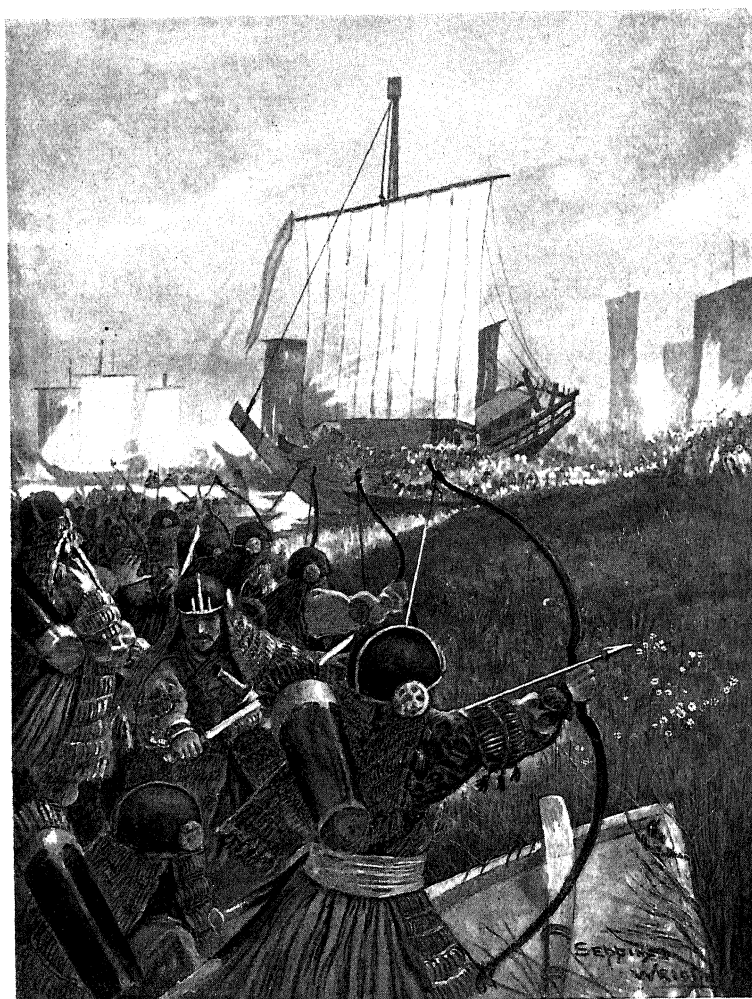


[By H. Seppings Wright.

Painted specially for this work]

SIAMESE ENVOYS PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE EMPEROR OF CHINA.

During the first hundred years of the Ming Dynasty the knowledge of distant countries was widely extended. Chinese junks visited the shores of Arabia, and there is reason to believe that they even reached Zanzibar, while tribute was received from Siam, Java, Sumatra and Ceylon. In the picture the Siamese commission is seen presenting tribute of pepper, satin, ambergris, ebony, ivory, etc.



Painted specially for this work]

[By H. Seppings Wright.]

THE JAPANESE RAVAGE THE COAST OF CHINA.

In 1592 the Japanese invaded Korea, and the Japanese regent, Taikosama, was going to appoint himself king of the peninsula when a Chinese army defeated the Japanese, while the Chinese fleet cut off their retreat. The Japanese sent an embassy for peace to Peking, but in 1597 they sent an army again to Korea, and defeated the Chinese. They also destroyed the Chinese ships and made raids on the coasts.

the thirteenth Emperor came to an end in 1620, and the fourteenth Emperor mounted the throne of a bankrupt empire to rule over a discontented and rebellious people. After a reign of two months he was poisoned by an official, who administered a drug which he said was the elixir of life.

It is extraordinary how, all through Chinese history down to the date last mentioned, various rulers have become infatuated with the idea of securing immortality by means of a drug. There is an old story from feudal days which is very much to the point in this connexion. Some person sent to one of the feudal princes a phial said to contain the elixir of life. It was duly received by the gatekeeper of the palace and handed on to the Chief Warden. "Is this to be swallowed?" inquired the latter. "It is," replied the gatekeeper, whereupon the Chief Warden promptly swallowed it. The prince was exceedingly angry, and ordered the immediate execution of the perpetrator of such an outrage. But the Chief Warden suggested that if the drug really possessed the property of conferring immortality, he was then beyond the reach of his Highness's vengeance; whereas if it did not, it would be more fittingly called the elixir of death, and the prince would be the laughing-stock of all. His life was spared.

