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FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1890.

All communications for the Society should be addressed to the Secretary, John-street, Adelphi, London, W.C.

NOTICES.

CONVERSAZIONE.

The Society's *conversazione* will take place at the Natural History Museum, Cromwell-road, S.W. (by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum), on Friday, 27th June.

The reception by the Duke of Abercorn (Chairman), and the members of the Council of the Society, will commence at 9.0 p.m.

The bands of the Grenadier Guards and the Scots Guards will perform during the evening.

Each member is entitled to a card for himself (which will not be transferable), and a card for a lady. In addition to this, a limited number of tickets will be sold to members of the Society, or to persons introduced by a member, at the price of 5s. each if purchased before the 14th June. After that date the price will be 7s.; on the 27th June, 10s.

These tickets can now be purchased. They will only be supplied to persons presenting members' vouchers (which can be obtained from the Secretary) or a letter of introduction from a member.

Members can purchase these additional tickets by personal application, or by letter addressed to the Secretary. In all cases of application by letter a remittance must be enclosed. Each ticket will admit one person, either lady or gentleman.

Light refreshments (tea, coffee, ices, claret cup, &c.) will be supplied.

As the number of tickets which can be issued is limited, early application is desirable.

Proceedings of the Society.

INDIAN SECTION.

Thursday, May 8th, 1890; Major-Gen. Sir OWEN TUDOR BURNE, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., in the chair.

The paper read was—

THE WESTERN FRONTIERS OF CHINA.

BY DEMETRIUS C. BOULGER.

The mention of the name of China is sufficient to suggest an indefinite number of problems as to its future, whether we place uppermost its own internal development or its relations with other countries. How those problems will work themselves out, and what their solution will be, must remain very much a question of time, and before a final consummation is attained, there will be ample opportunity for individuals to ventilate plausible theories as to what the strangely-constituted community of which we are speaking, and to which the laws of Europe are inapplicable, will become from intercourse with ourselves and other Western nations. I feel, however, compelled to confine myself to the prosaic side of the question, and to only place before you a certain number of facts explanatory of China's action and policy in different important quarters, leaving to you the more pleasing task of evolving your own theories from the historical passages and incidents to which I shall refer.

The particular portion of the very large area of the Chinese empire and its influence to which I would specially invite your attention to-day, is comprehended within the immense line that girdles the dependencies of the Peking ruler from Manchuria to Tonquin. Much of that circumference, it will be said, lies in the north, and much also in the south, which only shows the difficulty of finding a terse and accurate title for a wide and elastic subject; but all these borders are to the west in the main and practical sense that they are continuous with two great Western dominions, those of Russia and England. In fact, if we except a very narrow fringe of doubtful territory in the Pamir region, China has now only European neighbours even in the heart of Asia and the interior of Indo-China, and those neighbours are England, Russia, and France. Many natural difficulties still intervene, but these cannot keep out, for any length of time, the traders of those countries who are making steady and increasing efforts to penetrate into China. In two points Russia enjoys a great advantage over her rivals. Not merely is her extent of common frontier greater, and the natural difficulties intervening between Russian and Chinese territory less, but there are also one

or two long-established and much-frequented trade routes, of which that *viâ* Kiachta is the best known. In this respect Russia possesses a superior position to ours, and it will be useful to state, *en passant*, that of the 12,000 miles which form the land girdle of China, 6,000 touch Russian territory, 4,800 British territory, and only 400 French, while 800 may be described as doubtful. It will be obvious that the questions arising from time to time along so extensive an area must be affected by local considerations of which we can only possess slight knowledge, but although their number might be indefinitely increased, the most important fall under, comparatively, a few heads, viz. :—Tibet, Burmah, and the Shan States, so far as we are concerned; Manchuria, the Upper Amour, and Turkestan with regard to Russia; and Tonquin in connection with France.

The recent protracted negotiations with China, on the subject of Sikhim, prove that the subject we are about to consider is not one of merely theoretical importance. It is really a matter of much practical moment which will become more evident to the public when, instead of having to restrict or terminate Chinese pretensions in a small Himalayan state, we shall have to define the future boundaries with China in Burmah and the Shan States. To a much-occupied Government like that of India, the prospect of having to negotiate with the Chinese on any subject is not a pleasing one. Notwithstanding the telegraph and the presence in Calcutta of a Chinese mission, under the control of Mr. James Hart, an able Englishman in the employment of the Chinese Government, the settlement of the rival claims put forward with regard to Sikhim by the Tibetans and ourselves required more than twelve months. At the same rate of progress, if we may draw a ratio from a comparison of the interests at stake, more than a generation would be necessary to permanently define the Burmese frontier east of the Irrawaddy and the Salween, and, with its recent experience of the dilatoriness of an Oriental Government in the case of Siam the other day, when the Commissioners from Bangkok, notwithstanding the professed and probably sincere desire of the Siamese Government to come to an arrangement, pursued a systematic policy of obstruction, the Government of India may feel some natural apprehension at the strain which would be placed on its patience and forbearance by any prolonged negotiation

with China. Still, it cannot be doubted that the question will have to be faced, and now that we are in close touch with the western frontier of China, we can only hope for the early removal of all possible causes of friction, and the exact definition of the rights of the two empires, so that they may be mutually respected.

