

MA CHIEN-CHUNG'S MISSION TO INDIA IN 1881:

His Travel Account, *Nan-Hsing-Chi* 南行記 \*

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I

My subject today, Ma Chien-chung 馬建忠 (1844-1900), was usually known in Japan either as the author of *Ma-shih wên-t'ung* 馬氏文通 (posthumously published in 1904), a pioneer modern book of grammar of literary Chinese, or as a tough negotiator or political agent with whom Japanese diplomats had to deal in Korea in the early 1880s. When I read a paper on Ma Chien-chung at the 1970 autumn convention in Tokyo of the Association of International Law, a venerable professor in the audience said, perhaps partly out of courtesy to me, that until then he had not realized that Ma the grammarian and Ma the negotiator were really one and the same person. As a matter of fact, Ma Chien-chung was, as the French historian Henri Cordier (1845-1925), who knew him personally, put it, "Jack of all trades in the service of Li Hung-chang, at one and the same time an interpreter of the French, a legal adviser, an expert on mining, a maritime customs tao-tai at Tientsin, an examiner at the Torpedo School and the Telegraph School, a judge of the Admiralty Court, an inspector of the Pei-yang Fleet, an administrator of the Taku Dockyard, a manager of the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Co., ..., or an emissary dispatched to Korea, Annam, or Calcutta."

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\* This paper was read at a seminar, chaired by Prof. Tê-chao Wang, of the Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong, on November 9, 1978. It was also read in an abridged form, on the 7th of the same month, at a lunch talk, chaired by Prof. Frank H. H. King, of the Center of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong. The paper is printed here in a slightly revised form. It will be developed into a fully-documented article in Japanese to be published elsewhere in due course of time.

Ma Chien-chung was born in 1844 in Tan-t'u hsien 丹徒縣, Kiangsu Province, in a Christian family. His Christian name was Mathias. His father was an apothecary, who also practiced medicine and who later became a merchant dealing in rice and cotton clothes. Besides receiving a traditional education, Ma studied western learning for some seven or eight years in a French-Jesuit school called Hsü-hui Kung-hsüeh 徐滙公學, or the College of St. Ignatius in Zikawei, near Shanghai. Afterwards, he was engaged for some years in Tientsin in the so-called *yang-wu* 洋務 (foreign matters) under the Viceroy Li Hung-chang 李鴻章, perhaps as a clerk or interpreter.

In 1877, he was sent to Paris to study "diplomacy" (*chiao-shé* 交涉), "international law" (*kung-fa* 公法), and "jurisprudence" (*lü-li* 律例). He stayed in Europe for three years. He studied at the Faculty of Law of Paris and also at the School of Political Sciences (l'Ecole libre des sciences politiques), working at the same time as an interpreter at the newly opened Chinese legation. In 1879 he received his degree of *licencier en droit*. In the same year he got a diploma from the School of Political Sciences.

After his return to China in 1880, his activities under Li Hung-chang were many-sided. He was a capable administrator or *entrepreneur*, and also a tough negotiator speaking fluent French. After serving in 1890-91 as general manager of the Shanghai Cotton Cloth Mill Co., he took retirement in Shanghai, probably because he now felt frustrated in public life.

In 1900, in the midst of the Boxer turmoil, he was working at the temporary residence in Shanghai of Li Hung-chang, when a 7,000-word telegram came from the Russian court. He sat up all night translating this, and in his exhaustion he developed a fever, which turned out to be fatal. Ma Chien-chung thus died on Monday, September 3, 1900.

## II

The collection of Ma Chien-chung's writing, *Shi-k'o-chai chi-yen chihsing* 適可齋記言記行 (published in 1896) contains eleven occasional memoranda or treatises and also five accounts of his missions as emissary, investigator or political agent. Through these writing are revealed his

sophisticated understanding of the economics, politics and social dynamics of the contemporary western world, as well as the historical development of modern international relations – all intermingled with bitter and almost deseperating criticism of the actual conditions in his own country.

Out of my interest in this fascinating man, I have so far published three articles in Japanese on Ma and some of his ranging expertise. The first article was on his views of modern diplomacy and diplomatic service, in which I paid special attention to his idea about how to build up a permanent professional diplomatic service for China. The second was on his views of China's naval problems, especially how to build up a professional officer corps. The third was on his views of modern railways, that is to say, the urgent need of railways for China, how to raise the funds needed for the construction, what kinds of engineering problem were involved, and also how to manage or conduct a railway.

