. For records of this long period our first reliance is upon the dynastic histories, but a careful study of these is by no means reassuring to the investigator. The record of the Former Han dynasty by Pan Ku is more satisfactory than that of the Later Han by Fan and Hsieh and there is much information concerning the period available to foreign students. The records of the time which intervened between the close of the Han dynasty in A.D. 220 and the rise of the T'ang in 581 were brought together during the T'ang dynasty and from what still appears to be a more or less contradictory and miscellaneous collection. The early T'ang dynasty record was supplemented by the New T'ang Record—Hsing T'ang Shu 168—written by the famous Sung dynasty scholar Eo-yang Hsiu. 169 This new record is a valuable piece of historical work as is also the New History of the Five Dynasties Wu Tai Hsing Shih 168 by the same author. The Sung dynasty history written by T'o-t'ou 169 of the Yüan dynasty is not of a high order, nor is his history of the Liao dynasty. He succeeded better in his history of the Chin dynasty of Nü-chên Tartars. Neither the history of the Yüan dynasty nor of the Ming are of a high grade of scholarship or composition. On the whole it must be agreed that the outside histories to which references have been made in the preceding part of this paper are superior to the dynastic histories. The poor quality of the records between A.D. 220 and 1644 may be one of the chief reasons that has prevented foreign scholars from translating them into other languages. The T'ang and Sung dynasties are the richest historical mines in China and apart from a few scattering researches they still remain undiscovered to the Western world. Of these the first to be investigated should be the records of the Sung dynasty.