If the progress of the Sikhim negotiation was wearying, its result can only be termed satisfactory as showing the desire of the Chinese Government to live on good terms with ourselves. We cannot doubt this, because the Chinese have waived much to which they, or rather their *protégés*, the Tibetans, held themselves to be unquestionably entitled. The Rajah of Sikhim is, in the eyes of the Tibetans, one of themselves, and as a Lama, the subordinate of the Dalai Lama of Lhasa. The Pekin Government has little or no interest in a small State so remote from it, and possessing associations that are exclusively Indian, but it has a good deal of interest in keeping the Tibetan hierarchy in good humour. We must, therefore, count it a special act of friendship on the part of China that she has given way to our representations, and acquiesced in a final and formal declaration that Sikhim no longer forms part of Tibet.

The Sikhim question serves to introduce a consideration of China's relations with, and policy in, the important and interesting State of Tibet, with which much of her policy on the western frontier is closely associated. China has been connected with Tibet from a very early period of history, but in the early stages of the relationship Tibet was hostile to China, and in the wars that marked that epoch Tibet was often successful, and figured as the invader of China. It was not until Tibet became a religious community, and ceased to aspire to worldly fame and power by deeds of arms, that Chinese influence became paramount in Tibet, and that the truculent but unwarlike Lamas looked to Pekin for protection against any peril from the Goorkhas or others who might be incited by their own greed, or some lawless act on the part of the Tibetans themselves, to make a descent into the valley of the Sanpu. The more vigorous policy adopted by the Manchu rulers of China under the still reigning dynasty, invested the old claims of the Middle Kingdom with increased force, until at last, under the great Emperor Kanghi and his grandson, Keen Lung, Tibet became the most favoured of China's dependencies. During the last two

centuries China has pursued two separate and distinct policies with regard to Tibet, each being dictated by the most pressing necessity of the moment. For the greater portion of the time she has been content with the nominal allegiance of the Tibetans, and the only visible sign of her authority has been the presence of an official called the Amban, who may be compared to the Resident kept by the Indian Government at the courts of the native States, and of a small garrison at two or three of the forts commanding the passes. But on rare occasions the Chinese have thought it necessary to assert their power in Tibet, and to garrison it with a large army. We may devote a little time to the consideration of the circumstances and motives which induced the Chinese Government to vary its action in this quarter.

While the first emperor of the Manchu dynasty, Chuntche, was content to confer on the chief Lama of Lhasa the title of Dalai Lama, by which he and his successors have ever since been known, thus showing the extent and reality of China's influence, his successor, Kanghi, evinced a still stronger interest in the welfare of Tibet. It may be deemed an open question whether Kanghi would have resorted to any active military measures in Tibet if he had not been obliged to do so in consequence of his long struggle in Central Asia with the chiefs of Jungaria and Turkestan, Galdan and Tse Wang Rabdan. During the height of the war with Galdan, when one Chinese army followed another across the Gobi desert, Tibet remained outside the sphere of the contest; but after the overthrow and death of that chief, the Eleuth rulers had to abandon the hope of vanquishing China in the open field, and turned their attention and efforts to another quarter in which they thought China would be less likely to interfere. The situation of affairs in Tibet at the beginning of the 18th century seemed to invite the interference of her neighbours. There had been a recrudescence of the historic rivalry of the Yellow and Red Caps—the representatives of the priestly and military castes—and Tse Wang Rabdan thought it a favourable opportunity to ensure the preponderance of his influence for the future by espousing the side of the Red Caps. After the decisive success of the Yellow Caps (about 1650), which resulted in their expelling their rivals, who took refuge in Bhutan, where their descendants still enjoy a paramount position, the Dalai Lama appointed a new official, named the Tipa, to exer-

cise in his name the military and secular power essential to order, but inconsistent with his sacrosanct character. The holder of this office became a great personage in the State, and after some years it is not surprising to find that this *maire du palais* began to abuse his position. At last the reputed son of the Dalai Lama of the day was appointed to the post, and reluctant to resign an office which he held chiefly from his connection with the head of the Lamas, he managed to suppress the knowledge of his father's death and ruled the State for a period of sixteen years. It was at this stage that the attention of China was forcibly drawn to the position of affairs on the Sanpu, for the Tipa, feeling that Kanghi would declare against him the instant he knew the facts, intrigued with the princes of Jungaria and solicited their military support. When Kanghi was informed of his perfidy, he wrote him a strong letter, stating that he would "direct against him all the troops of Yunnan," and that he would "come himself or send the princes of his Court to wash out in the Tipa's blood the disgrace of his treason." The threats of the Chinese Emperor sufficed to give fresh confidence to the Tipa's enemies, and during the commotion that ensued the Tipa was slain by a military officer named Latsan Khan, who succeeded to his power.

The invitation to the Jungarian prince to interfere in Tibet bore some fruit, for seeing in the overthrow of the Tipa a serious injury to his own reputation and the loss of many material advantages, Tse Wang Rabdan determined to make a bold bid for power in that country. With this object in view he despatched a large army across Kashgaria for the express purpose of invading that country of Tibet, which modern travellers of proved energy and experience, like the late Russian General Prjevalsky, have found so inaccessible, and what is more his General succeeded in accomplishing the main feature of his task by entering Tibet and capturing the capital, Lhasa. This expedition was sent in the year 1709, and it returned to Kuldja or Ili laden with incalculable spoil from the great monasteries of the Sanpu Valley. The Chinese Emperor only learnt of this expedition after it had attained its object and returned in security to the province from which it had set out. He could only provide against its repetition by sending a Manchu garrison to Tibet, and by vigorously prosecuting a war with Tse Wang Rabdan in Central Asia. This was the first occasion of China carrying out the vigorous policy of

asserting her power in Tibet, so far as to make it an integral part of her dominion.