Now I am engaged in a totally different aspect of the man. I have been working, now for more than one year, in preparation for writing an article on Ma Chien-chung's account in the form of day-to-day journal of his mission to India in 1881, entitled *Nan-hsing chi* 南行記 (An account of the journey to the South). As a number of related topics and problems yet to be clarified are involved in this research, what I could and would like to present here is a sort of interim report of what I am now doing.

### III

In 1881, Ma Chien-chung was sent by Li Hung-chang to India in order to obtain information about the opium question, especially about the opium revenue system, and also to sound out the Indian government on the possibility or practicability of gradually reducing and eventually terminating the opium trade to China by agreement. He carried Li Hung-chang's letters of introduction to the Governor-General of India and to the Governor of Hong Kong.

According to his travel account, *Nan-hsing chi*, Ma received oral instructions from Li Hung-chang on July 18, 1881. On the next day he left Tientsin aboard a steamship. After anchoring one day at Chefoo and

stopping over for five days in Shanghai, he arrived in Hong Kong, where he was given letters of introduction from the Governor of Hong Kong to the Governor-General of India, to the Governor of the Straits Settlements at Singapore, and to the Governor of Bombay. He then proceeded to Singapore, anchoring one day *en route* at Saigon. After staying in Singapore for two days and in Penang for another two days, on August 29 he landed at Calcutta, where he spent four days, staying apparently at the Great Eastern Hotel.

He travelled by train as far as Ambala, and then took a horse carriage for Simla, the summer capital of British India, where he arrived on September 5. He was put up at the government guest house and was treated with much courtesy and great hospitality. He stayed in Simla for nine days, during which he had one interview with Governor-General, Lord Ripon (Li-p'êng 黎彭), and two long interviews with Evelyn Baring (Pei-lêng 貝冷) (later Lord Cromer), financial member of the Supreme Council of the Governor-General. He left Simla on September 14. From Ambala he travelled by train, going through Rajputana, a great region of Hindoo native states, and arrived in Bombay on September 17. He went to Poona to see the Governor of Bombay, Sir James Fergusson (Fu-kê-sung 福葛松).

Ma Chien-chung sailed from Bombay on September 24. After calling at Colombo, Penang, and Singapore, he reached Hong Kong on October 12, where he stayed for three days. On October 18 he arrived safely back in Shanghai. Thus ends the narrative of the travel account, *Nan-hsing chi*. All together, it was a journey of three months.

If you read only *Nan-hsing chi*, you will have the impression that Ma travelled alone. As a matter of fact, he had a travel companion in a young educated man named Wu Kuang-p'ei 吳廣霈 (Wu Han-t'ao 吳瀚濤). This man wrote a 26,000-character detailed journal of the journey, entitled *Nan-hsing jih-chi* 南行日記. This is printed side by side with Ma's 20,000-character *Nan-hsing chi* in *Hsiao-fang-hu-chai yü-ti ts'ung-ch'ao* 小方壺齋輿地叢鈔, compiled by Wang Hsi-ch'i 王錫祺. According to this journal, Wu Kuang-p'ei was a native of Ching-hsien 涇縣, Anhwei Province. He had studied the so-called *yang-wu* (foreign matters) under

Hsü Shou-p'êng 徐壽朋 (Hsü Chin-chai 徐進齋 ) and wanted to serve abroad, perhaps as a diplomat. He had been in Japan in some capacity. At the invitation of Ma Chien-chung, he accompanied him to India as a sort of *attaché*. Upon his return in China, he seems to have been sent to Washington, D. C., as an *attaché* to the newly appointed Chinese envoy to the United States, Chêng Tsao-ju 鄭藻如 (Chêng Yü-hsüan 鄭玉軒), former maritime customs tao-tai of Tientsin. In *Hsiao-fang-hu-chai yü-ti ts'ung-ch'ao* is also printed a 550-character undated treatise of his, entitled *T'ien-hsia ta-shih t'ung-lun* 天下大勢通論 (An introduction to the general situation of the world). This paper discusses a tripartite precarious balance of power between China, Russia, and Japan, and advocates the necessity for China to cooperate with Britain and to extend assistance to Korea. As of 1881, he was at the age of about 27 *sui*, that is to say, some ten years younger than Ma Chien-chung.

