

art of reigning should have been uninterrupted transmitted through a succession of four princes for upwards of a century and a half' would be very difficult to account for, if we did not constantly bear in mind a fundamental principle of the state. All power and authority in China derive solely from the sovereign, and they are not only distributed by him in his life time, but attest their origin after his decease. The appointment of his successor is exclusively vested in him. Without regard to primogeniture, without the fondness of a parent, without the partiality of a friend, he acts on this occasion as the father of the state, and selects the person of his family, whom he judges the most worthy to replace him. Every choice of this kind as yet made has been unexceptionably fortunate. K'ang-hsi proved as great a prince as his father; Yung-cheng was inferior to neither, and Ch'ien-lung surpasses the glory of all his predecessors. Who is the Atlas destined by him to bear this load of empire when he dies is yet unknown, but on whatever shoulders it may fall, another transmigration of Fo-hi into the next emperor will be necessary to enable him to sustain it on its present balance; for though within the serene atmosphere of the Court everything wears the face of happiness and applause, yet it cannot be concealed that the nation in general is far from being easy or contented. The frequent insurrections in the distant provinces are unambiguous oracles of the real sentiments and temper of the people. The predominance of the Tartars and the Emperor's partiality to them are the common subject of conversation among the Chinese whenever they meet together in private, and the constant theme of their discourse. There are certain mysterious societies in every province who are known to be disaffected, and although narrowly watched by the government, they find means to elude its vigilance and often to hold secret assemblies, where they revive the memory of ancient glory and independence, brood over recent injuries, and mediate revenge.

Though much circumscribed in the course of our travels we had opportunities of observation seldom afforded to others, and not neglected by us. The genuine character of the inhabitants, and the effects resulting from the refined polity and principles of the government, which are meant to restrain and direct them, naturally claimed my particular attention and inquiry. In my researches I often perceived the ground to be hollow under a vast superstructure, and in trees of the most stately and flourishing appearance I discovered symptoms of speedy decay, whilst humbler plants were held by vigorous roots, and mean edifices rested on steady foundations. The Chinese are now recovering from the blows that had stunned them; they are awaking from the political stupor they had been thrown into by the Tartar impression, and begin to feel their native energies revive. A slight collision might elicit fire from the flint, and spread flames of revolt from one extremity of China to the other. In fact the volume of the empire is now grown too ponderous and disproportionate to be easily grasped by a single hand, be it ever so capacious and strong. It is possible, notwithstanding, that the momentum impressed on the machine by the vigor

and wisdom of the present Emperor may keep it steady and entire in its orbit for a considerable time longer; but I should not be surprised if its dislocation or dismemberment were to take place before my own dissolution. Whenever such an event happens, it will probably be attended with all the horrors and atrocities from which they were delivered by the Tartar domination; but men are apt to lose the memory of former evils under the pressure of immediate suffering; and what can be expected from those who are corrupted by servitude, exasperated by despotism and maddened by despair? Their condition, however, might then become still worse than it can be at present. Like the slave who fled into the desert from his chains and was devoured by the lion, they may draw down upon themselves oppression and destruction by their very effort to avoid them, may be poisoned by their own remedies and be buried themselves in the graves which they dug for others. A sudden transition from slavery to freedom, from dependence to authority, can seldom be borne with moderation or discretion. Every change in the state of man ought to be gentle and gradual, otherwise it is commonly dangerous to himself and intolerable to others. A due preparation may be as necessary for liberty as for inoculation of the smallpox which, like liberty, is future health but without due preparation is almost certain destruction. Thus then the Chinese, if not led to emancipation by degrees, but let loose on a burst of enthusiasm would probably fall into all the excesses of folly, suffer all the paroxysms of madness, and be found as unfit for the enjoyment of freedom as the French and the negroes.

6.4 AND 6.5 QIANLONG'S REJECTION OF MACARTNEY'S DEMANDS: TWO EDICTS

Qianlong's famous edicts to George III were the Qing government's response to the proposals carried to Peking by Lord George Macartney. In 1793, Qianlong ruled territories many times the size of Great Britain; indeed, China with its dependencies was the largest unified empire in the world and had been undefeated in all of the wars it had fought with its neighbors since the seventeenth century. Each year, in adherence to a schedule established by the Board of Rites, tribute emissaries from Burma, Korea, Vietnam, Japan, and other territories trekked to Peking to pay their respects to the Chinese throne. In return for obeisance and tribute, the Qing government condescended to allow these far-flung "vassal states" (*fanguo*) to enjoy trade with China and extended protection to their monarchies. Scholars in these countries learned Chinese and memorized the Chinese classics, and in Korea, Vietnam, and Japan, the lessons of Chinese political and institutional history were assiduously studied and imitated.

The Forbidden City was the center of a political world in which loyalties had been beaten into place the by hard-riding Manchu generals of the seventeenth century. But the historical roots of this polity stretched back some two millennia.

It is, thus, little wonder that the Qianlong emperor regarded Lord Macartney as little more than a self-important tributary emissary and rejected all of his requests without discussion or debate. In the edicts that follow, Macartney's charge from Henry Dundas was refused practically article by article. On his own turf, the Chinese emperor was used to defining things in a peremptory way but also with regard to the precedents built into the Qing scheme of foreign affairs. Qianlong's logic in these edicts was solidly founded on history, power, and a belief that a tiny maritime state thousands of *li* from China was not a force to be reckoned with.

6.4 *The First Edict, September 1793*

You, O King, live beyond the confines of many seas, nevertheless, impelled by your humble desire to partake of the benefits of our civilization, you have dispatched a mission respectfully bearing your memorial. Your Envoy has crossed the seas and paid his respects at my Court on the anniversary of my birthday. To show your devotion, you have also sent offerings of your country's produce.

I have perused your memorial: the earnest terms in which it is couched reveal a respectful humility on your part, which is highly praiseworthy. In consideration of the fact that your Ambassador and his deputy have come a long way with your memorial and tribute, I have shown them high favour and have allowed them to be introduced into my presence. To manifest my indulgence, I have entertained them at a banquet and made them numerous gifts. I have also caused presents to be forwarded to the Naval Commander and six hundred of his officers and men, although they did not come to Peking, so that they too may share in my all-embracing kindness.

As to your entreaty to send one of your nationals to be accredited to my Celestial Court and to be in control of your country's trade with China, this request is contrary to all usage of my dynasty and cannot possibly be entertained. It is true that Europeans, in the service of the dynasty, have been permitted to live at Peking, but they are compelled to adopt Chinese dress, they are strictly confined to their own precincts and are never permitted to return home. You are presumably familiar with our dynastic regulations. Your proposed Envoy to my Court could not be placed in a position similar to that of European officials in Peking who are forbidden to leave China, nor could he, on the other hand, be allowed liberty of movement and the privilege of corresponding with his own country; so that you would gain nothing by his residence in our midst.

Moreover, Our Celestial dynasty possesses vast territories, and tribute missions from the dependencies are provided for by the Department for Tributary States, which ministers to their wants and exercises strict control over their movements. It would be quite impossible to leave them to their own devices. Supposing that your Envoy should come to our Court, his language and national dress differ from that of our people, and there would be no place in which he might reside. It may be suggested that he might imitate the Europeans permanently resident in Peking and adopt the dress and customs of China, but, it has never been our dynasty's wish to force people to do things unseemly and inconvenient. Besides, supposing I sent an Ambassador to reside in your country, how could you possibly make for him the requisite arrangements? Europe consists of many other nations besides your own: if each and all demanded to be represented at our Court, how could we possibly consent? The thing is utterly impracticable. How can our dynasty alter its whole procedure and regulations, established for more than a century, in order to meet your individual views? If it be said that your object is to exercise control over your country's trade, your nationals have had full liberty to trade at Canton for many a year, and have received the greatest consideration at our hands. Missions have been sent by Portugal and Italy, preferring similar requests. The Throne appreciated their sincerity and loaded them with favours, besides authorizing measures to facilitate their trade with China. You are no doubt aware that, when my Canton merchant, Wu Chao-p'ing, was in debt to the foreign ships, I made the Viceroy advance the monies due, out of the provincial treasury, and ordered him to punish the culprit severely. Why then should foreign nations advance this utterly unreasonable request to be represented at my Court? Peking is nearly 10,000 li from Canton, and at such a distance what possible control could any British representative exercise?

If you assert that your reverence for Our Celestial dynasty fills you with a desire to acquire our civilization, our ceremonies and code laws differ so completely from your own that, even if your Envoy were able to acquire the rudiments of our civilization, you could not possibly transplant our manners and customs to your alien soil. Therefore, however adept the Envoy might become, nothing would be gained thereby.

Swaying the wide world, I have but one aim in view, namely, to maintain a perfect governance and to fulfil the duties of the State; strange and costly objects do not interest me. If I have commanded that the tribute offerings sent by you, O King, are to be accepted, this was solely in consideration for the spirit which prompted you to dispatch them from afar. Our dynasty's majestic virtue has penetrated unto every country under Heaven, and Kings of nations have offered their costly tribute by land and sea. As your Ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufacturers. This then is my answer to your request to appoint a representative at my Court, a request contrary to our dynastic usage,

which would only result in inconvenience to yourself. I have expounded my wishes in detail and have commanded your tribute Envoys to leave in peace on their homeward journey. It behooves you, O King, to respect my sentiments and to display even greater devotion an secure peace and prosperity for your country hereafter. Besides making gifts (of which I enclose a list) to each member of your Mission, I confer upon you, O King, valuable presents in excess of the number usually bestowed on such occasions, including silks and curios—a list of which is likewise enclosed. Do you reverently receive them and take note of my tender goodwill towards you! A special mandate.

6.5 The Second Edict, September 1793

You, O King from afar, have yearned after the blessings of our civilization, and in your eagerness to come into touch with our converting influence have sent an Embassy across the sea bearing a memorial. I have already taken note of your respectful spirit of submission, have treated your mission with extreme favour and loaded it with gifts, besides issuing a mandate to you, O King, and honouring you with the bestowal of valuable presents. Thus has my indulgence been manifested.

Yesterday your Ambassador petitioned my Ministers to memorialize me regarding your trade with China, but his proposal is not consistent with our dynastic usage and cannot be entertained. Hitherto, all European nations, including your own country's barbarian merchants, have carried on their trade with Our Celestial Empire at Canton. Such has been the procedure for many years, although Our Celestial Empire possesses all things in prolific abundance and lacks no product within its own borders. There was therefore no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians in exchange for our own produce. But as the tea, silk, and porcelain which the Celestial Empire produces are absolute necessities to European nations and to yourselves, we have permitted, as a signal mark of favour, that foreign *hongs* [merchant guilds] should be established at Canton, so that your wants might be supplied and your country thus participate in our beneficence. But your Ambassador has now put forward new requests which completely fail to recognize the Throne's principle to "treat strangers from afar with indulgence," and to exercise a pacifying control over barbarian tribes, the world over. Moreover, our dynasty, swaying the myriad races of the globe, extends the same benevolence towards all. Your England is not the only nation trading at Canton. If other nations, following your bad example, wrongfully importune my ear with further impudently requests, how will it be possible for me to treat them with easy indulgence? Nevertheless, I do not forget the lonely remoteness of your island, cut off from the world by intervening wastes of sea, nor do I overlook your excusable ignorance of the usages of Our Celestial Empire. I have consequently commanded my Ministers

of the mission. But I have doubts that, after your Envoy's return he may fail to acquaint you with my view in detail or that he may be lacking in lucidity, so that I shall now proceed to take your requests *seriatim* and to issue my mandate on each question separately. In this way you will, I trust, comprehend my meaning.