The mandate of the Ming dynasty was now evidently exhausted, and with the hour arrived the man. A quondam village beadle, who had turned brigand and was known as the Rebel Li, headed in 1640 a small

trouble, with a view to exterminate them; instead of which result his army was routed and he himself was taken prisoner. Some time after his release, he was forced against his will to reascend the throne, but he was ultimately deposed and sent into banishment.

During the reign of the eleventh Emperor, who occupied himself chiefly in searching for the elixir of life, the Portuguese appeared in China, and in 1520 an envoy, named Thome Pires, succeeded in reaching Peking. He was sent back to Canton and died there in prison after three years' incarceration. The Portuguese were followed in the next reign but one by the Spaniards, two priests of that nation arriving from Manila on a proselytizing mission in 1575; and the next European nation to arrive was the Dutch, who succeeded in establishing themselves on the island of Formosa until 1662, when they were expelled by the celebrated pirate-chieftain Koxinga.

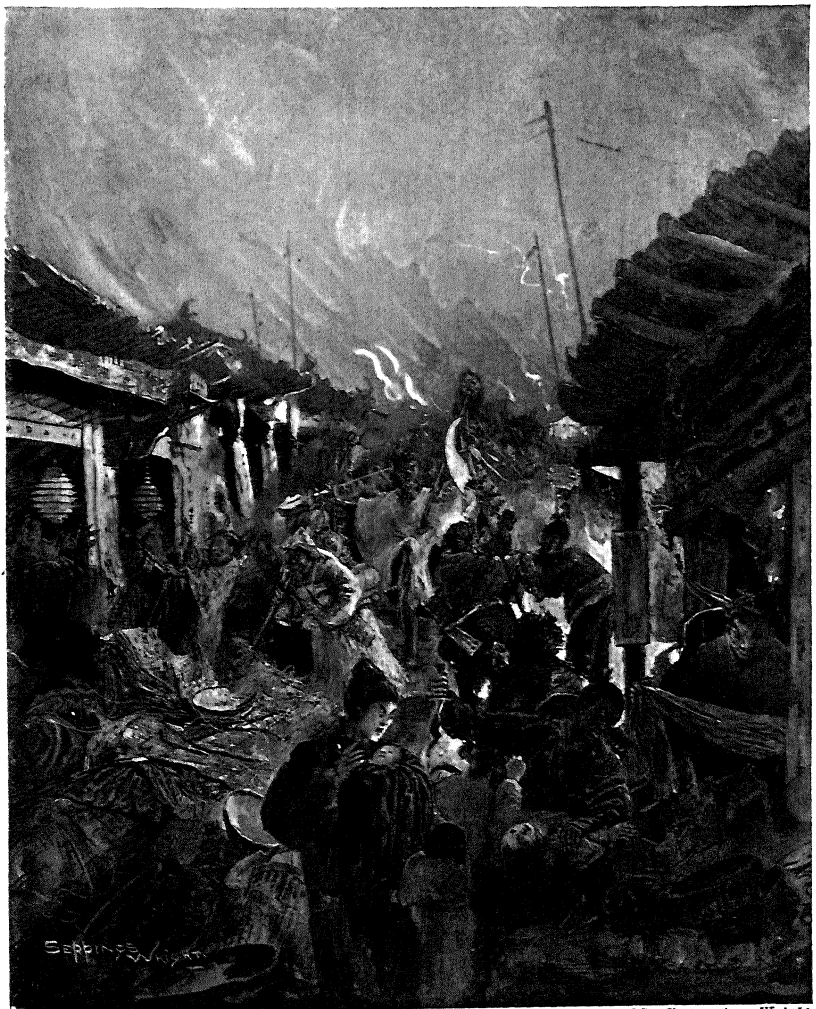
Meanwhile the Manchus were rising to power under their great leader Nurhachu. They invaded Korea and threatened Liao-yang, meeting with only a feeble resistance from the ill-paid soldiery and corrupt officers of the Mings. The long and disastrous reign of

gang of desperadoes, and overrunning parts of Hupeh and Honan, was soon in command of a large army. By 1644 he was ready to march against Peking, and forthwith proclaimed himself Emperor of a new dynasty.