Ma barely mentions Wu Kuang-p'ei in his *Nan-hsing chi* except that he says twice that he talked with a "friend" (*yu-jen* 友人 ) while on board. On the other hand, Wu's *Nan-hsing jih-chi* constantly mentions Ma and his activities. While Ma's account is mainly concerned with the official side of the journey, such as the contact and negotiations with British authorities or observations relating to economic and political conditions, Wu's journal describes cities and landscapes of the places visited and manners and customs of local inhabitants. It also records in detail social contacts that Ma and he had with Chinese friends especially in Shanghai and Hong Kong — for instance, their mixing together and drinking in Shanghai with Ch'ien Chêng 錢徵 (Ch'ien Hsin-po 錢昕伯 ), chief editor of the *Shên-pao* 申報 , and several gentlemen with unconventional ways like Li Shih-fên 李士棻 (Li Yü-hsien 李芋仙 ) or Yao Fu-ch'iu 姚賦秋 , or their daily contact in Hong Kong with Wang T'ao 王韜 (Wang Tzŭ-ch'üan 王紫銓 ), father-in-law of Ch'ien Chêng and editor-in-chief of the *Tsun-wan yat-po* (*Hsün-huan jih-pao*) 循環日報. Wu's journal also reveals his own interest in military affairs and his awareness of the decline of China's international position. A number of passages or sentences in Ma's account are almost exactly the same as those in Wu's journal. This suggests that Wu's journal was probably used as a major source when

Ma drafted or elaborated his travel account.

#### IV

Now, let me talk about Ma Chien-chung's official activities during this journey.

On the very day he arrived in Shanghai, he bought several western books on the opium question and read them while in Shanghai and on board a ship to Hong Kong, and also after his arrival there. In Hong Kong, besides a long formal interview with Sir John Pope Hennessy (Yen-nieh-ssü 燕梟斯), Governor of Hong Kong, he talked several times more or less confidentially with Dr. E. J. Eitel (Ou-tê-li 歐德理), private secretary to the Governor. He was also given free access to ninety-two files of documents relating to the opium question covering the previous ten years, and he took copious notes from these in Chinese translation. He was even shown a copy of a current confidential dispatch of Hennessy to London.

According to Ma's own memorandum of his conversation with Hennessy as reproduced in *Nan-hsing chi*, he pointed out to Hennessy that the current rate of opium duties in China, the *likin* included, amounted at most to only 60% *ad valorem*, which was far less than, for instance, the 120% import duty in Britain on French wine, an article that was a hundred times less harmful than opium. China wanted, based on the opium clause of the 1876 Chefoo Convention, still unratified by Britain, to get a substantial increase in the rate of opium taxation; however, he feared that might bring about an increase in smuggling too. Ma had been dispatched, he explained, in order to find an appropriate measure with which China would at one and the same time be able both to increase the opium revenue and to exterminate the opium smuggling. He suggested that monopoly by the Chinese government on the import of Indian opium might serve both of those purposes and moreover make possible the eventual dissolution of the opium trade through gradual decrease of trade. Hennessy's response to Ma's proposition was rather favourable in a general way. And he encouraged Ma's idea of approaching the government of India on the matter.

Incidentally, as any student of history who is more or less versed in the opium problem in China of those days may verify, a man named Joseph Samuel (Sha-miao 沙苗) had come to Tientsin and Peking in the spring of this year. He proposed a scheme roughly to the effect that Britain should establish a world monopoly in opium and become the sole trader both with the Chinese and other markets, and that Samuel should be appointed sole agent for the import of opium for five years, guaranteeing the Chinese government the payment of 100 taels per picul, and that if Britain and China undertook to stop the trade he would pursue that by annually decreasing the amount imported.