1. Your Ambassador requests facilities for ships of your nation to call at Ningpo, Chusan, Tientsin and other places for purposes of trade. Until now trade with European nations has always been conducted at Macao, where the foreign *hongs* are established to store and sell foreign merchandise. Your nation has obediently complied with this regulation for years past without raising any objection. In none of the other ports named have *hongs* been established, so that even if your vessels were to proceed thither, they would have no means of disposing of their cargoes. Furthermore, no interpreters are available, so you would have no means of explaining your wants, and nothing but general inconvenience would result. For the future, as in the past, I decree that your request is refused and that the trade shall be limited to Macao.
2. The request that your merchants may establish a repository in the capital of my Empire for the storing and sale of your produce, in accordance with the precedent granted to Russia, is even more impracticable than the last. My capital is the hub and centre about which all quarters of the globe revolve. Its ordinances are most august and its laws are strict in the extreme. The subjects of our dependencies have never been allowed to open places of business in Peking. Foreign trade has hitherto been conducted at Macao, because it is conveniently near to the sea, and therefore an important gathering place for the ships of all nations sailing to and fro. If warehouses were established in Peking, the remoteness of your country lying far to the northwest of any capital, would render transport extremely difficult. Before Kiakhta was opened, the Russians were permitted to trade at Peking, but the accommodation furnished them was only temporary. As soon as Kiakhta was available, they were compelled to withdraw from Peking, which has been closed to their trade these many years. Their frontier trade at Kiakhta is equivalent to your trade at Macao. Possessing facilities at the latter place, you now ask for further privileges at Peking, although our dynasty observes the severest restrictions respecting the admission of foreigners within its boundaries, and has never permitted the subjects of dependencies to cross the Empire's barriers and settle at will amongst the Chinese people. This request is also refused.
3. Your request for a small island near Chusan, where your merchants may reside and goods be warehoused, arises from your desire to develop trade. As there are neither foreign *hongs* nor interpreters in or near Chusan, where none of your ships have ever called, such an island would be utterly

useless for your purposes. Every inch of the territory of our Empire is marked on the map and the strictest vigilance is exercised over it all: even tiny islets and far-lying sandbanks are clearly defined as part of the provinces to which they belong. Consider, moreover, that England is not the only barbarian land which wishes to establish relations with our civilization and trade with our Empire: supposing that other nations were all to imitate your evil example and beseech me to present them each and all with a site for trading purposes, how could I possibly comply. This also is a flagrant infringement of the usage of my Empire and cannot possibly be entertained.

4. The next request, for a small site in the vicinity of Canton city, where your barbarian merchants may lodge or, alternatively, that there be no longer any restrictions over their movements at Macao, has arisen from the following causes. Hitherto, the barbarian merchants of Europe have had a definite locality assigned to them at Macao for residence and trade, and have been forbidden to encroach an inch beyond the limits assigned to that locality. Barbarian merchants having business with the *hongs* have never been allowed to enter the city of Canton; by these measures, disputes between Chinese and barbarians are prevented, and a firm barrier is raised between my subjects and those of other nations. The present request is quite contrary to precedent; furthermore, European nations have been trading with Canton for a number of years and, as they make large profits, the number of traders is constantly increasing. How could it be possible to grant such a site to each country? The merchants of the foreign *hongs* are responsible to the local officials for the proceedings of barbarian merchants and they carry out periodical inspections. If these restrictions were withdrawn, friction would inevitably occur between the Chinese and your barbarian subjects, and the results would militate against the benevolent regard that I feel towards you. From every point of view, therefore, it is best that the regulations now in force should continue unchanged.
5. Regarding your request for remission or reduction of duties on merchandise discharged by your British barbarian merchants at Macao and distributed throughout the interior, there is a regular tariff in force for barbarian merchants' goods, which applies equally to all European nations. It would be as wrong to increase the duty imposed on your nation's merchandise on the ground that the bulk of foreign trade is in your hands, as to make an exception in your case in the shape of specially reduced duties. In the future, duties shall be levied equitably without discrimination between your nation and any other, and, in order to manifest my regard, your barbarian merchants shall continue to be shown every consideration at Macao.
6. As to your request that your ships shall pay the duties leviable by tariff, there are regular rules in force at the Canton Custom house respecting the

amounts payable, and since I have refused your request to be allowed to trade at other ports, this duty will naturally continue to be paid at Canton as heretofore.

7. Regarding your nation's worship of the Lord of Heaven, it is the same religion as that of other European nations. Ever since the beginning of history, sage Emperors and wise rulers have bestowed on China a moral system and inculcated a code, which from time immemorial has been religiously observed by the myriads of my subjects. There has been no hankering after heterodox doctrines. Even the European [missionary] officials in my capital are forbidden to hold intercourse with Chinese subjects; they are restricted within the limits of their appointed residences, and may not go about propagating their religion. The distinction between Chinese and barbarian is most strict, and your Ambassador's request that barbarians shall be given full liberty to disseminate their religion is utterly unreasonable.

It may be, O King, that the above proposals have been wantonly made by your Ambassador on his own responsibility or peradventure you yourself are ignorant of our dynastic regulations and had no intention of transgressing them when you expressed these wild ideas and hopes. I have ever shown the greatest condescension to the tribute missions of all States which sincerely yearn after the blessings of civilization, so as to manifest my kindly indulgence. I have even gone out of my way to grant any requests which were in any way consistent with Chinese usage. Above all, upon you, who live in a remote and inaccessible region, far across the spaces of ocean, but who have shown your submissive loyalty by sending this tribute mission, I have heaped benefits far in excess of those accorded to other nations. But the demands presented by your Embassy are not only a contravention of dynastic tradition, but would be utterly unproductive of good result to yourself, besides being quite impracticable. I have accordingly stated the facts to you in detail, and it is your bounden duty reverently to appreciate my feelings and to obey these instructions henceforward for all time, so that you may enjoy the blessings of perpetual peace. If, after the receipt of this explicit decree, you lightly give ear to the representation of your subordinates and allow your barbarian merchants to proceed to Chekiang and Tientsin, with the object of landing and trading there, the ordinances of my Celestial Empire are strict in the extreme, and the local officials, both civil and military, are bound reverently to obey the law of the land. Should your vessels touch shore, your merchants will assuredly never be permitted to land or to reside there, but will be subject to instant expulsion. In that event your barbarian merchants will have had a long journey for nothing. Do not say that you were not warned in due time! Tremblingly obey and show no negligence! A special mandate!

The First Clash with the West

7.1-7.4 MEMORIALS, EDICTS, AND LAWS ON OPIUM

After the abolition of the British East India Company's monopoly in the China trade in 1834, the amount of Indian opium reaching Canton increased dramatically. In 1835, over sixteen thousand chests of Bengali and Malwa opium with a dollar value of \$17,388,622 were imported illegally into China. The loss of silver specie paid for the drug was already a source of deep concern for the Qing court.¹ Also distressful from Peking's perspective was the failure of local authorities to quell the booming underground trade or halt the use of opium. Since each chest of opium weighed one hundred and seventy pounds and the normal user smoked only a tiny quantity of the drug, the volume of the trade was clearly already scaled to meet the needs of a huge population of habitual and casual users. The throne was also alarmed by the prospect of dealing with a useless and narcoticsized population dependent on foreign merchants for their "fix."

Economic and social dilemmas raised by the opium trade prompted a number of Qing officials to memorialize the throne on this question. What ensued was a carefully reasoned examination of China's existing opium laws. Some memorialists believed that opium should be legalized and paid for with trading goods. While China developed domestic sources for the drug to diminish reliance on imports, European traders could at least be forced to pay duty on shipments from abroad. Other memorialists advo-

cated a "war on drugs" with strict prohibitions designed to dry up the supply of the drug and discourage its domestic marketing and use.

One advocate of legalization was Xu Naiji (1777-1839), an 1809 *jinci* from Renhe County, Zhejiang, who had served as circuit intendant (*daotai*) at Canton. In the spring of 1836, while he was serving as a sub-director of the Court of Sacrificial Worship in Peking, Xu addressed his ideas to the throne in a memorial that remains controversial even today. In the memorial, reproduced below, he admitted the evil effects of opium but argued for a process of legalization whose end result would have been the elimination of the silver outflow and the dominant foreign role in the trade. The Daoguang emperor seemed to lean toward Xu's proposal but remanded it with a terse edict to Deng Tingzhen, the governor of Guangdong and Guangxi, for his consideration.

In the fall of 1836, however, other memorialists, among them Zhu Zun (1791-1862), addressed appeals to Daoguang for even tighter bans on the opium trade. Zhu, a vice-president of the Board of Rites and sub-chancellor of the Grand Secretariat, stressed the ethical importance of good prohibitory laws as a means of controlling clear social evils. His memorial, also reproduced below, was, likewise, remanded by Daoguang to Governor Deng for his perusal, but this time with an edict that indicated that the emperor was leaning toward an opium ban. Shortly, the emperor ordered Deng to devise plans for a stricter ban on opium, setting the stage for the confrontation between British traders and Commissioner Lin Zexu that erupted three years later in 1839.

7.1 *Memorial on Legalizing Opium, June 10, 1836*

Xu Naiji, sub-director of the sacrificial court, presents the following memorial in regard to opium, to show that the more severe the interdicts against it are made, the more widely do the evils arising therefrom spread; and that it is right urgently to request, that a change be made in the arrangements respecting it, to which end he earnestly entreats his sacred majesty to cast a glance hereon, and to issue secret orders for a faithful investigation of the subject.

I would humbly represent that opium was originally ranked among medicines; its qualities are stimulant; it also checks excessive secretions; and prevents the evil effects of noxious vapors. . . . When any one is long habituated to inhaling it, it becomes necessary to resort to it at regular intervals, and the habit of using it, being inveterate, is destructive of time, injurious to property, and yet dear to one even as life. Of those who use it to great excess, the breath becomes feeble, the body wasted, the face sallow, the teeth black: the individuals themselves clearly see the evil effects of it, yet cannot refrain from it. It is indeed

1. Chang Hsin-pao, *Commissioner Lin and the Opium War* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970), p. 223.

indispensably necessary to enact severe prohibitions in order to eradicate so vile practice.

On inquiry I find that there are three kinds of opium: one is called company's; the outer covering of it is black, and hence it is also called 'black earth'; it comes from Bengal; a second kind is called 'white-skin', and it comes from Bombay; the third kind is called 'red skin', and comes from Madras.² These are places which belong to England.

In Qianlong's reign, as well as previously, opium was inserted in the tariff of Canton as a medicine, subject to a duty of three taels per hundred catties, with an additional charge of two taels four mace and five candareens³ under the name of charge per package. After this, it was prohibited. In the first year of Jiaqing, those found guilty of smoking opium were subject only to the punishment of the pillory and bamboo. Now they have, in the course of time, become liable to the severest penalties, transportation in various degrees, and death after the ordinary continuance in prison. Yet the smokers of the drug have increased in number, and the practice has spread throughout almost the whole empire. In Qianlong's time and the previous reigns, when opium passed through the custom-house and paid a duty, it was given into the hands of the foreign merchants in exchange for tea and other goods. But at the present time, the prohibitions of government being most strict against it, none dare openly exchange goods for it; all secretly purchase it with money. In the reign of Jiaqing there arrived, it may be, some hundred chests annually. The number has now increased to upwards of 20,000 chests, containing each a hundred catties. The 'black earth', which is the best, sells for about 800 dollars, foreign money, per chest; the 'white-skin', which is next in quality, for about 600 dollars; and the last, or 'red-skin', for about 400 dollars. The total quantity sold during the year amounts in value to ten and some odd millions of dollars; so that, in reckoning the dollar at seven mace, standard weight of silver, the annual waste of money somewhat exceeds ten million of taels. Formerly, the barbarian merchants brought foreign money to China; which, being paid in exchange for goods, was a source of pecuniary advantage to the people of all the sea board provinces. But latterly, the barbarian merchants have clandestinely sold opium for money; which has rendered it unnecessary for them to import foreign silver. Thus foreign money has been going out of the country, while none comes into it.

During two centuries, the government has maintained peace, and by fostering the people, has greatly promoted the increase of wealth and opulence among them. With you we witness the economical rule of our august sovereign,

2. Xu refers to Turkey.

3. Chinese money of account equalling 10 copper cash or 6 grains troy. "Tael": standard weight of silver and trade name for Chinese ounce with a varied value as measured against copper cash during the Qing. "Mace": $\frac{1}{10}$ of a tael.

an example to the whole empire. Right it is that yellow gold be common as the dust.