The moment was unusually opportune. Wu San-kuei, the one Chinese general of first-class rank, was away opposing the Manchus and fully occupied in trying to arrest their advance. He was hurriedly recalled by the distracted Emperor, but it was too late ; Peking was taken and pillaged, and the Emperor hanged himself. On hearing this news, General Wu came to terms with the Manchus, and invited them to assist in the expulsion of the Rebel Li and the recapture of the capital.

The rest of the story is summed up in the fable of the horse that sought the aid of man against its enemy the stag. The Manchus helped indeed to get rid of the Rebel Li, and then annexed the empire for themselves. But just as the Mongols, being an alien race, experienced endless difficulties, through a long series of years, in displacing the Sungs, a native dynasty, even though effete and corrupt, so did the Manchu Tartars meet with dissatisfaction and resentment on all sides, which it took many years to allay, and a thread of which may be said to have run through their all but three centuries of power.

The first thing the Manchus did was to make the " pigtail " style of coiffure obligatory throughout the empire. Already there were a certain number of Chinese who, mostly from fear, had shaved their heads as a token of submission to the new rulers ; but this was confined to the north, where the change of dynasty was an accomplished fact. In the south resistance to the order was obstinate and prolonged, and was only swept away gradually, as the Manchus bit by bit succeeded in establishing their administration. Altogether, the reduction of the country was carried out in a wise and statesmanlike manner, great concessions being made to popular prejudices by the Tartar conquerors. These last were not, and they must have felt that they were not, on the same intellectual level, or in any way to be compared, from the point of view of civilization, with the vanquished Chinese. The Manchus were skilled archers and bold horsemen, with little or no knowledge of the arts and crafts in which the Chinese were so distinguished, and they had been possessors of a written



Painted specially for this work

[By H. Seppings Wright.]

THE LOOTING OF PEKING BY THE REBEL LI.

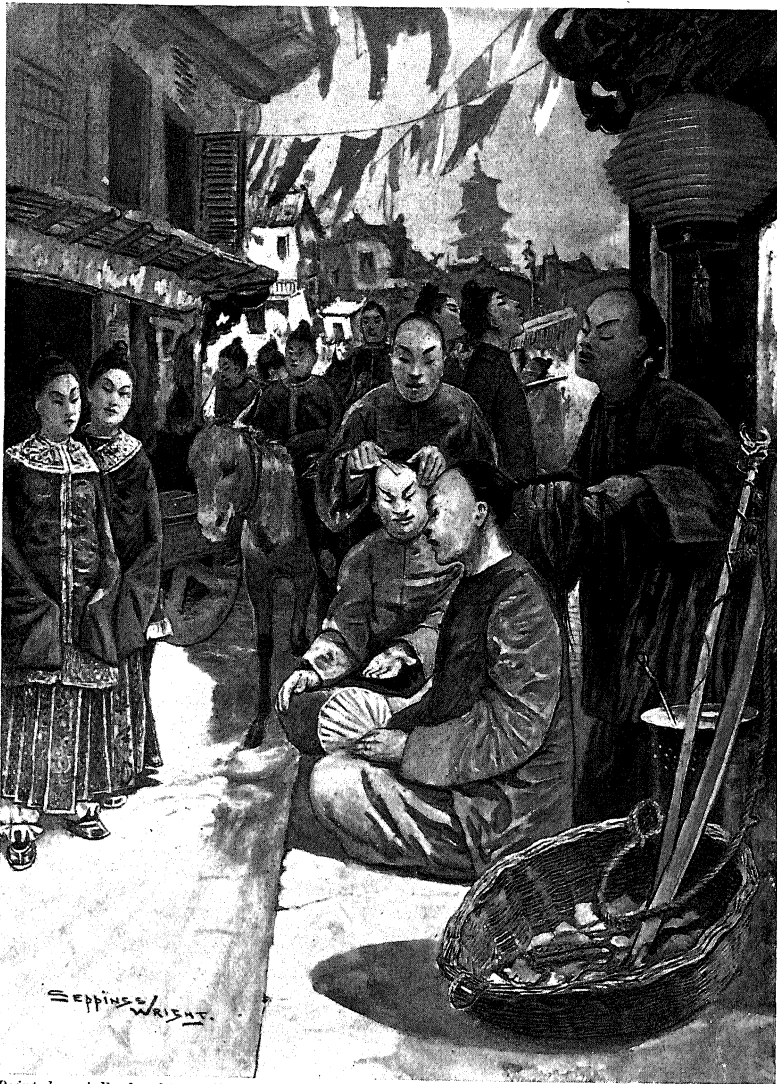
The Rebel Li had been a village beadle, but he turned brigand and was soon at the head of a large army. In 1644 he marched against Peking, and pillaged it; he then proclaimed himself Emperor, and the founder of a new dynasty. The Manchus were invited to come in and assist in the repression of Li, and having done this they decided to stay and annex the empire for themselves