Although Samuel's plan was not accepted by the Chinese government, it seems to have acted as a factor behind Li Hung-chang's decision in dispatching Ma Chien-chung to India. According to Thomas Wade, British minister in Peking, Samuel was "an intelligent gentleman connected with money agencies," or "a private speculator." "He had certainly no kind of official position, but the Grand Secretary Li [Hung-chang], who received Mr. Samuel, without any introduction from Consul or Minister, appeared to have imagined that he was invested with official responsibility." (Wade to Granville, 3 June 1882, *P. P.: China No. 3 (1882) (C.-3395)*, p. 79.) The strange thing here is that, according to Ma's account, when he asked Eitel about Samuel, he was told that Samuel was "an official of the India Office in London" (*Lun-tun Yin-tu-pu ssü-yüan* 倫敦印度部司員), this time dispatched by the British government and bearing a certifying letter of the Foreign Office. Hennessy and Eitel even made not unfavourable comments on Samuel's plan.

In Singapore Ma had a long talk with the Colonial Secretary, Cecil Clementi Smith (Shih-mi-tê 市米德), who was then the acting Governor of the Straits Settlements. Thus he learned about the opium trade and the opium revenue in Singapore. The governor, Sir Frederick Aloysius Weld (Wei-êrh-tê 味爾德), himself received Ma at the governor's summer house in Penang. He gave Ma a copy of the regulations relating to the opium trade and the opium refineries in Singapore and Penang.

In Calcutta Ma was given an explanation about the government opium monopoly system from the private secretary (Kao-k'o-lai 高克來

by name) to the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Ashley Eden (Ya-san I-têng 亞散依登). The official (Fu-pei-ssü 福貝斯 by name) in charge of opium affairs took him to see the opium auction room where more than three hundreds buyers were present. He noticed that Jewish merchants were most numerous among them. The same official also showed Ma very detailed regulations of the Opium Bureau and the annual report of the preceding year from the Opium Bureau to the Governor-General.

The highlight of Ma's mission to India was the nine-day stay in Simla. During this stay he had an interview with Governor-General, Lord Ripon, on September 7 and two interviews with Evelyn Baring, who was in charge of finance, on the following two days. Volume 12 of *I-shu han-k'ao* 譯署函稿, included in Li Hung-chang's Collected Writings, reproduces Ma's own memoranda of these three conversations, of which the memorandum of his first conversation with Baring, apparently the most important of the three, is also reproduced in *Nan-hsing chi*.

In a dispatch from Simla to the India Office in London, it is simply stated that Ripon informed Ma that "no formal negotiations could take place between the Chinese Government and the Government of India direct; but that if he could place himself in communication with Major Baring, he could obtain unofficially any information on the subject of opium which might be of use to him." According to Ma's memorandum, he called Ripon's attention to the anti-opium agitation in the English Parliament. He also told Ripon that, unlike the customs import duties on opium, China could freely increase the *likin* rate, and that if the Chinese native opium production increased still more by a removal of the prohibition of the growth of poppy, the Indian opium would have a poorer market. Ma also recorded that Ripon said he already knew through a letter from Hennessy Ma's suggested plan of a "monopoly of import of opium" (*t'ung-p'an ch'êng-mai ya-p'ien i-chieh* 通盤承買鴉片一節) which he found "generally practicable" (*ta-tuan k'o-hsing* 大端可行) although "specific details were yet to be carefully discussed" (*hsi-chieh shang hsü hsiang-i* 細節尚須詳議).

As for the Ma-Baring interview, we can compare Ma's two memoranda with the "Memorandum of conversation with Mah Kie Tchung" drawn



up by Baring himself. According to Baring, Ma spoke French fluently, so that they did not need the aid of an interpreter. Baring made it clear to Ma that any diplomatic negotiations had to be conducted through the British minister at Peking, that he was therefore only expressing his own personal opinion, and that even his personal opinion could not be given in the form of a written document. Ma hoped that in the event of overtures being made by his government to the British government on the opium question, the Government of India would be prepared to consider China's proposal. "The general nature of the proposal, which the Chinese Government was inclined to make," Baring records, "was that the Government of India should supply the opium required by China to the Chinese Government direct; that the latter should engage on their part to pay a fixed sum for a certain term of years, — which he [Ma] said might be 30, 40, or 50, — and that the amount to be paid should gradually decrease." To this, Baring replied that he could not express any definite opinion without being informed in greater detail as to the precise nature of the proposal.

This much was, according to Baring, "all of importance that occurred," although they had a good deal of desultory conversation on the opium question. Among other things, for instance, Baring explained to Ma the general features of the two different systems under which opium revenue was raised in Bengal and Western India. Baring endeavoured in vain to find out whether the true aim of the Chinese government was really to suppress the use of opium or merely to obtain a larger revenue from it.