Always in times past, a tael of pure silver exchanged for nearly about 1000 coined cash, but of late years the same sum has borne the value of 1200 or 1300 cash: thus the price of silver rises but does not fall. In the salt agency, the price of salt is paid in cash, while the duties are paid in silver: now the salt merchants have all become involved, and the existing state of the salt trade in every province is abject in the extreme. How is this occasioned but by the unnoticed oozing out of silver? If the easily exhaustible stores of the central spring go to fill up the wide and fathomless gulf of the outer seas, gradually pouring themselves out from day to day, and from month to month, we shall shortly be reduced to a state of which I cannot bear to speak.

It is proposed entirely to cut off the foreign trade, and thus to remove the root to dam up the source of the evil? The celestial dynasty would not, indeed, hesitate to relinquish the few millions of duties arising therefrom. But all the nations of the West have had a general market open to their ships for upwards of a thousand years; while the dealers in opium are the English alone; it would be wrong, for the sake of cutting off the English trade, to cut off that of all the other nations. Besides, the hundreds of thousands of people living on the sea-coast depend wholly on trade for their livelihood, and how are they to be disposed of? Moreover, the barbarian ships, being on the high seas, can repair to any island that may be selected as an entrepot, and the native sea-going vessels can meet them there; it is then impossible to cut off the trade. Of late years, the foreign vessels have visited all the ports of Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangnan, Shandong, even to Tianjin and Manchuria, for the purpose of selling opium. And although at once expelled by the local authorities, yet it is reported that the quantity sold by them was not small. Thus it appears that, though the commerce of Canton should be cut off, yet it will not be possible to prevent the clandestine introduction of merchandise. . . .

Since then, it will not answer to close our ports against [all trade], and since the laws issued against opium are quite inoperative, the only method left is to revert to the former system, to permit the barbarian merchants to import opium paying duty thereon as a medicine, and to require that, after having passed the custom-house, it shall be delivered to the hong merchants only in exchange for merchandise, and that no money be paid for it. The barbarians finding that the amount of duties to be paid on it is less than what is now spent in bribes, will also gladly comply therein. Foreign money should be placed on the same footing with sycee silver [lumps of fine uncoined silver], and the exportation of it should be equally prohibited. Offenders when caught should be punished by the entire destruction of the opium they have, and the confiscation of the money that be found with them. With regard to officers, civil and military, and to the scholars and common soldiers, the first are called on to fulfill the duties of their rank and attend to the public good; the others, to cultivate their talents and become

it for public usefulness. None of these, therefore, must be permitted to contract practice so bad, or to walk in a path which will lead only to the utter waste of their time and destruction of their property. If, however, the laws enacted against the practice be made too severe, the result will be mutual connivance. It becomes my duty, then, to request that it be enacted, that any officer, scholar, or soldier, found guilty of secretly smoking opium, shall be immediately dismissed from public employ, without being made liable to any other penalty. In his way, lenity will become in fact severity towards them. And further, that, if any superior or general officer be found guilty of knowingly and willfully conniving at the practice among his subordinates, such officer shall be subjected to a court of inquiry. Lastly, that no regard be paid to the purchase and use of opium on the part of the people generally. . . .

Prostrate I beg my august sovereign to give secret directions to the governor and lieutenant-governor of Guangdong, together with the superintendent of maritime customs, that they faithfully investigate the character of the above statements, and that, if they find them really correct, they speedily prepare a list of regulations adapted to a change in the system, and present the same for your majesty's final decision. Perchance this may be found adequate to stop further oozing out of money, and to replenish the national resources. With inexpressible awe and trembling fear I reverently present this memorial and await your majesty's commands.

7.2 Memorial on Banning Opium, October 1836

Zhu Zun, member of the council and of the Board of Rites, kneeling, presents the following memorial, wherein he suggests the propriety of increasing the severity of certain prohibitory enactments, with a view to maintain the dignity of the laws, and to remove a great evil from among the people: to this end he respectfully states his views on the subject, and earnestly entreats his sacred majesty to cast a glance thereon.

I would humbly point out, that wherever an evil exists it should be at once removed; and that the laws should never be suffered to fall into desuetude. Our government, having received from heaven, the gift of peace, has transmitted it for two centuries: this has afforded opportunity for the removal of evils from among the people. For governing the central nation, and for holding in submission all the surrounding barbarians, rules exist perfect in their nature, and well-fitted to attain their end. And in regard to opium, special enactments were passed for the prohibitions of its use in the first year of Jiaqing [1796]; and since then, memorials presented at various successive periods, have given rise to additional prohibitions, all which have been inserted in the code and the several tariffs. The laws, then, relating thereto are not wanting in severity; but there are those in office who, for want of energy, fail to carry them into execution.

Hence the people's minds gradually become callous; and base desires, springing up among them, increase day by day and month by month, till their rank luxuriance has spread over the whole empire. These noisome weeds, having been long neglected, it has become impossible to eradicate. And those to whom this duty is entrusted are, as if handbound, wholly at a loss what to do.

When the foreign ships convey opium to the coast, it is impossible for them to sell it by retail. Hence there are at Canton, in the provincial city, brokers, named 'melters.' These engage money-changers to arrange the price with the foreigners, and to obtain orders for them; with which orders they proceed to the receiving ships, and there the vile drug is delivered to them. This part of the transaction is notorious, and the actors in it are easily discoverable. The boats which carry the drug and which are called 'fast-crabs' and 'scrambling-dragons,' are all well furnished with guns and other weapons, and ply their oars as swiftly as though they were wings. Their crews have all the over-bearing assumption and audacity of pirates. Shall such men be suffered to navigate the surrounding seas according to their own will? And shall such conduct be passed over without investigation? . . .

It is said that the opium should be admitted, subject to a duty, the importers being required to give it into the hands of the hong merchants, in barter only for merchandise, without being allowed to sell it for money. And this is proposed as a means of preventing money from secretly oozing out of the country. But the English, by whom opium is sold, have been driven out to Lintin [a small island in the Pearl River estuary] so long since as the first year of Daoguang [1821], when the then governor of Guangdong and Guangxi discovered and punished the warehousemen of opium: so long have they been expelled, nor have they ever since imported it into Macao. Having once suppressed the trade and driven them away, shall we now again call upon them and invite them to return? This would be, indeed, a derogation from the true dignity of government. As to the proposition to give tea in exchange, and entirely to prohibit the exportation of even *foreign* silver I apprehend that, if the tea should not be found sufficient, money will still be given in exchange for the drug. Besides, if it is in our power to prevent the extortion of dollars, why not also to prevent the importation of opium? And if we can but prevent the importation of opium, the exportation of dollars will then cease of itself, and the two offenses will both at once be stopped. Moreover, is it not better, by continuing the old enactments, to find even a partial remedy for the evil, than by a change of the laws to increase the importation still further? As to levying a duty of opium, the thing sounds so awkwardly, and reads so unbecomingly, that such a duty ought sorely not to be levied.

Again, it is said that the prohibitions against the planting of the poppy by natives should be relaxed; and that the direct consequences will be, daily diminution of the profits of foreigners, and in course of time the entire cessation of the trade without the aid of prohibitions. Is it, then, forgotten that it is natural

to the common people to prize things heard of only by the ear and to undervalue those which are before their eyes,—to pass by those things which are near at hand, and to seek after those which are afar off—and, though they have a thing in their own land, yet to esteem more highly such as comes to them from beyond the seas? Thus, in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong, they will not quietly be guided by the laws of the empire, but must needs make use of foreign money: and this foreign money, though of an inferior standard, is nevertheless exchanged by them at a higher rate than the native sycee silver, which is pure. And although money is cast in China after exactly the same pattern, under the names of Jiangsu pieces, Fujian pieces, and native or Canton pieces, yet this money has not been able to gain currency among the people. Thus, also, the silk and cotton goods of China are not sufficient in quantity; and yet the broadcloths, and comlets, and cotton goods of the barbarians from beyond the place of the empire are in constant request. Taking men generally the minds of all are equally unenlightened in this respect, so that all men prize what is strange, and undervalue whatever is in ordinary use.

From Fujian, Guangdong, Zhejiang, Shandong, Yunnan, and Guizhou, memorials have been presented by the censors and other officers, requesting that prohibitions should be enacted against the cultivation of the poppy, and against the preparation of opium; but while nominally prohibited, the cultivation of it has not been really stopped in those places. Of any of those provinces, except Yunnan, I do not presume to speak; but of that portion of the country I have it in any power to say, that the poppy is cultivated all over the hills and the open campaign, and that the quantity of opium annually produced there cannot be less than several thousand chests. And yet we do not see any diminution in the quantity of silver exported as compared with any previous period; while, on the other hand, the lack of the metal in Yunnan is double in degree to what it formerly was. To what cause is this to be ascribed? To what but that the consumers of the drug are very many, and that those who are choice and dainty, with regard to its quality prefer always the foreign article?

Those of your majesty's advisers who compare the drug to the dried leaf of the tobacco plant are in error. The tobacco leaf does not destroy the human constitution. The profit too arising from the sale of tobacco is small, while that arising from opium is large. Besides, tobacco may be cultivated on bare and barren ground, while the poppy needs a rich and fertile soil. If all the rich and fertile ground be used for planting the poppy; and if the people, hoping for a large profit therefrom, madly engage in its cultivation; where will flax and the mulberry tree be cultivated, or wheat and rye be planted? To draw off in this way the waters of the great fountain, requisite for the production of goods and raiment, and to lavish them upon the root whence calamity and disaster spring forth, is an error which may be compared to that of a physician, who, when treating a mere external disease, should drive it inwards to the heart and centre of the body. It may in such a case be found impossible even to preserve life.

And shall the fine fields of Ciungdong, that produce their three crops every year, be given up for the cultivation of this noxious weed—those fields in comparison with which the unequal soil of all other parts of the empire is not even to be mentioned?

To sum up the matter—the wide-spreading and baneful influence of opium, when regarded simply as injurious to property, is of inferior importance; but when regarded as hurtful to the people, it demands most anxious consideration: for in the *people* lies the very foundation of the empire. Property, it is true, is that on which the subsistence of the people depends. Yet a deficiency of it may be supplied, and an impoverished people improved; whereas it is beyond the power of any artificial means to save a people enervated by luxury. In the history of Formosa we find the following passage: "Opium was first produced in Kaotsin [?], which by some is said to be the same as Kalapa [or Batavia]. The natives of this place were at the first sprightly and active, and being good soldiers, were always successful in battle. But the people called Hongmao [Red-hairs, a term originally applied to the Dutch] came thither, and having manufactured opium, seduced some of the natives into the habit of smoking it; from this the mania for it rapidly spread throughout the whole nation, so that in process of time, the natives became feeble and enervated, submitted to the foreign rule, and ultimately were completely subjugated." Now the English are of the race of foreigners called Hongmao [Red-hairs]. In introducing opium into this country, their purpose has been to weaken and enfeeble the central empire. If not early aroused to a sense of our danger, we shall find ourselves ere long, on the last step towards ruin....

Since your majesty's accession to the throne, the maxim of your illustrious house that horsemanship and archery are the foundations of its existence, has ever been carefully remembered. And hence the governors, the Lt. governors, the commanders of the forces, and their subordinates have again and again been directed to pay the strictest attention to the discipline and exercise of the troops, and of the naval forces and have been urged and required to create by their exertions strong and powerful legions. With admiration I contemplate my sacred sovereign's anxious care for imparting a military as well as a civil education, prompted as this anxiety is by desire to establish on a firm basis the foundations of the empire, and to hold in awe the barbarians on every side. But while the stream of importation of opium is not turned aside, it is impossible to attain any certainty that none within the camp do ever secretly inhale the drug. And if the camp be once contaminated by it, the baneful influence will work its way, and the habit will be contracted beyond the power of reform. When the periodical times of desire for it come round, how can the victims—their legs tottering, their hands trembling, their eyes flowing with child-like tears—be able in any way to attend to their proper exercises? Or how can such men form strong and powerful legions? Under these circumstances, the military will become alike unfit to advance to the fight, or in a retreat to defend their

posts. Of this there is clear proof in the instance of the campaign against the Yao rebels in the 12th year of our sovereign's reign [1832]. In the army sent to Yongzhou [Hunan], on that occasion, great numbers of the soldiers were opium-smokers; so that although their numerical force was large, there was hardly any strength to be found among them. . . .