On Kanghi's death, which took place a few years after his occupation of Tibet, a policy of greater apathy in this quarter was adopted by his successor, Yung Ching, and even during the greater part of the long reign of Keen Lung the Pekin Government was content to leave Tibet alone, with the result that the Chinese garrison was again reduced to nominal dimensions, and that the only vestige of the Emperor's power was afforded by the resident ambassador. This state of things would have continued indefinitely if unexpected provocation had not been offered the Chinese by a Goorkha invasion of Tibet in the year 1791. The Goorkhas had only asserted their power in Nepaul over the old Newar kings a few years when, tempted by the prospect of booty in the Tibetan lamaseries, they crossed the Himalayas for the purpose of waging war on the Dalai Lama. The Goorkhas easily overcame the slight resistance offered by the Tibetans, but as the Chinese had received some warning of their intended attack, they only succeeded in taking and pillaging the town of Shigatze and the lamasery of Teshu Lumbo, before they found it prudent to retreat on the rumoured approach of a large Chinese army. The Goorkhas delayed their retreat until the last moment, and as their march was hampered by the quantity of their baggage and spoil, the Chinese succeeded in coming up with them in the Kirong Pass of the Himalaya. A battle was fought at Tengri Maidan, when the Goorkhas were vanquished, and in several pitched battles the fortune of war declared itself unequivocally in favour of the Celestials. The final battle of the war was fought at Nayakot, and after the overthrow of their last army, the Goorkhas only succeeded in averting the occupation of their capital by signing an ignominious peace which made Nepaul a tributary State of China. *En passant*, I would observe that this campaign has always seemed to me the safest and easiest test of the efficiency to which a Chinese army could attain. People generally, and many military experts, deride the warlike prowess of the Chinese. It seems to me impossible to do so after a careful consideration of this campaign, and a comparison of its triumphant course with our own arduous operations in Nepaul twenty-five years later, when it took two severe campaigns for us to gain a far less decisive victory over the same opponents. The annals of our own Indian army prove conclusively that no Asiatic

race possesses superior military qualities to the Goorkha.

To this striking and brilliant service the Chinese were indebted for the greatly increased hold they have possessed on Tibet during the last century. The Tibetans were bound to entertain a grateful feeling towards the Power that had rendered them such timely aid and effectual protection, and that had inflicted so salutary a lesson on a neighbour who would otherwise have proved a constant nuisance and peril. The resident Chinese garrison was considerably increased, and the Amban was instructed to take a more active part in the administration, but, indeed, these measures were unnecessary, as the Tibetans had no other thought than to make themselves as agreeable as possible to their protectors. During the hundred years that have elapsed since those events, China has gradually relaxed her hold on Tibet, so far as active participation in the military and civil government of the country is concerned; but her paramount authority has never been questioned, and in proof of this it may be mentioned that the quinquennial tribute-bearing mission from Khatmandu still passes through Tibet to Pekin. The time has now arrived for a fresh exhibition of Chinese authority in Tibet. I think we should be prepared to see at an early date an increase in the Chinese garrison of Tibet, and the Pekin Government will be impelled to take this step both by the experience acquired during the recent Sikhim negotiations, and by apprehensions at the continual efforts of the Russians to gain an entrance into this remote and little known province. The expedition of Colonel Pevtsoff, now roaming on the borders of Tibet, will recall the danger that once beset Tibet and the Chinese position in that country from the Eleuth princes, whose base was also on the banks of the Ili. We can have no objection to some stronger and more amenable authority being established at the frontier posts of Tibet than the rabble following of the Lamas, who, from ignorance or religious zeal, did not know their own impotence.

The policy of China on her western frontiers was, so far as Tibet and Turkestan were concerned, closely connected. She garrisoned Tibet in order to keep out the Eleuths, and under the Emperor Keen Lung, she conquered Turkestan so that the Eleuths might be rendered incapable of invading Tibet, and by this means she carried her borders up to great and almost impassable mountain barriers in

the Pamir and the Himalaya. She was induced to do this, not by any greed of territory, nor from any wanton spirit of aggression. The lawless and unprovoked proceedings of the chiefs and clans of Turkestan and Jungaria, who would have been emboldened by the slightest success to undertake the invasion of China proper, in imitation of the Mongols and other desert conquerors of the Middle Kingdom, including the Manchus themselves, compelled the Chinese Emperor, in self-defence, to wage war upon them, and experience showed that no reverses east of Turfan sufficed to curb their turbulence, or to deprive raids in the direction of China of the attractiveness such an enterprise possessed in the eyes of the Central Asian nomads, who had nothing to lose. It was with the greatest reluctance that the policy of annexation was at last finally adopted by the Emperor Keen Lung, as the only remedy that ensured the permanent cessation of a constantly recurring annoyance and danger. When that great ruler annexed the regions north and south of the Tian Shan range, which are now known under the names of Kuldja and Kashgaria, and placed a garrison in Tibet, he attained a perfect solution of the difficult problem which had beset Chinese rulers for centuries, viz., security on the western frontier. It may be said that even his solution did not endure, and that under his incapable successors his conquests were lost and with them also the fruits of his policy. But, on the other hand, it can be argued that the Chinese have thought it wise to make the effort to recover what they had lost, and this they accomplished ten years ago. The problem they have now to face is whether they can maintain their hold on their remote Central Asian provinces without some improved means of communicating with them. It seems to me that unless China lays down a railway, not necessarily to Kashgar, but to the borders of her north-west province of Kansuh, it will be impossible for her to hold her position in Central Asia against Russia whenever that Power feels inclined to assail it. Before long Russia will have extended her railway to Khodjent and Tashkent, and the movement of troops against the Chinese in Kuldja and Kashgar would thus be greatly simplified. There is every probability that the opinion formed not only by General Prjevalsky, but by all the English officers who have visited Eastern Turkestan, that the Russians could crush the Chinese in Central Asia before the