Whereas Baring's memorandum of his conversation with Ma Chien-chung was topically arranged in thirteen paragraphs, Ma's two memoranda of his talk with Baring were rather like the transcript of a dialogue in the form of questions and answers. A cursory reading of Ma's memoranda might give the reader the impression of looking at a play of sword-crossing in the form of exchange of words. Like Ripon, Baring is also recorded here to have stated that the plan of a "monopoly of import of opium" seemed "generally practicable," although "specific details were yet to be discussed." Furthermore, Baring proceeded to raise specifically such questions as whether the Chinese government itself or a private company

should be the monopolist, the difficulty of using the same method both in Bengal and Western India, how the annual sale price of opium should be determined, whether the amount to be paid should be decreased at the pace of once every year or, say, once every five years, and whether the opium trade could thus be eventually terminated in 20 or 30 years, as Ma suggested, or in at least 50 years.

As mentioned above, Ma Chien-chung left Simla on September 14 and arrived in Bombay three days later. From Bombay he went to Poona, where the Governor of Bombay, Sir James Fergusson, gave him great hospitality. Fergusson told him that he thought the current import duty on opium in China was very low indeed, suggesting that, since even the opium export duty of India amounted to 120%, the import duty in China should be no less than that.

Back in Bombay, Ma could learn from the official (Pa-ha-k'o 巴哈克 by name) in charge of opium revenue much about the system of revenue from Malwa opium. Next morning he was also shown the related regulations in three volumes. In the afternoon of the same day, an opium magnate, Solomon David Sassoon (Sha-luo-man 沙落滿), who was in charge of the head office of David Sassoon and Company, came to see him and asked how the business he had come to do in India was going.

Ma replied that he had come simply to obtain information. Ma also explained to Sassoon that everybody in China supported the idea of heavily increasing the opium import taxation, that some people proposed a removal of the prohibition on growing poppy, and that he found this proposal not unreasonable. If the proposal were realized, it would certainly diminish the import of opium.

Parenthetically, David Sassoon and Company and some other merchants of Bombay interested in the opium trade with China, knowing that "a Chinese Envoy" had arrived in India to confer on the opium question, sent a memorial dated September 13, 1881, to Governor-General Ripon, in which they urged that "the system of taxation on Indian opium in China may be allowed to remain as at present authorized by the Treaty of Tientsin." A similar memorial of protest was also presented by thirty-seven opium merchants of Calcutta. Solomon David

Sassoon's visit to Ma should, of course, be understood against the background of these moves.

## V

During his journey, Ma Chien-chung met various westerners other than British colonial officials.

For instance, he met in Shanghai the Brazilian minister, Eduardo Callado (K'o *kung-shih* 喀公使), who invited him to lunch. The Italian minister, Fernando de Luca (Lu-chia-tê 蘆嘉德), gave him a dinner party, a gathering of fourteen people from twelve countries, where he met the newly arrived Spanish minister, Don Tibercio Rodriguez y Muños (Lu-li-ko 禄利格). In Hong Kong, the Portuguese consul, José da Silva Loureiro (Lu *ling-shih* 路領事), came to pay a visit to Ma. In Saigon, Ma went to see the acting Governor, Général de Trentinian (Tê-li-ang 德里盎), who asked him to stay for lunch.

In Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Calcutta, and Bombay, Ma Chien-chung made contacts with representatives of the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank. Ewen Cameron (Chia-mo-lung 加末隆), manager of Shanghai branch and an old acquaintance of Ma, invited him for drinks. In Hong Kong, the chief manager of the bank, Thomas Jackson (Chia-k'o-sung 甲克松), came to see him. E. Morris (Mao-li-shih 毛里士), the agent in Calcutta, took him to visit the Presidency Bank and to have a look at things there. Morris then invited him to a dinner, where Ma met two French bankers. G. E. Noble (No-pei-lei 諾貝肋 or 諾貝勒), the agent in Bombay, took him to look at the merchant ship's dockyard, nearby which there were numerous warehouses filled with grain to be exported.