At the present moment, throughout the empire, the minds of men are in imminent danger; the more foolish, being seduced by teachers of false doctrines, are sunk in vain superstitions and cannot be aroused; and the more intelligent, being intoxicated by opium, are carried away as by a whirlpool, and are beyond recovery. Most thoughtfully have I sought for some plan by which to arouse and awaken all but in vain. While, however, the empire preserves and maintains its laws, the plain and honest rustic will see what he has to fear, and will be deterred from evil; and the man of intelligence and cultivated habits will learn what is wrong in himself, and will refrain from it. And thus, though the laws be declared by some to be but waste paper, yet these their unseen effects will be of no trifling nature. If, on the other hand, the prohibitions be suddenly repealed, and the action which was a crime be no longer counted such by the government, how shall the dull clown and the mean among the people know that the action is still in itself wrong? In open day and with unblushing front, they will continue to use opium till they shall become so accustomed to it, that eventually they will find it as indispensable as their daily meat and drink, and will inhale the noxious drug with perfect indifference. When shame shall thus be entirely destroyed, and fear removed wholly out of the way, the evil consequences that will result to morality and to the minds of men will assuredly be neither few nor unimportant. As your majesty's minister, I know that the laws of the empire, being in their existing state well fitted to effect their end, will not for any slight cause be changed. But the proposal to alter the law on this subject having been made and discussed in the provinces, the instant effect has been, that crafty thieves and villains have on all hands begun to raise their heads and open their eyes, gazing about, and pointing their finger, under the notion that, when once these prohibitions are repealed thenceforth and for ever they may regard themselves free from every restraint and from every cause of fear.

Though possessing very poor abilities I have nevertheless had the happiness to enjoy the favor of your sacred majesty, and have, within a space of but few years, been raised through the several grades of the censorate, and the presidency of various courts in the metropolis, to the high elevation of a seat in the Inner Council. I have been copiously imbued with the rich dew of favors; yet have been unable to offer the feeblest token of gratitude; but if there is aught within the compass of my knowledge, I dare not to pass it by unnoticed. I feel in my duty to request that your majesty's commands may be proclaimed to the governors and lieutenant-governors of all the provinces, requiring them to direct the local officers to redouble their efforts for the enforcement of the existing pro-

hibitions against opium; and to impress on every one, in the plainest and strictest manner, that all who are already contaminated by the vile habit must return and become new men,—that if any continue to walk in their former courses, strangers to repentance and to reformation, they shall assuredly be subjected to the full penalty of the law, and shall not meet with the least indulgence,—and that any found guilty of storing up or selling opium to the amount of 1000 catties or upwards, the most severe punishment shall be inflicted. Thus happily the minds of men may be impressed with fear, and the report thereof, spreading over the seas (among foreigners) may even there produce reformation. Submitting to my sovereign my feeble and obscure views, I prostrate implore your sacred majesty to cast a glance on this my respectful memorial.

7.3 *Imperial Edict, September 1836*

The councillor Zhu Zun has presented a memorial, requesting that the severity of the prohibitory enactments against opium may be increased. The sub-censor Xu Qiu also has laid before us a respectful representation of his views; and, in a supplementary statement, a recommendation to punish severely Chinese traitors.

Opium, coming from the distant regions of barbarians, has pervaded the country with its baneful influence, and has been made a subject of very severe prohibitory enactments. But, of late, there has been a diversity of opinion in regard to it, some requesting a change in the policy hitherto adopted, and others recommending the continuance of the severe prohibitions. It is highly important to consider the subject carefully in all its bearings, surveying at once the whole field of action, so that such measures may be adopted as shall continue for ever in force, free from all failures.

Let Deng [Deng Tingzhen, the Qing governor-general of Guangdong and Guangxi] and his colleagues anxiously and carefully consult together upon the recommendation to search for, and with utmost strictness apprehend, all those traitorous natives who sell the drug, the hong merchants who arrange the transactions in it, the brokers who purchase it by wholesale, the boat-men who are engaged in transporting it, and the naval militia who receive bribes; and having determined on the steps to be taken in order to stop up the source of the evil, let them present a true and faithful report. Let them also carefully ascertain and report whether the circumstances stated by Xu Qiu in his supplementary document, in reference to the foreigners from beyond the seas be, true or not, whether such things as are mentioned therein have or have not taken place. Copies of the several documents are to be herewith sent to those officers for perusal; and this edict is to be made known to Deng and Ke, who are to enjoin it also on Wan, the superintendent of maritime customs. Respect this.

7.4 *Annexed Laws on Banning Opium, July 1839*

FURNACE KEEPERS OR WHOLESALE DEALERS

Whoever shall hereafter open a "furnace," and connive with and secretly buy opium of the outside barbarians, storing it up for sale, shall, if he be the principal, be decapitated immediately on conviction.

The royal authority shall be respectfully produced and the law executed, ere a report is sent to the crown. The head of the offender shall then be stuck upon a pole, and exposed upon the seacoast as a warning to all. The accomplices, advisers, participators, receivers, givers (those who deliver the drug), and boatmen who knowingly receive opium on board their boats for transport, shall be sentenced to strangulation and thrown into dungeons to wait the royal warrant for their execution. The houses and boats of these parties shall be sequestered.

1. Any officer or soldier on the coast station who shall receive bribes to connive at opium being brought in, whether the quantity be large or small, shall immediately upon conviction be strangled. He who, knowing it to be such, allows opium to be brought in, but without receiving a bribe, shall be transported to Xinjiang [Chinese Turkestan].
2. If any persons join together and open a furnace for the purpose of selling opium, he who originates the plan shall be considered as the principal.
3. He who stores opium brought by the foreign ships shall be dealt with in the same manner as accomplices in a "furnace." He who, knowing it to be such, consents to conceal opium for any notorious dealers who may have fallen into the hands of government, shall be punished one degree less severely than the principal.
4. He who receives a bribe to release any opium seller or smoker from his custody, shall be punished in the same manner as if he were an opium seller or smoker himself. Should the amount received be considerable, he shall be held punishable under the law against "false and malicious information."
5. Any jailor who shall buy opium and supply it to the prisoners under his charge, shall be transported to the most distant and unhealthy settlements. Any guard or overseer, guilty of a similar offence, shall be transported to a nearer settlement; should the amount received for purchases be considerable, it shall be computed and the offender held punishable under the act against "False and malicious information."
6. Any soldier or policeman, or any of those idle blackguards who infest every place, who shall, without a warrant, enter a house and under pretence of searching for opium forcibly carry off other articles, or who shall,

through malice or a desire to extort money, themselves secrete opium in the house, that an accusation may be supported [against their victim], shall, whether principal or accomplice, be held punishable under the law against "false and malicious information," and transported to the most distant settlements. If the amount stolen shall exceed in value 120 taels, the principal shall be sentenced to strangulation, and kept in prison till the warrant for his execution shall arrive.

7. All persons sentenced to transportation for crimes connected with opium shall be excluded from the benefit of the law respecting "indulgence to offenders for the sake of their parents."

SECTION 2ND. KEEPERS OF RETAIL AND SMOKING SHOPS.

Any person who shall keep a shop for selling opium to be smoked on the premises, shall, if the principal, be sentenced, on conviction, to immediate strangulation, and his house shall be sequestered. Accomplices, accessories, or those who knowing for what purpose, still consent to let their houses to such characters, shall, on purpose, still consent to let their houses to such characters, shall, on conviction, be transported to Xinjiang to be slaves to the military, and their houses sequestered. Any soldier or policeman who shall receive a bribe for conniving at and "securing" these dens, shall receive the same punishment as a principal. "Ground-surerties" and neighbors, who know of the existence of such places and do not report the same to government, shall be punished with 100 blows, and transported for 3 years. If they shall receive hush money, the amount shall be computed, and the law respecting "False and malicious information" put in force against them.

1. Any native traitor who shall cultivate the poppy for the purpose of expressing its juice to make opium, for preparations and sale, or who shall sell either the "paste" or "mud" to the extent of 500 taels, or if, altho' the amount does not equal that sum, he shall sell at a great number of different places and times, he shall, if apprehended within the next 18 months, be sentenced to strangulation [if a principal], and thrown into prison to wait the arrival of the warrant for his execution. Accomplices shall be transported to the most distant and unhealthy places. If any are convicted of selling only once or twice, the whole amount of such sales not being taels 500—they shall be transported, if principals to Xinjiang to be slaves to the military, if accomplices they shall be transported to a distance of 4000 le. After the expiration of the 18 months, both principals and accomplices shall be sentenced to be strangled. If any soldier or policeman receives a

bribe to connive at and screen them, he shall be punished in the same manner as the principal. If the amount received be considerable, it shall be computed, and the offender punished under the law against "false and malicious information." Any landlord, who, knowing for what purpose, lets a field or house to opium dealers, or any boatman who shall knowingly hire his boat for transporting the drug, shall, if the offence take place before the expiration of one year from this time, receive a hundred blows, and be transported 2000 li—if after one year, he shall be transported to the most distant settlement, if within half a year he shall be sentenced to receive a hundred blows and three years transportation. The fields, grounds, houses, and boats, shall in all cases be sequestered. If any dealer shall voluntarily confess his crime and cause by his information the apprehension of other dealers, he shall be pardoned, and his house, ground, or boat shall not be sequestered. If the parties implicated by the said person's confession shall escape and elude the vigilance of government, although his crime shall be pardoned, his house, ground, field, or boat shall not be confiscated. Any "ground surety" or neighbor, who knows of the existence of such dealers and does not forthwith inform against them, shall be punished with 100 blows. If he receives hush money, the amount shall be computed and the law respecting "false and malicious information" put in force against him.

2. The law against the crime of opium smoking, shall take effect in Peking from the day the sacred commands were received; in the provinces from the day that the commands of the board were made known. These were received in the city of Canton on the 26th day of the 5th moon from which time they will date in all the cities, and towns, throughout the province. One year from that date will be allowed for all to renounce the habit. At the expiration of that period all who have *not* renounced the habit, whether they be of the nobles, the military, or vulgar, shall on conviction be sentenced to strangulation and thrown into prison to wait the arrival of the warrant for their execution. If any are apprehended *within* the year of probation, if of the vulgar, they shall be punished with 100 blows and transported to a distance of 2000 li. &c. If they are unable to say from whom they got the opium, their punishment shall be one degree more severe; they shall receive 100 blows and transported to a distance of 2500 li; if of the Tartar soldiery, the offender shall first be expelled from his banner, (or regiment) and then dealt with as one of the common people; if a government underling, a relation of an officer, a secretary or follower, the offender shall be punished one degree more severely than a common man; if an officer of government, the offender shall be sent to Xinjiang on some degrading and laborious mission; if of the provincials or general army, the offender shall be transported to a shorter distance....

7.5 LORD PALMERSTON'S DECLARATION OF WAR, FEBRUARY 20, 1840

After China's seizure of British opium in Canton, Charles Elliot and the British community in Canton rejected Lin Zexu's demand for a bond requiring them not to engage in the opium trade. They fled to Macao, where, in June 1839 Elliot and the merchants separately petitioned the Tory foreign minister, Lord Palmerston, for stern measures by the Crown on the behalf of British subjects in China. Palmerston, despite his usual advocacy of British power in the international realm, was initially loathe to help the merchants and believed they should adhere to Chinese law. However, domestic pressure, in the form of letters from some thirty-nine Manchester textile firms who feared being cut out of both the Chinese and Indian markets, and energetic lobbying efforts by William Jardine in September 1839 caused the foreign minister to change his mind.

On October 18, 1839, Palmerston informed Charles Elliot that a British expeditionary force would reach China in the spring of 1840 and would endeavor to blockade the harbor of Canton and the Pearl river. Since the structures of the British Constitution provided Parliament with little control over foreign policy, the decision for war was made without parliamentary consultation. Indeed, China policy until Palmerston's departure from the government in 1841 was single-handedly shaped by the foreign minister himself. Neither Parliament nor the nation was fully informed of the circumstances of the Opium War.