Pekin Government could send adequate reinforcements, would be vindicated by the result. We can therefore only come to the conclusion that the policy of China in absorbing the region from the Gobi to the Pamir, which in the past gave her security against invasion by the Mahomedan and other tribes of Central Asia, has in the present day brought her face to face with a danger which she seems to only imperfectly realise, and towards meeting which she has done during the last ten years very much less than she ought.

In order that too pessimistic a view may not be taken of China's position in Central Asia *vis-à-vis* with Russia, I would call your attention very briefly to another part of what I have ventured to call the western frontiers of China. I refer to the valley of the Lower Amour, and China's position with regard to maritime Manchuria and its well-known naval port of Vladivostock. In this direction China has not been idle, and European visitors to this region are almost as unanimous in their opinion of the military strength of the Chinese position therein as they hold an adverse view on the point of China's capacity to resist Russia in Central Asia at the present time. The only point I wish you to infer from this is that, weak as China may be in Turkestan, she possesses the power of retaliation elsewhere; and if the Chinese fleet could successfully cope with the Russian Pacific squadron, there is every reason to suppose that, crushing as China's defeat in Kashgaria might be, that of Russia in Manchuria would not be less so. It would, therefore, be somewhat misleading to say that, because Russia could overthrow China in Central Asia, there is imminent risk of a hostile collision between those two empires. The situation in Manchuria is calculated to inspire the Russian military authorities with caution; and when China connects even Moukden, not to speak of Kirin and Tsitsihar, by railroad with Peking, she will have taken the only step still necessary to establish her security, and probably her superiority as well, in north-east Asia.

We must now turn to the more southern portion of China's western frontier, where for the greater distance we are her only neighbour, and where for a shorter space she is also contiguous with France. As China has never been exposed to any serious danger from this quarter, or felt any great peril of invasion from the south, it is not surprising to find that she has no historical policy in this direction, similar to that she possessed

in Central Asia from a much earlier time than I have liked to call your attention to. It is true that on more than one occasion the Burmese have crossed the Yunnan frontier, and history also shows that there have been Chinese invasions of Burmah; but these have been merely passing incidents in the life of a great empire. The hostility of the Burmese never attained the formidable character of that of the inhabitants of Central Asia, and the great campaign of 1768, when the Burmese were vanquished, and compelled to sign a treaty binding them to pay tribute to the Chinese Emperor, sufficed to place the relations of the two States on what has proved to be a durable basis. Beyond regarding the position of affairs in this quarter with a considerable amount of complacency, from the fact that one of the proudest potentates of Asia had ranked himself among the tributaries of the Son of Heaven, it does not seem that the Chinese had any fixed policy towards Burmah. They were quite content to leave matters as they were, especially when they found that even the formidable Mahomedan revolt in Yunnan did not impel the Burmese to take advantage of that occurrence to encroach on Chinese territory, as would infallibly have been the case if they had been Khokandians or any of the other Central Asian peoples, who always endeavoured to profit by the embarrassments of the Chinese. The first disturbing influence was introduced by our conquest of Upper Burmah, for the Chinese perceived that instead of an easy-going and weak neighbour like the Kings of Ava and Mandalay, they would henceforth have to do with a somewhat exacting and not less powerful neighbour in the Indian Government. Regret at the change, as well as the desire to keep up old formalities, may have explained the tenacity with which the Chinese clung to their rights of suzerainty over Burmah; although that might have been explained by the somewhat light manner in which many authorities sought to treat China's claim to demand tribute from Burmah as a pretension that had no basis in fact. Negotiations of a very delicate nature ensued from the time of our occupation of Burmah until August, 1886, when, by the efforts of Lords Salisbury and Rosebery, an amicable convention was signed, by the terms of which China's pretensions were admitted, and an arrangement was made for the continued despatch of the tribute-bearing mission to Peking. I may be permitted to call your attention to the fact that during the whole of this delicate negotia-

tion, the distinguished officer who honours me by presiding this evening was the political secretary at the India-office, and took consequently an important part in arranging in an amicable and honourable manner the first difficulty that presented itself when England and China became neighbours beyond the Irrawaddy.

We can only hope that the difficulties which will present themselves in regard to the delimitation of the ill-defined frontier between Burmah and Yunnan will be overcome with equal success. Up to the present no steps have been taken towards appointing a frontier commission, and perhaps it was wise to let the more important matter stand over until we had come to an agreement with the Siamese in the Shan States. Unfortunately no success can be chronicled with regard to the efforts made during the past six months to come to an arrangement with the Siamese, and our chief representative, Mr. Ney Elias (than whom no one knows Eastern countries and peoples better) has returned to Simla *re infecta*. He and his colleagues have collected a great deal of valuable information, and it really looks as if the only practical outcome of their exertions will be for us to trace what seems to be a fair and workable boundary through the Shan States, and notify the Court of Bangkok that we shall require it to be respected. Our experience in this quarter will suggest the advisability of proceeding with considerable deliberation before we commence, in conjunction with China, the delimitation of our common frontier. It would not be surprising if many years were to elapse before an Anglo-Chinese frontier commission met to discuss the question at all. The Chinese certainly are not over anxious to enter upon a formal arrangement as to boundaries, which would be the preliminary to increased intercourse, and to the opening of distinct trade routes between Burmah and Yunnan. Nor are we perhaps more anxious to begin the matter than the Chinese, for we have so much to do in Burmah and the Shan States with regard to the improvement of our communications and the construction of railways, that we may well hope to be in a better position to come to a satisfactory arrangement with China some years hence, when more of the necessary work for the thorough administration of Burmah has been accomplished. There is another reason why a little delay may be advisable and conducive to the interests of the two countries, and it is this—