Ewen Cameron in Shanghai, on the above-mentioned occasion of drinking, said the London branch was willing to lend to China up to 20 million pound sterling for railway buildings. "Our bank is well aware," he said, "that the Chinese are far more trustworthy than the Japanese. And we all know that railways are for China what should be most useful with no harm at all. There are many people who want to help her. Although railways cannot be built just now in China, they are certain to be

built in future.” An influential French banker, E. J. Hardcastle (Ho-tê-chia-ssŭ-lei 赫德加斯肋), sub-manager of Comptoir d’escompte de Paris, happened to be visiting its Shanghai branch and invited Ma for drinks. On this occasion he told Ma that if China wanted to borrow money his bank would lend it at a lower rate of interest than other banks. He said China should contact his bank direct, not through third parties, each of which would ask its own share of commission.

On his way out to Hong Kong while on a ship from Shanghai, Ma Chien-chung met William Keswick (K'ai-ssŭ-wei 開斯味) of Jardine, Matheson and Co., and had long leisurely talks with him. Keswick, who had had the experience of being in charge of his firm’s business in Yokohama, said the Japanese were untrustworthy, that they considered a written contract a dead letter, whereas since the opening of their Shanghai office more than thirty years before he had not experienced a single case of a promise broken by a Chinese merchant. Keswick also said: “The power of a nation derives from wealth. A nation’s wealth simply depends upon commerce. Most Chinese are versed in trade. Therefore, the basis of a wealthy nation should be there. Actually, your country not only does not know how to help commerce, but also rather obstructs it in various ways. If you thus still want to be wealthy and powerful, it would be just like seeking a fish on a tree. But, one thing to be noted here is that Chinese merchants are not learned. Many of them are rather vulgar. The *literati* do not want to make friends with them. We westerners in China have also, so far as I know, never invited Chinese merchants to a public dinner. Really I think that, if Chinese merchants become more literate and well-mannered, the *literati* will not despise them and westerners will be willing to mix with them. Then people will tend more to struggle for money in the market than to struggle for prestige in the court. Is this not to be one way of seeking wealth and power?”

## VI

In Saigon, Singapore, and Penang, Ma Chien-chung came into contact with some overseas Chinese.

For instance, in Saigon he went to see a Chinese merchant named

Chang P'ei-lin 張霽霖 (Chang Wo-shêng 張沃生), who was an agent of the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Co. He also met another Chinese, Chang Ching-ho 張鏡河 by name, who told him about the local opium question.

In Singapore, he visited the Chinese consulate, which had been started in 1878. This was, as is well known, the first consulate that the Chinese government established abroad. Hu Hsüan-tsê 胡璇澤 (Hu Ya-chi 胡亞基), a local Cantonese magnate commonly known as H. A. K. Whampoa, was the first appointed consul. He died in March 1881. When Ma Chien-chung came to Singapore, a man called Su Kuei-ch'ing 蘇桂清 was the consul. When he revisited Singapore in October on his way back to China, the consul was a bright young man, Tso Ping-lung 左秉隆 (Tso Tzŭ-hsing 左子興). Tso was an old acquaintance of Ma and had a good command of English. He had just been transferred from London on the strong recommendation of Tsêng Chi-tsê 曾紀澤, the Chinese minister to Britain.

In Penang, wealthy Chinese merchants – Ch'iu T'ien-tê (Khoo Thean Tek 邱天德), monopolizing the opium refineries, and three others – came to see Ma at the Chinese warehouse-inn, Yen-mei-shui zhan 顏美水棧, where he was staying. They did not speak Mandarin and their English was bad. So, E. Karl (Chia-êrh 嘉爾), assistant protector of Chinese of the Straits Settlements, who was versed in both the Cantonese and Fukienese dialects, acted as an interpreter. Colonial engineer, J. F. A. MacNair (Ma-k'o-nai 瑪克奈), said at a lunch party that all the wealthy merchants in Penang were Chinese, and that although they were too vulgar to be befriended they had been able to build up family fortunes owing to their trustworthiness. Ma says he replied that perhaps more Anglo-Chinese colleges (*Hua-Ying shu-yüan* 華英書院) should be set up in order to free them from vulgarity.

In Simla one day a Cantonese came to see Ma. The man said he had come to this place as a tea merchant fifteen years before and had a family, but he had become bankrupt and now was very badly off. Ma gave him some money and the man went away.