The following dispatch from the pen of Lord Palmerston informs the Chinese government of Britain's intention to use force to protect the interest of its subjects in China and states Great Britain's war aims.

DESPATCH FROM LORD PALMERSTON TO THE MINISTER OF THE EMPEROR OF CHINA

F.O. London, *February 20, 1840.*

THE UNDERSIGNED, Her Britannick Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has the honour to inform the Minister of the Emperor of China, that Her Majesty The Queen of Great Britain has sent a Naval and Military Force to the Coast of China, to demand from the Emperor satisfaction and redress for injuries inflicted by Chinese Authorities upon British Subjects resident in China, and for insults offered by those same Authorities to the British Crown.

For more than a hundred years, commercial intercourse had existed between China and Great Britain; and during that long period of time, British Subjects have been allowed by the Chinese Government to reside within the territory of China for the purpose of carrying on trade therein. Hence it has happened that British Subjects, trusting in the good faith of the Chinese Government, have annexed themselves in Canton as Merchants, and have brought into that city from time to time property to a large amount; while other British Subjects who wished to trade with China, but who could not for various reasons go thither themselves, have sent commodities to Canton, placing those commodities in the care of some of their fellow Countrymen resident in China, with directions that such commodities should be sold in China, and that the produce of the sale hereof should be sent to the Owners in the British Dominions.

Thus there has always been within the territory of The Emperor of China a certain number of British Subjects, and a large amount of British Property; and though no Treaty has existed between the Sovereign of England and the Emperor of China, yet British Subjects have continued to resort to China for purposes of trade, placing full confidence in the justice and good faith of The Emperor.

Moreover, of late years the Sovereign of Great Britain has stationed at Canton an officer of the British Crown, no wise connected with trade, and specially forbidden to trade, but ordered to place himself in direct communication with the local Authorities at Canton in order to afford protection to British Subjects, and to be the organ of communication between the British and the Chinese Governments.

But the British Government has learnt with much regret, and with extreme surprise, that during the last year certain officers, acting under the Authority of The Emperor of China, have committed violent outrages against the British Residents at Canton, who were living peaceably in that City, trusting to the good faith of the Chinese Government; and that those same Chinese officers, forgetting the respect which was due to the British Superintendent in his Character of Agent of the British Crown, have treated that Superintendent also with violence and indignity.

It seems that the course assigned for these proceedings was the contraband trade in Opium, carried on by some British Subjects.

It appeared that the Laws of the Chinese Empire forbid the importation of Opium into China, and declare that all opium which may be brought into the Country is liable to confiscation.

The Queen of England desires that Her Subjects who may go into Foreign Countries should obey the Laws of those Countries; and Her Majesty does not wish to protect them from the just consequences of any offenses which they may commit in foreign parts. But, on the other hand, Her Majesty cannot permit that Her Subjects residing abroad should be treated with violence, and be

exposed to insult and injustice; and when wrong is done to them, Her Majesty will see that they obtain redress.

Now if a Government makes a Law which applies both to its own Subjects and to Foreigners, such Government ought to enforce that Law impartially or not at all. If it enforces that Law on Foreigners, it is bound to enforce it also upon its own Subjects; and it has no right to permit its own Subjects to violate the Law with impunity, and then to punish Foreigners for doing the very same thing.

Neither is it just that such a Law should for a great length of time be allowed to sleep as a dead letter, and that both Natives and Foreigners should be taught to consider it as of no effect, and that then suddenly, and without sufficient warning, it should be put in force with the utmost rigor and severity.

Now, although the Law of China declared that the importation of Opium should be forbidden, yet it is notorious that for many years past, that importation has been connived at and permitted by the Chinese Authorities at Canton; nay, more, that those Authorities, from the Governor downwards, have made an annual and considerable profit by taking money from Foreigners for the permission to import Opium: and of late the Chinese Authorities have gone so far in setting this Law at defiance, that Mandarin Boats were employed to bring opium to Canton from the Foreign Ships lying at Lintin.

Did the Imperial Government at Peking know these things?

If it did know these things, it virtually abolished its own Law, by permitting its own officers to act as if no such Law existed. If the Chinese Government says it did not know of these things, if it says that it knew indeed that the Law was violated by Foreigners who brought in opium, but did not know that the Law was violated by its own Officers who assisted in the importation, and received fixed sums of money for permitting it, then may Foreign Governments ask, how it happened that a Government so watchful as that of China should have one eye open to see the transgressions of Foreigners, but should have the other eye shut, and unable to see the transgressions of its own officers. . . .

Now as the distance is great which separated England from China, and as the matter in question is of urgent importance, the British Government cannot wait to know the answer which the Chinese Government may give to these demands, and thus postpone till that answer shall have been received in England, the measures which may be necessary in order to vindicate the honour and dignity of the British Crown, in the event of that answer not being satisfactory.

The British Government therefore has determined at once to send out a Naval and Military Force to the Coast of China to act in support of these demands, and in order to convince the Imperial Government that the British Government attaches the utmost importance to this matter, and that the affair is one which will not admit of delay.

And further, for the purpose of impressing still more strongly upon the Government of Peking the importance which the British Government attaches to this matter, and the urgent necessity which exists for an immediate as well as a satisfactory settlement thereof, the Commander of the Expedition has received orders that, immediately upon his arrival upon the Chinese Coast, he shall proceed to blockade the principal Chinese ports, that he shall intercept and detain and hold in deposit all Chinese ports, that he shall proceed to blockade the principal Chinese ports, that he shall intercept and detain and hold in deposit all Chinese Vessels which he may meet with, and that he shall take possession of some convenient part of the Chinese territory, to be held and occupied by the British Forces until everything shall be concluded and executed to the satisfaction of the British Government.

These measures of hostility on the part of Great Britain against China are not only justified, but even rendered absolutely necessary, by the outrages which have been committed by the Chinese Authorities against British officers and Subjects, and these hostilities will not cease, until a satisfactory arrangement shall have been made by the Chinese Government.

The British Government in order to save time, and to afford to the Government of China every facility for coming to an early arrangement, have given to the Admiral and to the Superintendent, Full Powers and Instructions to treat upon these matters with the Imperial Government, and have ordered the said Admiral and Superintendent to go up to the Mouth of the Peiho River, in the Gulph of Pechelee, that they may be within a short distance of the Imperial Cabinet. But after the indignity which was offered to Her Majesty's Superintendent at Canton, in the course of last year, it is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to permit any of Her Majesty's Officers to place themselves in the power of the Chinese Authorities until some formal Treaty shall have been duly signed, securing to British Subjects safety and respect in China; and therefore the Undersigned must request that the Chinese Government will have the goodness to send on board the Admiral's Ship the Plenipotentiaries whom the Emperor may appoint to treat upon these matters with the Plenipotentiaries of The Queen of England. Those Chinese Plenipotentiaries shall be received on board the Admiral's Ship, with every honour which is due to the Envoys of the Emperor, and shall be treated with all possible courtesy and respect.

The Undersigned has further to state, that the necessity for sending this Expedition to the Coast of China having been occasioned by the violent and unjustifiable acts of the Chinese Authorities, the British Government expects and demands that the expenses incurred thereby shall be repaid to Great Britain by the Government of China.

The Undersigned has now stated and explained to the Chinese Minister, without reserve, the causes of complaint on the part of Great Britain; the representation which Great Britain demands, and the nature of the measures which the British officer commanding the Expedition has been instructed in the first

instance to take. The British Government fervently hopes that the wisdom and spirit of Justice for which The Emperor is famed in all parts of the World, will lead the Chinese Government to see the equity of the foregoing demands; and it is the sincere wish of Her Majesty's Government that a prompt and full compliance with those demands may lead to a speedy re-establishment of that friendly intercourse which has for so great a period of time subsisted between the British and Chinese Nations, to the manifest advantage of both.

The Undersigned, in conclusion, has the honour to state to the Minister of The Emperor of China that he has directed Her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries to forward to His Excellency the present Note, of which he has transmitted to the Plenipotentiaries a copy, with instructions to cause a Translation of it to be made into the Chinese language, and to forward to the Chinese Minister the Translation at the same time with the original Note.

The Undersigned avails himself of this opportunity to offer to His Excellency the Minister of The Emperor of China the assurances of his most distinguished consideration.

PALMERSTON.

The Crisis Within

8.1 QIAN YONG ON POPULAR RELIGION, 1838

The scholar Qian Yong (1759–1844) was a specialist in etymology and bronze and stone inscriptions. He traveled throughout China serving in various yamens but never occupied a powerful position. His famous *Luyuan conghua* is a collection of miscellaneous jottings on many subjects.

In an appendix to this work, he included the following injunction against “evil customs” in south China. It was apparently written by one of Qian Yong’s acquaintances and was introduced in his jottings with an approving note. It exhibits the scorn felt by the literati for folk religion and “heterodox” festivals in the years immediately preceding the Opium War, and illustrates the impulse felt by the elite to rein in the wild and unrestrained behavior of untutored peasants, villagers, and city dwellers.

GOING OUT FOR A GATHERING

There have always been religious festivals and parades in China but presently these practices are really flourishing. In the cities, the so-called “heads” of these assemblies are the scribes, clerks, and runners of the prefectural and county yamens. In the countryside, they are the chiefs of *buojia* units¹ and local idlers. Generally, those who understand to some degree the rites and codes of the society and who have family responsibilities will not take part.

Every year in the spring when there is no farm work to tend to, people feel

1. Mutual surveillance organizations in the countryside used to preserve order and monitor taxation.

superstitious doubts about ghosts and spirits. What happens then is called “going out for a gathering.” Everyone says that this [religious processions and gatherings] can “exorcise evil and bring good fortune” or “get rid of hardship and eliminate locusts.” There is a great commotion when these gatherings occur and the whole area goes wild. Tens of thousands of men and women appear to watch these parades and although local magistrates occasionally ban such activities, they grow and prosper from year to year.

Leading the processions are banners to clear the way and people banging gongs and drums. Others hold wooden placards, just like those carried by local officials, reading “silence” and “avoidance.” Some of them paint their faces and carry spears or staves. Some dress up as government soldiers and carry swords and bows and arrows or fowling pieces and rattan shields. Some others pretend to be scribes and clerks of the six departments of the local yamen and carry mock documents, case files, and registration books. Still others wear chains and shackles and pretend to be prisoners guilty of serious offenses. Two false executioners, dressed in red, lead a prisoner stripped to the waist on whose back is a tablet saying that he is to be decapitated. They [the people] are accustomed to these wicked spectacles and treat them as natural. They have no sense of shame and think that this is fun. This is really ludicrous!

Recently, Scholar Li Jiantian of Jiangyin urgently commented on this and wrote “The Ten Evils of Religious Gatherings.” He considered that people should only make sacrifices to ghosts and spirits of their own clans and that only community temples were appropriate to mediate between heaven and earth. Since ancient times, whenever harvest sacrifices were presented at community temples, the people merely burned paper money and beat ceremonial drums. Beneath the altar, the libations of wine were as fragrant as the spring wind and people frolicked in nearby groves of mulberry trees. It was the very image of happiness and peace! Rites and rituals were followed without error and none went astray. There was no insult to the spirits or raucous shouting in the community. There was no violation of the rites and ceremonies or injury to social customs to this great degree. Since Li Jiantian’s account of the “ten evils” is clear and precisely appropriate to the problem, I have recorded it here:

1. Blaspheming the ghosts and spirits. In the *Analekts* it says: “If you are unable to attend to human affairs, how can you serve the spirits?” Paying reverence to the spirits by trying to get close to them is unheard of! This is merely a means of taking other people’s money so that the “heads” of the societies can eat their fill and get drunk. The stupid commoners do not know what they are doing and so they follow them. After time, all of this becomes social custom and hundreds of problems arise. This is the first reason for imposing a ban.
2. Confusing the ritual code. In every prefecture and county there are altars for the spirits of the mountains, the rivers, and the land. There are also

8.2 THE CONVERSION OF LIANG FA:

GOOD WORKS TO EXHORT THE AGE, 1832

One of the first converts of the London Missionary Society was Liang Fa (1789–1855), a young Cantonese printer and employee of the Society's press in Malacca. In the first years of missionary work in south China, Liang Fa or, as he was known to most of his contemporaries, Liang Afa, played a vital role in the Society's effort to carry the faith to potential Chinese converts: he wrote tracts in Chinese, personally handed them out in market places and elsewhere, and helped in the Society's efforts to translate the New Testament into Chinese.