although there can be no question that England is more sympathetic at heart with China, and a truer friend of hers, she might be a more troublesome and exacting neighbour than either France or Russia. To support this view it is only necessary to refer to the acts of brigandage committed by the Black Flags in the Bacninh district since peace was proclaimed between France and China, and to the frequent raids of Chinese Kirghiz on the Russian frontier between Semipalatinsk and Kuldja. If those acts had been committed on the Indian frontier, it is perfectly clear that they would not have been treated with the same lenity, and the Government of India would have felt bound to demand as ample and as prompt reparation from the Chinese Government for the acts of its subjects as it would do in the case of offending border tribes, such as the Afridis or the Akhas. For such reasons as this, it does not at all follow that because there is, practically speaking, close identity of interest between England and China we should make the most agreeable neighbours on a frontier, where China has been content to exercise an almost nominal authority, and to leave the clans very much to follow their own inclinations. In the interests of both countries, therefore, it may be well to wait awhile before attempting to place on a regular and final basis the exact delineation of the respective authorities of England and China in South-East Asia. The natural progress of events will probably produce a simple and satisfactory solution of all the difficulties connected with this subject.

Summing up the whole question, or rather the number of questions connected with the western frontiers of China, we find that the chief policy pursued by the Chinese executive has been to drive to as great a distance from the capital as possible the hostile forces which might injure the Chinese nation or break up the empire. That policy was crowned with success when the limits of the empire were carried to the Amour, the Pamir, and the Himalaya, while in the south-west there never was any need to encroach beyond the mountains of Yunnan. Under old conditions, when China had only to deal with Asiatics, and when Russia was weak and only existed on sufferance in Asia, that policy was both wise and successful. China obtained in every quarter a strong natural frontier, for the defence of which her military resources amply sufficed without placing any too severe a strain on the resources of the central authori-

ties. But within the last thirty years a marked change has taken place. Instead of attaining greater security by marching into Central Asia, and renewing the conquests of Kanghi and Keen Lung, China has really brought nearer to her the great national danger from Russia. It is true that the reconquest of Turkestan was effected for the express purpose of putting an end to what seemed an imminent peril from a recrudescence of Mahomedan fanaticism in the north-west, and that so far as that object went, its success was complete. But the success carried this penalty with it, that it left a considerable Chinese army virtually cut off from communication with its base, and exposed on the outbreak of war with Russia to the risk of being annihilated before assistance could reach it. China has done nothing towards repairing that weak point in her armour, and although the greatest empire must be prepared at an hour of need to sacrifice a garrison, the success of a policy must be deemed qualified when it starts upon a catastrophe so clearly perceptible, and against which no precaution has been taken. The *raison d'être* of Chinese policy on her western frontiers has been not merely to ward off dangers, but to save herself the trouble of being annoyed periodically by the depredations and hostile designs of the Central Asian tribes. In the past the policy of annexation was crowned with success; but in order that it should be equally successful under modern conditions, it is necessary that China should not delay in providing railway communication between Peking and Manchuria on the one side, and Turkestan on the other; and that she should, in good time, place a strong garrison in Tibet. Unless China is prepared to make good her position on the extended frontier that she has taken up, it would better for her to draw in her boundaries, to evacuate Central Asia, and to confine herself to the defence of her nineteen provinces and Manchuria. This prudential retrenchment is not likely to be made by a State so much wedded to the past as China, and, therefore, we can only expect that Chinese statesmen will do their best to hold their own by preparing for a vigorous offensive where they are strong, as a counterblow to Russia's success where they are weak. It would be fortunate for the peace of the world if these efforts were to lead Russia to think that war with China was "a game not worth the candle." The question, however, that the Chinese have very seriously to consider is whether their policy

on the western frontiers which answered in the past is quite applicable to the present day. Instead of weak neighbours they have now to deal with two strong and exacting empires like England and Russia. They cannot permanently close their doors to the traders of those Empires, and they must realise that now-a-days trade is impossible without railways. Before many years we shall be knocking at the gates of Yunnan, and Russia at those of Mongolia, and China will have to listen to the summons and open her barriers. For that concession China should be prepared, and if she is wisely advised she will even anticipate the day of surrender, thus showing that she has not forgotten her old political knowledge, and that as she knew how to lay down an astute policy for guiding her relations on her western frontier in the glorious past of Manchu and Chinese history, so has she now risen superior to prejudice, and been able to modify it, or to adopt a new one, suited to the exigencies of the time. To do this she has not merely to show a bold front to her enemies, but to reciprocate, which is more difficult for her, and less in accord with her traditions, in a genuine and hearty manner the good wishes, and to comply with the reasonable requests of her friends.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. MICHELL said he did not see any necessity for delaying an attempt to secure a frontier with China until our position in Burmah had become stronger. If our position in Burmah promised to be good, a stitch in time would save nine, and it would be well to at once begin an effort to establish that authority and influence in Peking which in similar cases were greatly delayed until someone else was before us, as in the case of Persia, where we allowed the ground to be cut from under our feet by Russia. He did not see that China had experienced any overwhelming difficulties in Eastern Turkestan; they had always managed to master easily the difficulties they met with there, as witness their recovery several times of the province of Ili and Jettishahr, where they had to contend with enormous difficulties, but they recovered those provinces from vast millions of fanatic people led by vigorous chiefs, who were not mere adventurers like Yakoo Beg, but founders of the sacred dynasty. He did not think there was now any representative of the royal dynasty in Eastern Turkestan, and it was not likely that another Yakoo Beg would arise to oppose them. It would be easy therefore to hold the country against all comers, Russia included. The retrocession of Kuldja to the Chinese was a most