## VII

Finally, I would like to say a few words about Ma Chien-chung's image of India as represented in his travel account, *Nan-hsing chi*. This might be of some interest to any student of Asian history as a case of how India as of 1881 was observed by an educated Chinese traveller, moreover one who was vigorously engaged in government service and who knew both Europe and China.

Ma Chien-chung's first experience of India or rather Indian people, arriving in the port of Calcutta on August 29, was a very harsh search by customs underlings coming aboard. In Calcutta and Bombay, Ma often went out and looked around the city with Wu Kuang-p'ei. As mentioned above, he visited the Presidency Bank and the opium auction room in Calcutta, and the dockyard in Bombay. He also spent one afternoon at a court of justice in Calcutta, watching scores of minor money cases being speedily decided one after another in the presence of juries of members, half British and half Indian. Most of the defendants were Indians. They kept clasping their hands during the hearings, trembling with fear and anxiety.

On August 30, when the dinner party given him by the Lieutenant Governor Ashley Eden was over and the people sat for after-dinner tea, Ma met several very wealthy nawabs (*t'u-ch'iu* 土酋), who spoke English fluently. He got the impression that they did not like the western way of government. Three days later one of them (Mo-luo 磨羅 by name) dispatched his major domo to Ma's hotel. Ma was shown a "first class decoration" (*t'ou-têng pao-hsing* 頭等寶星) of China, that was given by the Chinese envoy, Tsêng Chi-tsê, to the nawab. It was accompanied by a document, to which an official seal of the envoy was affixed. The major domo said that his master wanted to know whether the decoration had really been bestowed on him by the Chinese government.

*Nan-hsing chi* shows Ma Chien-chung's keen interest in recent history of India under British colonial rule. For instance, he gives a fairly good summary of the Great Mutiny of 1857-58, especially as to how things changed afterwards. He also pays attention to the techniques the British were using to control native states. What most impressed him seems,

however, to have been the current prosperity of Bombay. When he for the first time went around in this city, he was struck not only by rows of huge, lofty stone buildings but also by the spaciousness of the business centers, which he found almost comparable to London.

He tries to explain the prosperity of Bombay in the following way: "At the time of the American Civil War, the cotton mills in Europe, which had used American raw cotton, became unable to import cotton from America. So the British vied with each other in going to India to get raw cotton. India annually exported tens of millions of rupees' worth of raw cotton. In 1869 the Suez Canal was opened. Merchant ships for India did not go around the Cape of Good Hope any more. It took now only twenty days to India. In other words, the distance between Europe and America and that between Europe and India were now just about the same. Thus Indian raw cotton monopolized the European market. Today, the Indians themselves have established their cotton mills. The cotton mills in Britain are now scarcely able to be independent. They, for the first time, have the trouble of subordinate growing too powerful (*wei-ta chih huan* 尾大之患). I remember that at the time of the Civil War in America, foreign merchants came to China too. Cotton merchants made raw cotton wet with water in order to make it heavier and make more money. When the raw cotton passed the equator, it all became rotten and could not be used any more .... We really missed the chances owing to the misdeeds of a few dishonest traders. We thus still endlessly have an unfavourable international payment because of the opium import, every year providing India with silver. India thus builds railways and dredges rivers and canals. Indian people become richer every day and Chinese people become poorer every day. What a pity!"

### VIII

I would like to conclude my lecture today by making a quotation from Wu Kuang-p'ei's *Nan-hsing jih-chi*. Wu Kuang-p'ei wrote on Ma Chien-chung under the entry for September 15, 1881, as follows (that day, they were on their way by train through Rajputana to Bombay): "Mei-shu *kuan-ch'a* 眉叔觀察 [i.e., tao-tai Ma Chien-chung; Mei-shu is

Ma's courtesy name] is a versatile, sarcastic, facetious person (*ku-chi ts'ai* 滑稽才). Because we are good old friends, he forgets his status as my superior. He thus behaves in an unrestrained and casual manner, and mischievously smiles at anything whatsoever. Throughout this journey he had always been very much complaining of this toilsome mission. So much so that I now dared to argue vehemently with a severe countenance and a loud voice against his complaint. As a result of my protest, Mei-shu then made fun of himself. It may be said that he is able to listen to a frank and thorough remonstrance."

(December 8, 1978)