In the 1820s and 1830s, first in Canton and then in Malacca, London Missionary Society preachers and their converts published many religious tracts. Printed on fragile paper, bound with string, and covered front and back with bright yellow paper, these thin tracts were aggressively circulated in Canton and other cities and towns in south China. Some of them inveighed against opium use, others retold Bible stories, while still others consisted of catechism-like question and answer discussions (not unlike the questions posed by Liang Fa and responded to by "Mr. Mi" in this document).

One famous religious tract written by Liang Fa in 1832, *Good Words to Exhort the Age* (Chuanshi liangyan), won its later renown neither from the number of converts it produced nor from the sophistication of its theological arguments. Rather, the nine-volume set of tracts was important because of its influence on the career of the future leader of the Taiping Rebellion, Hong Xiuquan (1813–1864), who was handed a copy of it outside the provincial examination hall in Canton in 1836. Although Hong ignored the pamphlet for years after he received it, it played an important role as a theoretical source book and guide to Christianity as the Taiping leader elaborated his own highly eclectic and eccentric Christian doctrines.

In the following document, Liang Fa describes his own conversion to Christianity and provides a clear sense of the considerations that drew him into the Christian fold.

Before I received the Lord's grace, my mind was full of evil and folly and had yet to be enlightened. I still did not piously believe the Savior's true scripture and holy way and although I slightly understood that my daily behavior and words were those of a sinful person, I did not know how to seek redemption for my sins. On the first and the fifteenth of the month, early in the morning,

in an airy place, I would burn incense and pay my respects to the passing immortals. I wanted to beg the passing gods for grace and mercy and to seek protection and good fortune. I also recited the "Guanyin Sutra" and the "Duoxin Sutra" one time and implored the Bodhisattva Guanyin and Buddha to pity me, protect my health, and give me spiritual peace. I also begged for wealth and fortune. I practiced this method of paying my respect to the various gods and deities for many years. Although I was physically worshipping various gods and buddhas, I still held evil and obscene notions in the heart and spoke false and deceitful words. I was filled with vicious desires that never left my heart or were far from my mouth.

At that time, every day, I listened to a certain Mr. Mi [William Milne of the London Missionary Society] preach the true and holy message of how the Savior had sacrificed himself to save mankind from its sins. Although I was physically present listening to him preach the truth, my mind was not there but racing about in contemplation of worldly things. At times I skimmed through the pages of the Holy Bible but could not understand its meaning. Even when I listened to Mr. Mi as he spoke of the truth, my mind could still not fathom the significance of what he was saying. After listening to his sermons I ignored them and despised them; I did not want to hear them. Often I talked to my friends and said: "How can this be right? Asking people not to worship various gods and buddhas? This has to be an evil and heretical teaching. Who will believe this? If we follow this kind of reasoning, then all of those people who sell gold paper, candles, and funeral money with golden flowers on it will go out of business! I am afraid that before long all of the gods and buddhas will beat people like you to death. How can you talk such nonsense!" I was working in his [Milne's] house at this time and every day he gathered all of the people in the household together to read the true Bible. Afterwards, he would explain it for a half hour or an hour and then everyone would rise to pray to God. All of the people in the household had to listen every day and at the time I too, despite myself, had to follow his will.

After more than a year, a Buddhist monk came from Yunnan and lived in a nearby temple. He asked people to donate money to build a new temple and often came to my home to talk with me. He discussed the rules for Buddhists who followed the way. I asked the monk what the benefits were for those who followed the Buddhist way. He said: "Our Buddhist way is the greatest. If one person leaves the carnal world and joins the Buddhist community to serve Lord Buddha, that person's sins and the sins of his entire family will be wiped away." I then asked: "But how are our sins pardoned?" The monk replied: "We read the sutras every day in the morning and at night. Buddha is in the Western Heaven. When he sees us sincerely reading the sutra in the morning and at night, Buddha is overjoyed and happily pardons the sins of a person's whole family. If someone donates alms to a temple, the monks of that temple recite sutras for him and after that person dies he is reincarnated in his next life into

wealthy and famous family. He does not fall into hell and suffer." When I heard the monk say that reciting the sutras would win pardon from all of one's sins, I believed it very much and happily wanted to follow him and enter the Buddhist religion. I then told the monk: "Presently, on the mornings of the first and fifteenth day of the month, I recite the Duoxin Sutra and the Guanyin Sutra one time. Is this a good way of reciting the sutras?" The monk said: "Very good!" Then the monk gave me a copy of the Shoushengqian [Karmic Debt Repayment] Sutra and taught me how to read it and meditate on it each night. If you read it once you can pay back some of the [karmic] debts of your previous lives. If you read thousands or millions of times, you can pay back all the debts of your previous lives. You won't have any calamities or difficulties in this life and after you die you will go to the Western Heaven to live in the world of ultimate joy. When I heard the monk say that things could be this good, I followed his instructions and continuously recited the Shoushengqian Sutra for dozens of nights. Suddenly one night as I was meditating, I thought to myself that from my teens to now, when I was already twenty-eight, I had been thinking of evil, speaking evil, and doing evil every day and night. Now I was reciting the sutra alone but was not doing good or performing good deeds. Could I really be pardoned for all the evil I had done? I was really afraid that things were not so simple.

At this time my mind slowly began to change and I no longer read the Shoushengqian Sutra or went to the monk to discuss Buddhist teachings. But every day I enjoyed listening to Mr. Mi's discussion of how Jesus had sacrificed himself to redeem the sins of mankind. In my free time, I read the Holy Bible and found that the Holy Bible teaches that people should not do evil deeds or speak evil and deceitful words. They should not worship images of gods made from wood or clay or painted on paper. I slightly understood the meaning of the Holy Bible and believed it must have a mysterious and profound message. . . . It also spoke of the Savior using his holy power to heal strange and difficult illnesses. Was this not the true holy classic? From this time on, I loved to listen to Mr. Mi speak of this book of holy truth and to worship the Lord our God. Every Sunday, when I did not need to work, I loved to read the Holy Bible. When there were things I did not understand, I would ask Mr. Mi for explanations. Mr. Mi also liked to explain and so I asked him how the Savior sacrificed himself to redeem the sins of mankind and how this could save the world.

Mr. Mi said: "Our savior Jesus was the holy son of the Lord our God and is the pure spirit of the supreme being. The people of the world are confused by all sorts of idolatrous images and regard them as gods. Because they do not worship the great god who created the heaven and earth and all beings who is also the Lord our God, they sin against the law of heaven. People in all different walks of life in the world have sinned in thousands of different ways. Were they justly dealt with, the people of the whole world would be punished and

wiped out. But our holy Lord who created the heaven and earth and all beings could not endure the destruction of mankind and so instead he bestowed unusual grace and mercy upon them. He ordered his holy son, Jesus, to leave his glorious and exalted position in heaven to descend to earth and placed him in the belly of a virgin and used a divine wind and holy virtue to cause him to be born as a man. When Jesus grew to manhood, he taught the people to know that only the one heavenly master who created the heaven and earth and all beings should be worshipped. Jesus also taught mankind that there is a precious soul in the physical body of every human being that is eternal and everlasting and that there are rewards and punishments in this life and the next. He [Jesus] taught people that he had come down to this world to endure pain, suffering, and death in order to take the punishment for the sins of mankind upon himself. Therefore, whoever piously believes in Jesus' mercy in taking the punishment for mankind's sins upon himself and is baptized shall be pardoned for his own sins and obtain the salvation of his soul. The sinner who refuses to piously believe will fall into hell and suffer eternal damnation."

I then asked Mr. Mi about the meaning of being baptized.

Mr. Mi said: "In baptism a bit of pure water is sprinkled on the forehead or body of the person receiving baptism. Its inner purpose is the cleansing away of all the filth of evil and sin so that one can receive the holy wind and allow it to move one's heart. After baptism, one loves good and hates evil and its significance is that one is transformed into a new man. Because all men have committed sins and had their bodies tainted by sin and their souls besmirched by sin, the baptismal water is to clean their bodies as they implore the Lord on high and send down the divine wind [*shenfeng*] to cleanse their souls."

After hearing Mr. Mi explain all of this, I asked, "Now that I know that I am a sinner, how can my sins be pardoned?"

Mr. Mi said: "If you truly believe in Jesus and are baptized, then it will be as if Jesus suffered and died for your sins. When the Lord our God considers Jesus' great accomplishment in dying for the sins of others, he can pardon your sins and accept you as good subject of the Lord. When it is time for you to die and go on to the next life, Jesus' merit also becomes your merit and you will be granted eternal happiness in heaven."

Mr. Mi's explanation was so wonderful that after I heard it I took my leave and returned to my small room to meditate [on these lessons]. I thought: "I am a sinner. If I do not rely on Jesus' merit [*gonglau*] in taking the sins of man upon himself, how can my sin simply be pardoned by the Lord our God? In believing in the way of Jesus one could be considered one of the Lord's good subjects and also enjoy the fortune of living in heaven after death. But the most fortunate thing of all was that one would not fall into hell after death and suffer eternal pain." I had now made up my mind: The following Sunday, I would accept Jesus' way, receive baptism, and enter through the gate of truth and holy reason. I went to ask Mr. Mi whether he was willing to baptize me.

Mr. Mi said: "If you will sincerely confess your sins and change your evil ways and follow the way Jesus the Savior and not worship graven images of God and Buddha but piously worship only the lord and master of heaven, earth, and all beings and eradicate all traces of the obscene and evil behavior of your past and rid yourself of deceitful and false words, then, next Sunday, on the sabbath, you may receive baptism. If you cannot do this, you may not receive baptism."

I said: "I will obey all that you have taught me." And on the following Sunday, at noontime, I went to implore Mr. Mi to baptize me. Mr. Mi asked me again whether I would confess and renounce all my evil deeds and then read with me several passages from the Holy Scriptures. He then knelt down with me to pray to the Lord our God to bestow his grace upon me and used his hand to sprinkle a bit of pure water on my head.

After I received baptism and expressed my thanks in prayer to the Lord, I then asked Mr. Mi: "What is the sign of people who believe in Jesus?"

Mr. Mi said: "To fully concentrate one's heart on doing good is the sign of people who believe in Jesus."

I thanked Mr. Mi and returned to my small room and sitting alone there felt happy in the belief that I had obtained pardon from the lord for my great sins. I then gave myself a new name: "Xueshanzhe" [the one who studies good]. This meant that in the future I would concentrate on changing my evil ways and studying the good and would not dare to do evil.

8.3 EXECUTIONS OF TAIPING REBELS AT CANTON, 1851

Under the Qing legal code, no crime, except perhaps patricide, was regarded as more serious than the crime of insurrection. Joining a rebel band was the ultimate political risk one could take under the imperial system and rebels could look forward to no quarter from government forces sent to crush them. The document that follows dates from the first year of the Guangxi insurrection and describes most vividly the punishment meted out to groups of Taiping followers sent to Canton for punishment.

In the course of the year 1851, more than 700 unfortunate persons were executed at Canton. The severity of the mandarins seemed to increase in the same proportion as the extension of the insurrection; and every day some arrest took place, and some unhappy wretch, shut up in a bamboo cage, or shackled like a wild beast, was brought from the province of Guangxi or the revolted districts of the Guangdong. Generally they had not to wait for their sentence; since, in case of insurrection, the superior authority of the province has a right

to inflict capital punishment, and makes abundant use of this sanguinary privilege. An execution is a horrible thing in any country, but in China its horror is doubled by its attendant circumstances. We give here the letter of one of our friends, who had the melancholy curiosity to be present at the execution of fifty-three rebels of the Guangxi.