remarkable fact, especially after the declarations made by Russia that she intended to retain every inch of territory she had acquired, and showed that the Russians stood in awe of their neighbours along the whole line of their extended frontier. The Chinese were a peace-loving people, who would not declare war except under great provocation, but they evidently were able to put great pressure upon Russia. It would therefore be waste of time to recommend our own friendship to China on the ground of any fears she might have of Russia on her northern frontier. We should rest our case rather on our position in Burmah, and we ought to begin negotiations at once.

Mr. C. W. MITCHELL, as one who had spent twelve years in China, could bear testimony to their comparatively good management of their own country. There was a system of passports, and he had travelled about with one a good deal, but scarcely ever had occasion to use it. The Chinese had a beautiful saying from Mencius to this effect:—"Benevolence (or humanity) is man's peaceful abode; righteousness is man's true path." Every schoolboy had to commit that to memory, and though there was a good deal of the parrot system about their education, those who remained a good while at school had these things expounded, and he believed that such sayings as this had a good effect on the national mind, and it would be as well if some Western countries adopted the same principles. But whilst the Chinese were peaceful, they were becoming more and more aware of the importance of being well equipped in case of attack, and he had just received a letter from a friend in Hanyang, in Central China, informing him that the new viceroy of the province had discarded the bow in the military examinations, and had given the students ninety days in which to learn the use of the rifle. Those who had been some years in China, had been amused to find that the military students, who were hereafter to become officials, had still to practise with the bow and arrow on foot and on horseback, though the regular soldiers had been for some years trained in the use of the rifle; but the bow was now being discarded altogether. He had been much interested in this paper, and he trusted that in any future communications with China we should act in the most straightforward and honourable way. At present England was much respected. Up to the time of the French war, Englishmen and Frenchmen were all classed together as foreigners, but they then discovered there were foreigners and foreigners, and he had found it more than once an advantage to be able to say he was not a Frenchman. The question of the tribute from Burmah was of importance, because the people of China had a notion that England paid tribute to China, and when they were told that though England was a very small country, she had immense countries, such as Australia, larger than their eighteen provinces, and India, with a population of 250,000,000, as tributary kingdoms,

they opened their eyes in astonishment. In a recent sheet almanac which was printed and circulated at Hankow, was inserted a paragraph showing the area of the different great empires, in which Great Britain came first, next Russia, and then China, and he thought the dissemination of such information was very useful.

Mr. W. MARTIN WOOD said this was a subject on which he had long felt considerable interest. He thought one of Mr. Boulger's remarks, that the Chinese frontier was 12,000 miles altogether, of which 4,800 miles touched British territory, required to be somewhat qualified. It did not follow because the intervening powers or tribes between the Chinese territory proper and our own were not recognised in European diplomacy, that therefore the Chinese territory extended up to ours; there was a certain no man's land between, and this was none the less so, though China was able to send garrisons to Tibet. In speaking of Sikhim, it should be understood that half of it was of a different tenure from the other half, with which the Chinese were concerned. Again, it was said that one of the early Chinese expeditions obtained "incalculable" spoil from the banks of the Sanpu, which he thought was rather too strong a statement; at any rate, some estimate might be given. The amazing power exercised by the Chinese at such an immense distance from Peking was one of the most striking facts in the history of the world. In our own time we had seen in Kashgaria their power overturned for a time, and a Musulman dynasty arose, so complete that it sent envoys to Europe. He himself had seen the envoy Yakub Beg, who was a very capable man. He remembered asking him if he could point out the part of Asia from which the Usbeks originally came; and though Yakub could not read Captain Trench's map, which he showed him, he asked where Yarkund was, then on its being pointed out, he traced out where he considered was the birthplace of the Usbeks, beyond Tian-shan range far to the north-east. That would serve to indicate the intelligence of these people, and yet the new State, compact and efficient as it seemed, was utterly swept away by the Chinese. The re-cession of Kuldjah was another most remarkable instance of their power. Again, in the south-west they saw part of that same recrudescence which Mr. Boulger referred to, which swept through the whole of Jungaria; then the little kingdom of the Panthays in Yunnan was set up, which also sent envoys to Europe. But before they could get back again the whole State was wiped out. He did not know that there was any moral to be drawn, but it was a most remarkable fact, this tenacious, overmastering power of the Chinese. He agreed with Mr. Boulger that they would be strong enough to resist the Russian forces, but that they could not do so without better means of communication. It was a consideration of this, probably, which induced Gordon to advise them to remove the

