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EMINENT CHINESE
of the
CH'ING PERIOD
(1644-1912)

Edited by
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PREFACE

THIS work, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, is primarily planned as a biographical dictionary of the last three centuries. As such, there is at present no other work of the kind in any language, including Chinese, which can compare with it in comprehensiveness of conception, in objectivity of treatment, and in general usefulness.

In order fully to appreciate the excellence of this work, it seems necessary to give a general estimate of the Chinese biographical literature which forms the chief source of material for this series of eight hundred biographies. In quantity, this literature is enormous. Of the "Thirty-three Collections of Ch'ing Dynasty Biographies" (see Editor's Note) which constitute the backbone of this source material, the four major collections alone, namely, the *Ch'i-hsien lei-chêng* and the three series of *Pei-chuan chi*, total over 1,110 *chüan*. In addition to these vast collections, there are hundreds of *nien-p'u* or chronologically arranged biographies and autobiographies. The immensity of the task of selection, translation and editing is truly appalling.

Much of this source material suffers from a number of serious defects. The Manchu conquest of China and the racial struggles and prejudices resulting from it greatly restricted the freedom of all historical and biographical writing that had anything to do with persons and events connected with the long conflicts between the two peoples. Court intrigue and political and partisan strife throughout the dynasty also were responsible for much of the suppression and distortion of biographical truth. The tyranny of the intellectual fashion of the age, the traditional prejudices against unorthodox thinkers, writers or artists, and dynastic or political support of schools of thought supposedly advantageous to the reigning house, led to distorted judgments in biographical literature. Numerous works were irretrievably lost through official prohibition and long neglect. Official "veritable" records were doctored and sometimes re-doctored. Private works were altered and deleted in order to make publication or re-publication possible.

In recent decades, modern scholarship has done much to unearth hidden documents, establish new evidence, and rectify some of the distorted versions of earlier biographers. Unexpurgated editions of suppressed works have appeared. New biographies of once defamed personages have been produced. But the process of suppression and distortion has been going on too long, and on far too extensive a scale, to make it possible for modern research fully to remedy and rectify. In many cases the truth will probably never be known.

Chinese biographical literature is, moreover, most defective in dealing with those men whose life and work brought them into direct contact with foreign countries and peoples—men like the early Chinese Christians of the 17th century, or those persons who took part in the Anglo-Chinese wars and negotiations of 1839-42, in the Taiping rebellion and its suppression, or in diplomatic relations with foreign powers from the days of the Taiping rebellion to the end of the dynasty. In writing about these men, Chinese biographers of the old school invariably failed to make use of non-Chinese sources, which in many cases are absolutely necessary to supplement the inadequate records written by native scholars ignorant of condi-

tions and events in the outside world. In the case of the leaders of the Taiping rebellion, wherein the Chinese records were deliberately destroyed or suppressed, foreign records form almost the only reliable sources of information. The history of the Taiping rebellion, with its peculiar form of fanatic iconoclasm, would now be unintelligible without the aid of records kept by foreign observers and missionaries. Indeed, even the numerous official documents and religious tracts published by the Taiping government have entirely disappeared from China and have only recently been reprinted in China from copies preserved in British and European archives.

In all these respects, the present contributors to this series of brief biographies of "Eminent Chinese" have done a great deal to improve upon the traditional biographical material in Chinese. They have exercised remarkable critical judgment in the selection of the subjects to be included and of the source materials to be used. They have succeeded very well in the reconstruction of authentic and objective biographies within the rigid limitations of a biographical dictionary. They have been able to supplement the official and formal biographies by critical use of unofficial and unorthodox materials. They have made full use of the results of modern historical research in China. And they have certainly set a good example for future Chinese biographical literature by their extensive incorporation of non-Chinese source materials in all cases wherein the native record is inadequate or incomplete.

The articles on such early Chinese Christian leaders as Hsü Kuang-ch'i, Li Chih-tsao, Ch'ü Shih-ssü and others; those on Hung Hsiu-ch'üan and Hung Jên-kan of the Taiping rebellion; and the many articles on Chinese statesmen having charge of foreign relations from Lin Tsê-hsü down to I-hsin and Jung-lu, will be found interesting and valuable to Chinese readers because they contain important information from sources not accessible to the traditional Chinese biographer.

Such articles as those on the geographical explorer Hsü Hung-tsu, the historian Ts'ui Shu, the novelists Ts'ao Chan and Wu Ching-tzū, and the scholars Chao I-ch'ing and Tai Chên, with special reference to the century-old controversy concerning the *Shui-ching chu shih*—these among others may be cited as examples of fruitful utilization of contemporary Chinese scholarship.