language only since 1599. On one head they were quite clear: they had got hold of China and they meant to keep it.

This they were enabled to do chiefly owing to the great abilities and sterling virtues of several of the early Emperors. The third of his line, 1655-1723, is popularly known by his year-title, K'ang Hsi, in accordance with the custom which has prevailed since the beginning of the Ming dynasty. He succeeded

to the throne as a child of eight, and became actually the ruler of the Chinese empire at the age of twenty. He was then faced with a very serious rebellion. Several of the provinces decided to set up independent governments, and six or seven years of fighting elapsed before this trouble was at an end. It was shortly followed by raids upon outlying parts of the empire by the Kalmuck Tartars, against whom the Emperor led an expedition in person, the upshot being an extension of Chinese frontier to Kokand, Badakshan, and Tibet. This reign was marked, too, by an extraordinary revival of learning, earnestly encouraged by the Emperor himself, who either initiated or sanctioned the publication of many important aids to study.

The fifth Manchu Emperor was a grandson of K'ang Hsi. He reigned under the year-title of Ch'ien Lung, and his fame rivals that of his grandfather. Both monarchs occupied the throne for sixty years, thus completing a full Chinese cycle; both were successful in suppressing anti-dynastic rebellions on a large scale, and in extending the frontiers of the empire; both were warm patrons of literature, and the



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THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PIGTAIL.

The first thing the Manchus did was to make the "pigtail" style of coiffure obligatory throughout the empire. In the north there were already a certain number of Chinese who, mostly from fear, had shaved their heads as a token of submission to the new ruler; but in the south resistance to the order was obstinate and prolonged, and was only swept away gradually. Upon the abdication of the Manchus in 1912 the wearing of the pigtail was generally discontinued.

nominal, if not real, editors of a series of works in the hands of every student of to-day.

In 1795 Ch'ien Lung, who had previously received Lord Macartney in audience, abdicated in favour of his son, and died three years later. From that hour Manchu rule was on the downward grade. The son, who reigned as Chia Ch'ing, neglected his duties and gave himself up to a life of pleasure and debauchery. Hence, family feuds, secret society risings, and plots, which cost vast sums to put down. From 1805 to 1809 the coast from Shantung to Tongking was infested with pirates who fought pitched battles with the Imperial navy and almost stopped trade. The Emperor himself was once attacked



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LORD MACARTNEY ARRIVES IN CHINA.

In 1793 Lord Macartney was sent to China as the British Ambassador for the extension of British commerce. He landed on August 6th, and was received by the aged Ambassador with great hospitality. The Chinese barges of the Embassy are here shown preparing to pass under a bridge



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LORD MACARTNEY RECEIVED BY THE EMPEROR.

On December 14th, 1793, the Emperor, who is here seen approaching the reception tent, received Lord Macartney at Gehol. Many restrictions had been placed upon trade with China and British subjects treated in a grossly unjust manner. The mission failed to obtain redress for British grievances.