capital further away from the sea, to Nankin. This paper, in various ways, brought before one the inconvenience and difficulty forced upon us by our coming directly in contact with the Chinese frontier; and the author seemed to favour the policy of being very patient, imitating the policy of the Chinese themselves, and putting off the evil day of drawing a definite line as long as possible. Mr. Michell expressed a different view, and he would not venture to judge between them; but if the former view were correct, why did we not only upset Theebaw but abolish the native dynasty of Burmah, and make ourselves the immediate neighbours and possible antagonists of the Chinese in that remote region, where they would have the advantage in every way? Some people had a very imperfect sympathy with the Mongolian character, but there were others who appreciated them highly, not only for their intellectual capacity, which was very great of its kind, but for their moral qualities. He feared that, as in other cases, there was often a wide gap between their faith, theory, or maxims, and their actual conduct; but, at the same time, there was much to admire about the Chinese, especially their non-aggressive character, though they were determined to hold their own. If we could convince them we wanted nothing more than was right and fair, we should probably get on with them much better than with the Muscovites.

Mr. C. E. D. BLACK thought it was very important to come to some understanding with China as to the boundary of Upper Burmah. One could not disguise the fact that an undefined boundary had often been the cause of misunderstanding, and the sooner it was settled the better would it be for both parties. Mr. Boulger said we should soon be knocking at the gates of Yunnan; but it was rather extraordinary, considering how much was said twenty years ago about making railways into south-west China, that these projects seemed to have so entirely died out. He remembered Captain Sprye's scheme and various others being brought forward, but now that the annexation of Upper Burma had brought us nearer than ever to South-West China, it was strange that one did not hear much about such projects. He should like to know what people thought of uniting the Indian railways with the Burmese, which, if accomplished, would no doubt lead to a great increase of trade.

Mr. W. S. SETON-KARR congratulated Mr. Boulger on the admirable historical sketch he had given, and especially on the calm tone with which he had treated the political questions which his researches had naturally forced upon him. He might make one slight criticism on what the reader of the paper said when comparing the English warlike operations against the Goorkhas with those of the Chinese, which he described as so successful. His own recollection of the Nepal war was

that our losses took place in taking walled forts, and in the end we certainly conquered and obtained a valuable province; but in the case of the Chinese one battle took place in a large open plain, when the Goorkhas were retreating in the face of a numerous army, and were probably more or less demoralised. Something was said about the diplomacy of China and Russia; he had never been in either country, but from what he had heard and read, he would rather treat with the Chinese diplomatists than Russians, especially with the affair of Pendjeh in his recollection. Mr. Boulger said that in a few years we should be knocking at the gates of Yunnan. He hoped we should knock with the moral pocket-handkerchief in our hands, and not with the cannon ball. The time was coming when China could no longer remain exclusively apart, but would have to contribute to the world's debate. We should facilitate this by all the means in our power, and if China would begin by laying down railways to our frontier, it would be time to consider whether it was right to pledge the English or Indian Exchequer for their extension.

The CHAIRMAN said—I rise chiefly with the object of asking you to join me in expressing the acknowledgments of this Society for the trouble which Mr. Boulger has taken in bringing before us so much valuable information as to China and her western frontiers. Speaking generally, there can be no doubt in the minds of those who have watched the relations between this country and China during the present century that there has been a great deal of suspicion and coldness on both sides, and a certain dislike to the idea of the boundaries of the two empires being in any way continuous. But it is evident that a beneficial change has now taken place in this respect. There has recently been, in short, an increase of confidence and cordiality which cannot but be advantageous to both sides, more especially as, notwithstanding efforts to the contrary, some 4,800 miles of the land-girdle of China, as we have been reminded by Mr. Boulger, now touch British Indian territory. For my own part, I am glad of this “march of the frontiers,” feeling that the more we see of each other the better friends we are likely to become, inasmuch as while China is content to safeguard her rights and to remain as she is, we have no real desire to encroach on our neighbours; and we have only done so, as in the case of Burmah, when compelled, after years of patient endurance, to put a stop to a state of things which had become dangerous and intolerable. It is evident, as matters stand, that while we are learning to move with caution combined with perfect openness in regard to the external relations of India, the Chinese Government are getting rid by degrees of that suspicion of our aims and objects that has made them slow and obstinate in past intercourse and negotiation. When once

this mutual feeling of trust and goodwill is firmly cemented, there can be no further doubt of the advantage to both empires of facility of intercourse and cordiality of relations. I venture to share Mr. Boulger's satisfaction that the Sikhim negotiations have been brought to a final termination. There never was any real doubt of our entire right over the suzerainty of Sikhim, but the recent Convention officially stamps this fact, and its conclusion should be regarded by all who are interested in the Indo-China question, not only as an evidence of the good will of the Chinese Government towards us, but as affording an opportunity to ourselves to assure China that we have no desire or intention to make Sikhim a “stalking horse” to Thibet; preferring, as Mr. Boulger had pointed out, the strong hand of China over that country, if she will but exercise it, in preference to the present rabble following and obstructionary tactics of the Llamas. We have, in past years, been anxious to establish trade relations between India and Thibet, and China has formally engaged to aid us in so doing; but after all, the value of that trade has been somewhat over-estimated, and we may all be confident that the Indian Government will take no steps in regard to it that can be at all objectionable to China. While on this subject, our thoughts wander back to the late Marquis Tseng and to Mr. Coleman Macaulay, both of whom were much interested, some few years ago, in this question. And we cannot but pay a passing tribute of regard to the memory of one of China's best and most far-seeing of statesmen, and to that also of a most able and devoted servant of the Indian Government. We deplore the loss to the world of these lamented men and we honour their memories. Mr. Boulger has referred in the course of his remarks to the convention between this country and China, relative to Burmah and Tibet, which was signed on the 24th of July, 1886, and to the possible delimitation of the frontier between Burmah and China by a special Boundary Commission. I agree with him in thinking that the natural progress of events will probably produce a simple and satisfactory solution of all the difficulties connected with this subject. The disturbed state of Burmah has hitherto done much to arrest any action in this direction, but when the time arrives for such action, I think we need have no fear of any complications arising in regard to it. I venture to agree in the general concluding remarks of the reader of the paper. China must no doubt wake up on the question of the general protection of her empire from active neighbours and enemies. But so far as England is concerned, I think that the Chinese Government need not trouble themselves much about us, except to second our efforts for increasing the facilities of trade and commerce between the two empires, by the construction of railways and the improvement of internal communications. With two such men as Sir John Walsham at Peking, and Sir Halliday