The greatest difficulty in planning this book, I can imagine, must have been the selection of the eight hundred men and women as subjects of biographical sketches. The final selection will probably be questioned by some readers who may fail to find certain of their favorite artists, poets or collectors prominently treated here. I for one have my own mild complaints of omission. But, after a careful analysis of the book as a whole, I am very well satisfied with the general plan of selection of biographical subjects. It is a well-balanced selection which takes into consideration the dynastic, racial, military, territorial, political, intellectual, literary, artistic and religious phases of Chinese history of the last three centuries, and gives a quite fair apportionment of space to the personalities who played their part, for better or for worse, in their respective spheres. It is a work of historical objectivity and justice which accords the same attention to the rebels Hung Hsiu-ch'üan and Li Hsiu-ch'êng as to the Emperor K'ang-hsi or the Empress Dowager Hsiao-ch'in; to a powerful Grand Secretary of State like Mingju as to

the son of his Korean slave who made money for him by manipulating a monopoly on the sale of salt.

There are numerous other features of merit which greatly enhance the usefulness of this series as a work of reference for both Western and Chinese readers. Chief among these may be mentioned the more exact transliteration and transcription of Manchu, Mongol and Tibetan names than has been made before by Chinese historians; the translation of all Chinese dates into the Gregorian calendar; and the appending of a good bibliography under each entry, including Chinese and non-Chinese works. All these will be found exceedingly helpful to students of history.

* * *

So much for this work as a great biographical dictionary.

But *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* is more than a biographical dictionary. It is the most detailed and the best history of China of the last three hundred years that one can find anywhere today. It is written in the form of biographies of eight hundred men and women who made that history. This form, by the way, is in line with the Chinese tradition of historiography.

A methodical student can reconstruct in great detail a political history of modern China by culling materials from the lives of the empire-builders, statesmen, and generals who conducted the great military campaigns for territorial conquest and for suppression of anti-Manchu uprisings; the rebels who several times came near wrecking the empire; the officials who had to deal with the foreigner, about whom they knew nothing; the Chinese loyalists who kept the flame of anti-Manchu sentiment burning throughout the alien rule and who paid for their loyalty with their lives; and the many scholars, writers and artists who made these three centuries an age of great revival in learning and art. Such a history would be fuller and more interesting than any that has been written about this period in any European language.

Or, if a student is interested in the cultural and intellectual history of the period, he can find enough material in this work to write a detailed account of the intellectual and philosophical renaissance of these exciting centuries. In the lives of Hsü Kuang-ch'i and his fellow Christians, of Ku Yen-wu, Ch'ien Ch'ien-i, Yen Jo-chü, Yen Yüan, Li Kung and others, he can perceive the rise in the 17th century of a great revival of learning, even in the midst of internal disintegration and foreign conquest. In the lives of Hui Tung, Ch'ien Ta-hsin, Chi Yün, Chu Yün, Tai Chên, Shao Chin-han, Chang Hsüeh-ch'êng, Wang Nien-sun, Ts'ui Shu and their contemporaries, he can see a new intellectual movement, generally but not quite accurately known as the Movement of Han Learning. It was an age of unprecedented revival of learning and of philological and historical research, based upon a newly-perfected critical methodology which goes back to the time of Ku Yen-wu and Yen Jo-chü. And finally, in the lives of Juan Yüan, Hsü Sung, Chang Mu, Wei Yüan, Ch'ên Li, Tsêng Kuo-fan, Kuo Sung-tao, Wang T'ao, T'an Ssü-t'ung and K'ang Yu-wei (see under T'an Ssü-t'ung) and their 19th century contemporaries—in these biographies is revealed the story of the third and last period of the intellectual renaissance, a period of history coinciding with China's first defeats and humiliations in her encounters with the colonial empires of the West and with a militarized Japan. It was an age of transition, in which, while the intellectual

gains of a preceding age were being conserved and consolidated, there was rising a new spirit of doubt which seriously questioned the soundness and the utility of the learning and scholarship of the entire Ch'ing period, and which groped for newer and more useful ways of knowledge and action that might better serve the country in the days of imminent internal collapse and external aggression.

This I suggest as one of the possible and very interesting ways of using this book as a source of historical information. There are, of course, other equally interesting ways of using it. For instance, the hundreds of biographies of Manchu emperors, empresses, princes, nobles, generals and officials in this series may be systematically studied from the standpoint of a historian who seeks to understand the historical process of a conquering nation rapidly yielding to and being absorbed by the cultural life of the conquered people. The process began with such men as Erdeni and Dahai who, long before the Manchus came into China proper, were busy translating into the newly-written Manchu tongue Chinese works on penal law, military tactics and general literature. Of the grandsons of Nurhaci, the founder of the Manchu Empire, Gose became a Chinese poet and Fu-lin, the first Manchu Emperor in China, who began to study Chinese in his teens, was a devotee of Chinese literature and of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism. Fu-lin left many works in Chinese, including a number of commentaries on Confucian and Taoist texts. The second emperor, Hsüan-yeh, was a great patron of Chinese arts and letters, and a large collection of Chinese prose and poetry was published in his name. At least two of his sons, Yin-li and Yin-hsi, wrote readable poetry in Chinese; Yin-hsi was also known as a Chinese painter and calligrapher. A grandson of Hsüan-yeh, named Hung-li, who became the fourth emperor, wrote frightfully bad poems—a fact which proves that they were not retouched by his courtiers. Nevertheless, he wrote and published over 42,000 Chinese poems, far exceeding the number ever composed by any Chinese poet before or after him!