"On the 1st of May," he writes, "I attended an execution with three of my friends. The street in which these frightful scenes occur, is situated as you are aware, without the walled city of Canton, towards that part of the suburbs which lies to the south along the river. This narrow, dirty street, which is about 100 *meters* long and 15 wide, is called by the Europeans, the 'Potter's Field.' All the houses on each side are in fact inhabited by workmen who make common services of porcelain, and those portable furnaces which you have often seen in the poorest houses, and in the floating residences on the river. For fear that a Chinese Scholar like you may dispute names with me, I must tell you at once that this dismal place is called by the natives, T'sien-Tse-Ma-Teou [*Qianzi mutou*], or the 'Quay of the Thousand Characters,' in allusion to the numerous signs which are seen there from the river.

"We arrived there at ten o'clock in the morning, and took our station in front of a shop belonging to a mender of old stockings. This was an excellent position to take a survey of the whole ceremony, and we remained there quietly till noon; at which time some soldiers and officers attached to the service of the mandarins, arrived to clear the street and thrust back the curious. As in Europe, the persons who came to see the spectacle were the vilest dregs of the populace,—dirty, ragged people, with sinister countenances, who wandered about the ensanguined soil; where most likely they had already seen the execution of a number of their companions, and perhaps of their accomplices.

"In a short time the roll of the tam tam announced to us the arrival of the whole procession. Mandarins of every degree, with the red, white, blue, or yellow ball, riding on horseback, or carried in palanquins, and followed by an escort of musicians, *shirri* [police officers], and standard-bearers, alighted at a short distance from the place of execution. Contrary to their ceremonious habits, they arranged themselves in the dismal enclosure.

"Then arrived the criminals. They were fifty-three in number, each shut up in a basket, with his hands tied behind his back, his legs chained, and a board inscribed with his sentence hanging from his neck. You have often met in the Chinese streets a pair of coolies carrying a pig stretched out at its full length in a bamboo case. Well, just imagine a human being put in the place of the unclean animal, and you can form an idea of the fifty-three unfortunate creatures in their cages. When the cages were set down, they were opened and emptied, just as when a pig is turned out at a butcher's shop. I examined these unfortunate wretches with attention: they were worn out with hunger, and looked more like skeletons than living beings. It was evident that they had suffered the most dreadful privations. They were clothed in loathsome tatters, wore long hair,

and the dishevelled tail attached to the crown of the head, had been reduced to a third of its usual length. They had evidently belonged to the insurgent bands, who had adopted the fashion of the Mings, and allowed all their hair to grow.

"Many of these unfortunate persons were very young: some were not sixteen years of age; while others had gray hair. Scarcely were they thrown on the ground pell-mell, when they were compelled to kneel; but the greater part of them was so debilitated from suffering, that they could not keep in this position, and rolled in the mud. An executioner's assistant then picked them up, and arranged them all in a row; while three executioners placed themselves behind them and waited the fatal moment. You doubtless recollect those horrible figures whom we have often seen together in the *cortege* [procession] of the criminal judge of Canton—those figures dressed in a red blouse, and wearing a copper crown, adorned above the ears with two long pheasant's feathers. Well! These were the executioners who now waited the signal with a rude and heavy cutlass in their hands. These enormous weapons are about two feet long, and the back of the blade is two inches thick: altogether it is a cumbersome instrument, shaped like a Chinese razor, with a rude handle of wood.

"A mandarin who closed the *cortege*, then entered the enclosure. He was adorned with the white ball, and held in his hand a board, inscribed with the order for execution. As soon as this man appeared the frightful work began. The executioner's assistants, each clothed in a long black robe, and wearing a sort of head-dress of iron wickerwork, seized the criminals from behind, and passing their arms under the shoulders of their victims, gave them a swinging movement, which made them stretch out their necks. The executioner who was now in front, holding his sword in both hands, threw all his strength into the weapon, and divided the cervical vertebra with incredible rapidity, severing the head from the body at a single blow. The executioner never had to strike twice; for even if the flesh was not completely cut through, the weight was sufficient to tear it, and the head rolled on the ground. An assistant then levelled the victim with a kick, for the corpse would otherwise have remained in a kneeling position. After three or four decapitations, the executioner changed his weapon; the edge of the blade seeming completely turned. The execution of these fifty-three wretches only lasted some minutes.

"When the last head had fallen, the mandarins retired from the scene as silent as they had come. Seeing the highest provincial officers present at the execution of these unfortunate men, I was struck with the reflection that in all countries—horrible to say—the political scaffold has been elevated instead of degraded. After the departure of the mandarins, the executioner picked up all the heads, and threw them into a chest brought for the purpose. At the same time the assistants took the chains off the victims as they lay in a pool of blood. The heads were carried away, but the bodies were left on the place of execution.

"A lamentable scene then commenced. A troop of women with dishevelled

hair approached the fatal spot, shrieking aloud in wild disorder. These unhappy beings were endeavoring to distinguish their fathers, their husbands, and their children, among the headless corpses. It was a frightful scene to see them hurrying about, pondering, and constantly mistaken among these headless remains. This search continued all day, accompanied by a mournful noise; funeral dirges being mingled with cries and sobs. The women never ceased repeating that kind of chant common to all funeral ceremonies and which was composed, it is said, in the time of the Mings. It is a sort of rhythmical plaint, in which the same words constantly recur: 'Oh, misery! Oh, despair! My happiness is gone forever! Your kindness will no longer soften the bitterness of life! Alone and bereaved of all, I can only weep and die over your ashes!' and so on.

"To these details, which I saw with my own eyes, I should add some others which have been communicated to me by the Chinese. When the criminals left their prison, each was provided with a cake. This was one of those pies cooked by steam, and filled with sweetmeats, that you have often seen on the table of mandarins.

"I asked the reason of this practice, and was informed that the criminal stomach was filled for two reasons. First, that the illusion of blood should not be too copious; and, secondly, that the soul, famished by too long an abstinence, might not torment those who separated it from its mortal tenement. I give you this explanation, that nothing may be omitted. The following particular statement is curious. It was given me by a man of letters, who stood by my side during the horrid spectacle. The execution did not take place quite according to rule. Generally the culprit is brought before a kind of altar, formed of stones brought from the eighteen provinces. This expiatory altar is raised on the day previous to the execution, and when all is over it is taken down. This custom—so thought my informant—is excellent. It inspires the criminal with feelings of contrition, because he seems to pay the penalty of his crime before the inhabitants of the empire."

8.4 AND 8.5 PRECEPTS AND ODES PUBLISHED BY HONG XIUQUAN IN 1852 AND 1853: "THE TEN COMMANDMENTS" AND "THE ODE FOR YOUTH"

Examinations of the Taiping movement have shown that three major sources for the rebel ideology were the *Zhou Li* and other Confucian classics, Christian tracts and translations of the Scripture published by foreign

missionary societies, and the Buddhist and Daoist folk religions of south China. The documents printed below are translations of the earliest extant versions of two major Taiping documents.

The "Ten Commandments" of the Taiping were printed in the early years of the rebellion. Each commandment is followed by a commentary and a poem. The "Ode to Youth" was designed to lay out clearly and simply the roles and duties of Taiping followers.

3.4 The Ten Commandments

Decalogue

THE TEN CELESTIAL COMMANDMENTS WHICH ARE TO BE
CONSTANTLY OBSERVED

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT
THOU SHALT HONOUR AND WORSHIP
THE GREAT GOD.

Remark. The great God is the universal Father of all men, in every nation under heaven. Every man is produced and nourished by him: every man ought, therefore, morning and evening, to honour and worship him, with acknowledgements of his goodness. It is a common saying, that Heaven produces, nourishes, and protects men. Also, that being provided with food we must not deceive Heaven. Therefore, whoever does not worship the great God breaks the commands of Heaven.

The Hymn says:

Imperial Heaven, the Supreme God is the true Spirit (God):
Worship him every morning and evening, and you will be taken up;
You ought deeply to consider the ten celestial commands,
And not by your foolishness obscure the right principles of nature,

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT
THOU SHALT NOT WORSHIP CORRUPT SPIRITS
(GODS).

Remark. The great God says, Thou shalt have no other spirits (gods) besides me. Therefore all besides the great God are corrupt spirits (gods), deceiving and destroying mankind; they must on no account be worshipped: whoever worships the whole class of corrupt spirits (gods) offends against the commands of Heaven.

The Hymn says:

Corrupt devils very easily delude the souls of men.
If you perversely believe in them, you will at last go down to hell.

We exhort you all, brave people, to awake from your lethargy,
And early make your peace with your exalted Heavenly Father.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT
THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE
GREAT GOD IN VAIN.

Remark. The name of the great God is Jehovah, which men must not take in vain. Whoever takes God's name in vain, and rails against Heaven, offends against this command.

The Hymn says:

Our exalted Heavenly Father is infinitely honorable;
Those who disobey and profane his name, seldom come to a good end.
If unacquainted with the true doctrine, you should be on your guard,
For those who wantonly blaspheme involve themselves in endless crime.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT
ON THE SEVENTH DAY, THE DAY OF WORSHIP,
YOU SHOULD PRAISE THE GREAT GOD FOR HIS
GOODNESS.

Remark. In the beginning the great God made heaven and earth, land and sea, men and things, in six days; and having finished his works on the seventh day, he called it the day of rest (or Sabbath): therefore all the men of the world, who enjoy the blessing of the great God, should on every seventh day especially reverence and worship the great God, and praise him for his goodness.

The Hymn says:

All the happiness enjoyed in the world comes from Heaven;
It is therefore reasonable that men should give thanks and sing:
At the daily morning and evening meal there should be thanksgiving,
But on the seventh day, the worship should be more intense.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT
THOU SHALT HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY
MOTHER, THAT THY DAYS MAY BE PROLONGED.

Remark. Whoever disobeys his parents breaks this command.

The Hymn says:

History records that Shun honoured his parents to the end of his days,
Causing them to experience the interest pleasure and delight:
August Heaven will abundantly reward all who act thus,
And do not disappoint the expectation of the authors of their being.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT
THOU SHALT NOT KILL OR INJURE MEN.

Remark. He who kills another kills himself, and he who injures another injures himself. Whoever does either of these breaks the above command.

The Hymn says:

The whole world is one family, and all men are brethren,
How can they be permitted to kill and destroy one another?
The outward form and the inward principle are both conferred by Heaven:
Allow every one, then, to enjoy the ease and comfort which he desires.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY OR ANY THING UNCLEAN.

Remark. All the men in the world are brethren, and all the women in the world are sisters. Among the sons and daughters of the celestial hall the males are on one side and the females on the other, and are not allowed to intermix. Should either men or women practice lewdness they are considered outcasts, as having offended against one of the chief commands of Heaven. The casting of infamous glances, the forbearing of boastful imaginations, the smoking of foreign tobacco (opium), or the singing of blasphemous songs must all be considered as breaches of this command.

The Hymn says:

Lust and lewdness constitute the chief transgression,
Those who practice it become outcasts, and are the objects of pity,
If you wish to enjoy the substantial happiness of heaven,
It is necessary to deny yourself and earnestly cultivate virtue.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT THOU SHALT NOT ROB OR STEAL.

Remark. Riches and poverty are determined by the great God; but whoever robs or plunders the property of others transgresses this command.

The Hymn says:

Rest contented with your station, however poor, and do not steal.
Robbery and violence are low and abandoned practices.
Those who injure others really injure themselves.
Let the noble-minded among you immediately reform.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT THOU SHALT NOT UTTER FALSEHOOD.

Remark. All those who tell lies, and indulge in devilish deceptions, with every kind of coarse and abandoned talk, offend against this command.

The Hymn says:

In your daily conduct do not harbour covetous desires.
When involved in the sea of lust the consequences are very serious.
The above injunctions were handed down on Mount Sinai;
And to this day the celestial commands retain all their force.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

THOU SHALT NOT CONCEIVE A COVETOUS DESIRE

Remark. When a man looks upon the beauty of another's wife and daughters with covetous desires, or when he regards the elegance of another man's possessions with covetous desires, or when he engages in gambling, he offends against this command.

The Hymn says:

In your daily conduct do not harbour covetous desires.
When involved in the sea of lust the consequences are very serious.
The above injunction was handed down on Mount Sinai;
And to this day the celestial command retains all its force.

8.5 Taiping Religious Verses (from "The Ode for Youth")

ON THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

Let the true Spirit, the great God,
Be honoured and adorned by all nations;
Let all the inhabitants of the world
Unite in the worship, morning and evening.