Macartney in London, we need not fear that this matter will be forgotten, or that every encouragement will not be given, as time goes on, to facilitate trade and intercourse between China and India.

Mr. HYDE CLARKE writes :—So many gentlemen were present connected with India and China that I deferred speaking, although I should have liked to give in a tribute to Mr. Boulger. The whole subject of our relations with China is of the greatest material and commercial interest, and has consequently much occupied us in the Indian Section. On one point it appeared to me Mr. Boulger has laid himself open to misconception, and that is the way in which he has referred to the Chinese reconquest of Yarkand and Kashgar. He intimated that they ought never to have taken that step, as they are now exposed far from their base to a powerful enemy. At the period of that event China did not know that Russia was to make so great an advance in Turkestan. China had been in danger, too, of our aiding Yakoob Beg, as many of us then wished, and she had reason enough for jealousy of England. It was, however, a matter of great moment for the prestige of China to recover her place in Turkestan, and undoubtedly that conquest did restore her prestige in Turkestan and also in Europe. To China it must be always a matter of importance to keep up her influence among the Altaic races, and, notwithstanding her repression of the Mussulmans, she stands better with them and the Altaic races than does Russia. The latter, which most successfully governed alien races, has abandoned her old policy of preserving their institutions, and has adopted russification. One hundred years ago, in consequence of the American war, the prestige of England in Europe was at low ebb, and among the measures adopted by William Pitt to restore it was his firm resistance to the encroachments of the Spaniards at Nootka Sound, on the American Continent. By his firmness in October, 1790, the treaty of Madrid was signed, by which Spain gave satisfaction, and it is not unworthy of remark that in this hundredth anniversary, which we hope to celebrate, we profit by the possession of British Colombia. So too, similarly, so far as China is concerned, the reconquest of Kashgar has rehabilitated her. If Mr. Boulger's policy is carried into effect, and railway communication is provided, he has less reason to fear for Turkestan. In reference to the power of China to contend with Russia, we are apt to undervalue her chances ethnologically. We lay it down as a contest of Mongolians with Aryans, having chosen to classify the Russian populations as Aryan and Indo-European, on account of the ruling language. How far this can fully be done is very doubtful. The general evidence of men of science is unfavourable to the allotment of an Aryan status to them, but rather to regard them as largely Ugrian in origin. When our kinsmen, the Warings or Varini, established the Russia empire, they evidently looked

on the population as chiefly Ugrian, and so they are described by the earliest chronicler, Nestor. The spread of the Slavonian language subsequently took place among the Ugrian populations. These are incidents to be carefully taken into account in comparing the characteristics of the two great empires.

MR. GEORGE CRAWSHAY writes :—The paper is full of valuable information, and contains important suggestions which will, I trust, receive due attention at Peking; but what has chiefly impressed me is the just appreciation on the part of the Chairman, the reader of the paper, and every one of the speakers, of the greatness of China. I gather from this that the opinion which was so prevalent at the time when we were doing them wrong that the Chinese were "barbarians," is now finally dispelled. This is a delusion which I never shared, but which was, at the time I refer to, nearly universal in this country. The wise policy of the Chinese Government in sending to England representatives, whose presence among us we found to be so great an advantage, has contributed greatly to this happy result; but study alone ought to be sufficient to convince us that in regulating our intercourse with China we have to do with an empire more majestic than any in existence. Of all the great empires of antiquity, the Chinese Empire is the only one that survives; nor is there any sign that it will not continue to exist as long as any of the more recently organised communities that rule the habitable world. Amidst all vicissitudes China has clung fast to the principle of reverence for parental authority, and as there is no sign of any weakening of this principle in China, so I venture to affirm there is no sign of her decay. Nevertheless it cannot be denied that, as Mr. Boulger has shown, China is exposed to danger from without, and that to meet that danger, and, at any rate, prevent a period of trouble and anxiety, and possibly of loss, she had better at once take measures to improve her internal communications, so as to be able to meet her enemy in the gate. It occurred to me, in listening to Mr. Boulger, that he was addressing his observations rather to the Chinese Government than to an English audience. I venture to say to the Chinese Government take to heart what your friend Mr. Boulger has said.

TWENTY-FIRST ORDINARY MEETING.

Wednesday, May 14th, 1890; A. B. W. KENNEDY, F.R.S., Member of the Council, in the chair.

The following candidates were proposed for election as members of the Society :—

Eaton, Edmund Octavius, B.A., B.Sc., 27, Martin's-lane, Cannon-street, E. C.