The same rapid process of cultural assimilation can be read in the history of many Manchu families. The powerful Mingju, who descended from the Nara clan of the Yehe tribe conquered by Nurhaci in 1619, was only nine years old at the time of the Manchu conquest of Peking and north China. Under Emperor Hsüan-yeh, he became a great patron of Chinese literature and scholarship. His son, Singde, was undoubtedly one of the best and most popular poets of the Ch'ing period. Singde died in 1685, only forty years after the conquest!

I need not multiply such instances, which are overwhelmingly numerous. I wish only to indicate that a student interested in the problem of "acculturation" can find no better source material than these biographical records of powerful Manchu ruling families of the last three hundred years. Starting with these brief but suggestive sketches and following up with such authentic collections of Chinese prose and poetry by Manchu authors as the *Pa-ch'i wên-ching*, the *Hsi-ch'ao ya-sung chi* and Yang Chung-hsi's *Hsüeh-ch'iao shih-hua*, the student of acculturation will soon realize that military conquest, long and powerful political domination, and explicit prohibition of intermarriage and adoption of Chinese customs were powerless to stem the irresistible process of voluntary cultural absorption. He will then understand that it was no accident that, when the Chinese revolution succeeded in overthrowing the reigning dynasty in 1912, the Manchu people simply took up Chinese family names and became overnight indistinguishable from the Chinese population.

In concluding this introduction to *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, I wish to say that this splendid work has been made possible only by the co-operative effort of some fifty scholars of the Orient and the Occident and in particular by the nine years of patient and untiring labor of the editor, Mr. Arthur W. Hummel, and his chief assistants, Mr. and Mrs. Fang Chao-ying. As my friend Mr. Wang Chung-min once said to me, "Mr. Hummel, Mr. and Mrs. Fang and Miss Marybelle Bouchard, these four persons alone, have together devoted more than thirty years of their lives to it." As a firm believer in the Baconian ideal of corporate and co-operative research, I sincerely congratulate the editor and his fifty associates on the signal success of this first great undertaking of international co-operative research in Chinese history and biography. Under similarly propitious conditions, the undertaking is well worth repeating.

New York City,
May 25, 1943.

胡適

HU SHIH



CORRECTIONS

- Page 55, left column, line 27, for Granld read Grand.
- “ 56, right column, line 23, for Shih-tsu read Shih-tsung.
- “ 66, left column, line 33, for emperior read emperor.
- “ 76, right column, line 21, for *shi* read *shih*; left column, line 18, for 1710?-1764? read 1711-1764.
- “ 91, right column, line 14, delete hyphen in *t'ang-chi*.
- “ 94, right column, line 39, for 校勘記 *chiao-k'an chi* read 考證 *k'ao-chêng*.
- “ 114, right column, line 39, for *chüan* read *chuan*.
- “ 128, left column, line 7, for ingorance read ignorance.
- “ 129, left column, line 47, for Shang-shu fang read Shang shu-fang.
- “ 147, right column, line 47, read great-grandsons.
- “ 168, left column, line 35, for grandnephew read distant cousin.
- “ 170, left column, line 9, for chung read Chung.
- “ 183, left column, line 21, read directors-general.
- “ 190, right column, line 3, for *ch'ang* read *Ch'ang*.
- “ 199, left column, line 15, for *Shou* read *Shuo*.
- “ 205, right column, line 6, for 1838 read 1889; in bibl., line 4, for III read VII.
- “ 228, right column, line 9, for *ch'ao* read *ch'o*.
- “ 272, left column, line 35, for *p'o* read *po*.
- “ 285, left column, 9 lines from below, for 1723 read 1724.
- “ 298, right column, line 43, for *chun* read *chün*.
- “ 308, right column, line 23 from below, for 1663 read 1665.
- “ 350, right column, line 15 from below, for Tsung- read Tsun-.
- “ 353, right column, last line, make characters after T. read 五橋.
- “ 354, left column, first line, make characters after T. read 艘軒.
- “ 374, right column, line 32, for *Ch'ün* read *Ch'un*.
- “ 390, right column, middle, make personal name Pi read P'i.
- “ 407, left column, line 27, for perfect read prefect.
- “ 452, left column, line 22 from below, for *Chêng* read *Ch'êng*.
- “ 479, lower right, line 17 from below, for *Pai-fu-tang* read *Pai-fu t'ang*.
- “ 543, right column, line 39, for *nien-piao* substitute *miao-shih nien-hui p'u*
廟證年諱證.
- “ 555, right column, middle, read *Reminiscences*.
- “ 572, right column, middle, for Manggebulu read Menggebulu.
- “ 820, right column, line 6 from below, for Lingdan read Lindan.
- “ 848, left column, line 25, for -sun read -sung.

