

**A PEEP AT CHINA IN MR. DUNN'S
CHINESE COLLECTION: WITH
MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES RELATING
TO THE INSTITUTIONS AND CUSTOMS OF
THE CHINESE, AND OUR COMMERCIAL
INTERCOURSE WITH THEM**

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A Peep at China in Mr. Dunn's Chinese Collection: With Miscellaneous Notices Relating to The Institutions And Customs of The Chinese, And Our Commercial Intercourse With Them by E. C. Wines

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E. C. WINES

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

A

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COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH THEM.

BY E. C. WINES.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED FOR NATHAN DUNN.

1839.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author of these sheets has never been in China, and yet he has attempted, to some extent, a development of Chinese character and customs. It is a fair claim on the part of the reader that he be informed of the degree of credibility that attaches to the statements made. With the view solely of satisfying this claim, he takes leave to say, that numerous works on China, of the highest repute, have been fully consulted, and the truth carefully sought.

The author acknowledges also his indebtedness to Mr. Dunn for much original information, and the correction of some errors, into which he had been led by the authorities on whose guidance he was obliged to rely. The Collection itself has been as a well spring of instruction. It is due to the Proprietor to state, that he objected to the few sentences complimentary to himself; but the author, being a thorough-paced opponent to the "expunging" doctrine, insisted on their being retained. This he considered as a mere act of justice; for he is free to express the opinion, that Mr. Dunn, in the Collection he has made and now offers to public examination, has done more than any other man to rectify prevalent

errors, and disseminate true information, concerning a nation, every way worthy to be studied by the philosopher who delights in the curious, by the economist who searches into the principles of national prosperity and stability, and by the Christian who desires the universal spread of that Gospel, in which are embarked the highest temporal welfare and the immortal hopes of the human race.

By some the following pages may be regarded as an "Apology for the Chinese;" but, unless the author's convictions are entirely erroneous, it is no more an apology, than truth and justice make it.

Philadelphia, April, 1839.

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH

OF THE COLLECTION.

I. *Preliminary Remarks.*

NATHAN DUNN, Esq., the proprietor of this vast and splendid Collection of Chinese Curiosities, having so far completed his arrangements as to be able to open it to the public, on the evening of Saturday, the 22d December, 1838, entertained a select party of his friends in the Saloon in which it is fitted up. We should think that considerably over a hundred gentlemen were present upon that occasion, and among them were many of our most eminent citizens. Artists, merchants, mechanics, editors, literati, military and naval officers, and a goodly representation from all the learned professions, graced that ample and magnificent hall, which now contains the richest deposit of curiosities from the Celestial Empire, in the whole world. Rarely have we passed a pleasanter hour, or formed one of a happier company. Every body was at his ease; conversation was brisk; the joke and the laugh were intermingled with the graver reflections which

could not be wholly suppressed ; and all seemed filled with admiration at the splendour of the scene, and the enterprise and taste which had called it into being. Our host did the honours of his station with refined and easy dignity, and with evident, though certainly pardonable, gratification at beholding his labours so happily terminated, and the long cherished object of his ambition crowned with so brilliant a success. The beverage extracted from China's most celebrated plant, of a richness and delicacy of flavour extremely rare among us, was served to the guests in cups of native manufacture, various in shape and size, though not without those heretical accompaniments of sugar and cream, which would destroy its value in the eyes, or rather to the palate, of a true Chinaman. The vineyards of France, and the skill of our own unrivalled confectioners, were also put under levy by our entertainer, to minister to the gratification of his guests.

The proprietor enjoyed facilities for gathering curiosities such as no foreigner perhaps besides himself ever possessed. He did not, indeed, go to China with this view originally, but, soon after his arrival there, the thought occurred to him that it would be easy to collect a cabinet sufficient to fill a small apartment, which would be both amusing and instructive to his friends in America. This happy conception, upon which he immediately proceeded to act, was the germ of that vast and astonishing gallery of rare and curious objects, which has now become one of the chief ornaments and attractions of our city. Most Americans who trade to China are more or less engaged in the opium traffic, which is contrary to the laws of the Empire. Mr. Dunn was never interested to the amount of a dollar in that illicit commerce. This fact was well known to the officers of the government, and