Above and below, look where you may,
All things are imbued with the Divine favour.
At the beginning, in six days,
All things were created, perfect and complete.

Whether circumcised or uncircumcised,
Who is not produced by God?
Reverently praise the Divine favour
And you will obtain eternal glory.

ON REVERENCE FOR JESUS.

Jesus, his first-born Son,
Was in former times sent by God:
He willingly gave his life to redeem us from sin;
Of a truth his merits are pre-eminent.

His cross was hard to bear;
The sorrowing clouds obscured the sun.
The adorable Son, the honoured of Heaven,
Died for you, the children of men.

After his resurrection he ascended to heaven;
Resplendent in glory, he wields authority supreme.
In him we know what we may trust
To secure salvation and ascend to Heaven.

ON THE HONOUR DUE TO PARENTS.

As grain is stored against a day of need,
So men bring up children to tend their old age:
A filial son begets filial children,
The recompense here is truly wonderful.
Do you ask how this our body
Is to attain to length of years?
Keep the fifth command, we say,
And honour and emolument will descend upon you.

ON THE COURT.

The imperial court is an awe-inspiring spot,
Let those about it dread celestial majesty;
Life and death emanate from Heaven's son,
Let every officer avoid disobedience.

ON THE DUTIES OF THE SOVEREIGN.

When one man presides over the government
All nations become settled and tranquilized:
When the sovereign grasps the sceptre of power
Calumny and corruption sink and disappear.

ON THE DUTIES OF MINISTERS.

When the prince is upright, ministers are true;
When the sovereign is intelligent, ministers will be honest.
E and Chow are models worthy of imitation:
They acted uprightly and aided the government....

ON THE DUTIES OF A FATHER.

When the main beam is straight the joists will be regular;
When a father is strict his duty will be fulfilled;
Let him not provoke his children to wrath,
And delightful harmony will pervade the dwelling.

ON THE DUTIES OF A MOTHER.

Ye mothers, beware of partiality,
But tenderly instruct your children in virtue;
When you are a fit example to your daughters,
The happy feeling will reach to the clouds.

ON THE DUTIES OF SONS.

Sons, be patters to your wives;
Consider obedience to parents the chief duty;

Do not listen to the tattle of women
And you will not be estranged from your own flesh.

ON THE DUTIES OF DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW.

Ye that are espoused into other families,
Be gentle and yielding, and your duty is fulfilled;
Do not quarrel with your sisters-in-law,
And thereby vex the old father and mother....

OF THE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS.

Unbending firmness is natural to the man,
Love for a wife should be qualified by prudence;
And should the lions roar
Let not terror fill the mind.

ON THE DUTIES OF WIVES.

Women, be obedient to your three male relatives,
And do not disobey your lords:
When hens crow in the morning
Sorrow may be expected in the family.

ON THE DUTIES OF THE MALE SEX.

Let every man have his own partner
And maintain the duties of the human relations
Firm and unbending; his duties lie from home,
But he should avoid such things as cause suspicion.

ON THE DUTIES OF THE FEMALE SEX.

The duty of women is to maintain chastity,
She should shun proximity to the other sex;
Sober and decorous she should keep at home:
Thus she can secure happiness and felicity.

ON THE CONTRACTING MARRIAGES.

Marriages are the result of some relation in a former state
The disposal of which rests with Heaven.
When contracted, affection should flow in a continued stream,
And the association should be uninterrupted.

ON MANAGING THE HEART.

For the purpose of controlling the whole body
God has given to man an intelligent mind;

When the heart is correct it becomes the true regulator
To which the senses and members are all obedient.

ON MANAGING THE EYES.

The various corruptions first delude the eye,
But if the eye is correct all evil will be avoided;
Let the pupil of the eye be sternly fixed,
And the light of the body will shine up to heaven.

ON MANAGING THE FEET.

Let the feet walk in the path of rectitude,
And ever follow it, without treading awry;
For the countless by-paths of life
Lead only to mischief in the end.

THE WAY TO GET TO HEAVEN.

Honour and disgrace come from a man's self;
But men should exert themselves
To keep the Ten Commandments,
And they will enjoy bliss in Heaven.

8.6 ZENG GUOFAN: A PROCLAMATION AGAINST THE BANDITS OF GUANGDONG AND GUANGXI, 1854

Zeng Guofan (1811–1872) was from a middle-peasant landowning family in Xiangxiang, Hunan. In 1838 he obtained his *jinsshi* degree and was appointed a Hanlin Academy scholar. He was noted for his clear and practical suggestions for addressing affairs of state. In 1852, when his mother died, in accord with the traditional mourning practice, he resigned his post as the vice minister of the Board of Rites and went back to Hunan where he received the imperial order to form militia units to fight the Taiping.

The Qing efforts to repulse the Taiping were uphill struggles in the early years and Zeng's efficiency as the commander was hampered by the chronic lack of funds. His situation improved, however, when he was given official sanction to take control of the tax revenues in the provinces where his armies were operating.

Zeng Guofan's proclamation of 1854 was a powerful evocation of the scholar-literati's view of the rebels. It stressed their affinity with other

rebels in Chinese history and compared them to Li Zicheng and Zhang Xianzhong. The document was notably anti-Christian and its references to the "kingly way" and the ethos of the Confucian *junzi*² draw a clear line between the forces of orthodox "light" and heterodox "darkness."

It has been five years since the rebels Hung Hsiu-ch'üan and Yang Hsiu-ch'ing started their rebellion. They have inflicted bitter sorrow upon millions of people and devastated more than 5000 *li* of *chou* [regions] and *hsien* [counties]. Wherever they pass, boats of all sizes, and people rich and poor alike, have all been plundered and stripped bare; not once inch of grass has been left standing. The clothing has been stripped from the bodies of those captured by these bandits, and their money has been seized. Anyone with five taels or more of silver who does not contribute it to the bandits is forthwith decapitated. Men are given one *ho* [$\frac{1}{10}$ th pint] of rice per day, and forced to march in the forefront in battle, to construct city walls, and dredge moats. Women are also given one *ho* of rice per day, and forced to stand guard on the parapets at night, and to haul rice and carry coal. The feet of women who refuse to unbind them are cut off and shown to other women as a warning. The corpses of boatmen who secretly conspired to fell were hung upside down to show other boatmen as a warning. The Yüeh [Guangdong and Guangxi] bandits indulge themselves in luxury and high position, while the people in our own Yangtze provinces living under their coercion are treated worse than animals. This cruelty and brutality appalls anyone with blood in his veins.

Ever since the times of Yao, Shun, and the Three Dynasties, sages, generation after generation, have upheld the Confucian teachings, stressing proper human relationships, between ruler and minister, father and son, superiors and subordinates, the high and the low, all in their proper place, just as hats and shoes are not interchangeable. The Yüeh bandits have stolen a few scraps from the foreign barbarians and worship the Christian religion. From their bogus ruler and bogus chief ministers down to their soldiers and menial underlings, all are called brothers. They say that only heaven can be called father; aside from him, all fathers among the people are called brothers, and all mothers are called sisters. Peasants are not allowed to till the land for themselves and pay taxes, for they say that the fields all belong to the T'ien Wang [Heavenly King]. Merchants are not allowed to trade for profit, for they say that all goods belong to the T'ien Wang. Scholars may not read the Confucian classics, for they have their so-called teachings of Jesus and the New Testament. In a single day several thousand years of Chinese ethical principles and proper human relationships, classical books, social institutions and statutes have all been completely swept away. This is not just a crisis for our Ch'ing dynasty, but the most extraordinary

2. The "ideal man" imagined and described by Confucius in his *Analects*.

crisis of all time for the Confucian teachings, which is why our Confucius and Mencius are weeping bitterly in the nether world. How can any educated person sit idly by without thinking of doing something?

Since ancient times, those with meritorious accomplishments during their lifetimes have become spirits after death; the Kingly Way governs the living and the Way of the Spirits governs among the dead. Even rebellious ministers and wicked sons of the most vicious and vile sort show respect and awe toward the spirits. When Li Tzu-ch'eng reached Ch'ü-fu [Confucius' birthplace in Shantung province], he did not molest the Temple of the Sage.³ When Chang Hsien-chung reached Tzu-t'ung, he sacrificed to Wen Ch'ang [the patron spirit of literature].⁴ But the Yueh bandits burned the school at Shen-chou, destroyed the wooden tablet of Confucius, and wildly scattered the tablets of the Ten Paragons in the two corridors all over the ground.⁵ Afterwards, wherever they have passed, in every district, the first thing they have done is to burn down the temples, defiling the shrines and maiming the statues even of loyal ministers and righteous heroes such as the awesome Kuan Yü and Yüen Fei.⁶ Even Buddhist and Taoist temples, shrines of guardian deities and altars to local gods have all been burned, and every statue destroyed. The ghosts and spirits in the world of darkness are enraged at this, and want to avenge their resentment.

I, the Governor-General, having received His Imperial Majesty's command leading 20,000 men advancing together on land and water, vow that I shall sleep on nettles and ship gall [to strengthen my determination] to exterminate these vicious traitors, to rescue our captured boats, and to deliver the persecuted people, not only in order to relieve the Emperor of his strenuous and conscientious labors from dawn to dusk, but also to comfort Confucius and Mencius for their silent sufferings over the proper human relationships; and only to avenge the millions who have died unjust deaths, but also to avenge the insults to all the spirits.

Therefore, let this proclamation be disseminated far and near so that all may know the following: Any red-blooded hero who assembles a company of righteous troops to assist in our extermination campaign will be taken in as my personal friend, and the troops given rations. Any Confucian gentleman who cherishes the Way, is pained at Christianity running rampant over the land, and who, in a towering rage, wants to defend our Way, will be made a member of the Governor-General's personal staff and treated as a guest teacher. Any

benevolent person, stirred by moral indignation, who contributes silver or assists with provisions, will be given a treasury receipt and a commission from the Board of Civil Appointments for a donation of 1000 *chin* [1 *chin* = 1½ lb.] or less, and a special memorial will be composed requesting a liberal reward for a donation of over 1000 *chin*. If anyone voluntarily returns after a long stay among the bandits, and kills one of their leaders or leads a city to surrender, he will be taken into the army of the Governor-General to the Emperor, will be given an official title. Anyone who has lived under the bandits' coercion for some years, whose hair has grown several inches long, but who discards his weapon when the fighting is about to commence and returns to the fold barehanded, will receive an amnesty from the death sentence, and will be given travel expenses to return home.

In the past, at the end of the Han, T'ang, Yuan, and Ming, bands of rebels were innumerable, all because of foolish rulers and misgovernment, so that none of these rebellions could be stamped out. But today the Son of Heaven is deeply concerned and examines his character in order to reform himself, worships Heaven, and is sympathetic to the people. He has not increased the land tax, nor has he conscripted soldiers from households. With the profound benevolence of the sages, he is suppressing the cruel and worthless bandits. It does not require any great wisdom to see that sooner or later they will all be destroyed.

Those of you who have been coerced into joining the rebels, or who willingly follow the traitors, and oppose the Imperial Crusade [are warned that] when the Imperial forces sweep down it will no longer be possible to discriminate between the good and evil—every person will be crushed.

I, the Governor-General, am scant in virtue and of meager ability. I rely solely on two words, trust and loyalty, as the foundation for running the army. Above are the sun and the moon, below the ghosts and spirits; in this world, the vast waters of the Yangtze, and in the other world, the souls of loyal ministers and stalwart heroes who gave their lives in battle against previous rebellions. Let all peer into my heart and listen to my words.

Upon arrival, this proclamation immediately has the force of law. Do not disregard it!

3. Li Tzu-ch'eng (Li Zicheng) was a major rebel leader at the end of the Ming dynasty.

4. Chang Hsien-chung (Zhang Xianzhong) was another important rebel leader at the end of the Ming period. Wen Ch'ang was the God of Literature, closely associated with the literati, and with the civil service examination system.

5. The Ten Paragons were ten famous Confucians, whose tablets were arranged along corridors, east and west, in Confucian temples.

6. Two famous generals and loyal officials. Kuan Yu was deified as the God of War.