THIRTY-THREE COLLECTIONS OF CH'ING DYNASTY BIOGRAPHIES

(Referred to by Numbers at the Left)

- 1 Ch'ing-shih kao 清史稿 by Chao Êr-hsün and others. Printed 1927-28.
- 2 Ch'ing-shih lieh-chuan 清史列傳, Chung-hua Book Company, 1928.
- 3 Kuo-ch'ao ch'i-hsien lei-chêng 國朝著獻類徵 by Li Huan. See pp. 458-459.
- 4 Pei chuan chi 碑傳集 by Ch'ien I-chi (1893). See p. 151.
- 5 Hsü Pei chuan chi 續碑傳集 by Miao Ch'üan-sun (1893). See p. 27.
- 6 Pei chuan chi pu 碑傳集補 by Min Êr-ch'ang (1931). See p. 154.
- 7 Kuo-ch'ao hsien-chêng shih-lüeh 國朝先正事略 by Li Yüan-tu. See p. 497.
- 8 Chung-hsing chiang-shuai lieh-chuan 中興將帥列傳 by Chu K'ung-chang.
- 9 Ts'ung-chêng kuan-fa lu 從政觀法錄 by Chu Fang-tsêng. Printed 1884.
- 10 Ta-Ch'ing chi-fu hsien-chê chuan 大清畿輔先哲傳 by Hsü Shih-ch'ang.
- 11 Man-chou ming-ch'ên chuan 滿洲名臣傳, privately printed from Archives.
- 12 Han ming-ch'ên chuan 漢名臣傳, privately printed from Archives.
- 13 Kuo-ch'ao Han-hsüeh shih-ch'êng chi 國朝漢學師承記. See pp. 137-138.
- 14 Sung-hsüeh yüan-yüan chi 宋學淵源記. See pp. 137-138.
- 15 Yen-Li shih-ch'êng chi 顏李師承記. See biography of Yen Yüan.
- 16 Ch'ing-ju hsüeh-an hsiao-chih 清儒學案小識 by T'ang Chien (1884).
- 17 Wên-hsien chêng-ts'un lu 文獻徵存錄. Printed 1858.
- 18 Kuo-ch'ao ming-ch'ên yen-hsing lu 國朝名臣言行錄 by Wang Ping (1885).
- 19 Ch'ing hua-chia shih-shih 清畫家詩史 by Li Chün-chih. Printed 1930.
- 20 Ch'ing-tai hsüeh-chê hsiang chuan 清代學者象傳 by Yeh Kung-h'o (1928).
- 21 Ch'ing-tai kuei-ko shih-jên chêng-lüeh 清代閨閣詩人徵略. Printed 1922.
- 22 Kuo-ch'ao ming-chia shih-ch'ao hsiao-chuan 國朝名家詩鈔小傳.
- 23 Kuo-ch'ao shih-jên chêng-lüeh ch'u-pien 國朝詩人徵略初編. See p. 58.
- 24 Kuo-ch'ao shih-jên chêng-lüeh êr-pien 國朝詩人徵略二編. See p. 58.
- 25 Fei-hung t'ang yin-jên chuan 飛鴻堂印人傳 by Wang Ch'i-shu (see biog.).
- 26 Kuo-ch'ao shu-hua-chia pi-lu 國朝書畫家筆錄 by Tou Chên (1911).
- 27 Kuo-ch'ao hua-chih 國朝畫識 by Fêng Chin-po and Wu Chin (1831).
- 28 Mo-hsiang chü hua-chih 墨香居畫識 by Fêng Chin-po.
- 29 Kuo-ch'ao shu-jên chi-lüeh 國朝書人輯略 by Chên-chün (1908).
- 30 Ho-chêng lu 鶴徵錄. See biography of Li Fu-sun on p. 457.
- 31 Ho-chêng hou-lu 鶴徵後錄 by Li Fu-sun. See p. 457.
- 32 Chi-wei tz'ü-k'o lu 己未詞科錄 by Ch'in Ying. See p. 168.
- 33 Kuo-shih lieh-chuan 國史列傳, printed by Tung-fang hsüeh-hui from Archives.

M 1 refers to the Ming Dynastic History (*Ming-shih* 明史).

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