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978-1-108-01427-4 - Intimate China: The Chinese as I Have Seen Them

Alicia E. Neva Little

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### Intimate China

Part memoir, part travelogue, part crusade, *Invisible China* details the exploits of Alicia Little (Mrs Archibald Little), who first arrived in China as a new bride in 1887. Little was already a prolific writer before her marriage, and this narrative is both compelling and refreshingly frank. Published in 1899, her account of life in late nineteenth-century China is arranged eclectically, with chapters on 'Superstitions', 'Current Coin in China' and 'Hindrances and Annoyances' interlaced with descriptions of trips to Tibet and up the Yangtze. The latter third of the book is devoted entirely to politics. Fuelled with a determination to represent the Chinese 'as I have seen them', Little spares no details, supplying descriptions of the complications arising from foot-binding, a practice she found abhorrent and against which she actively campaigned. Extending to over six hundred pages and lavishly illustrated with maps and photographs, this is an extraordinary book.

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# Intimate China

*The Chinese as I Have Seen Them*

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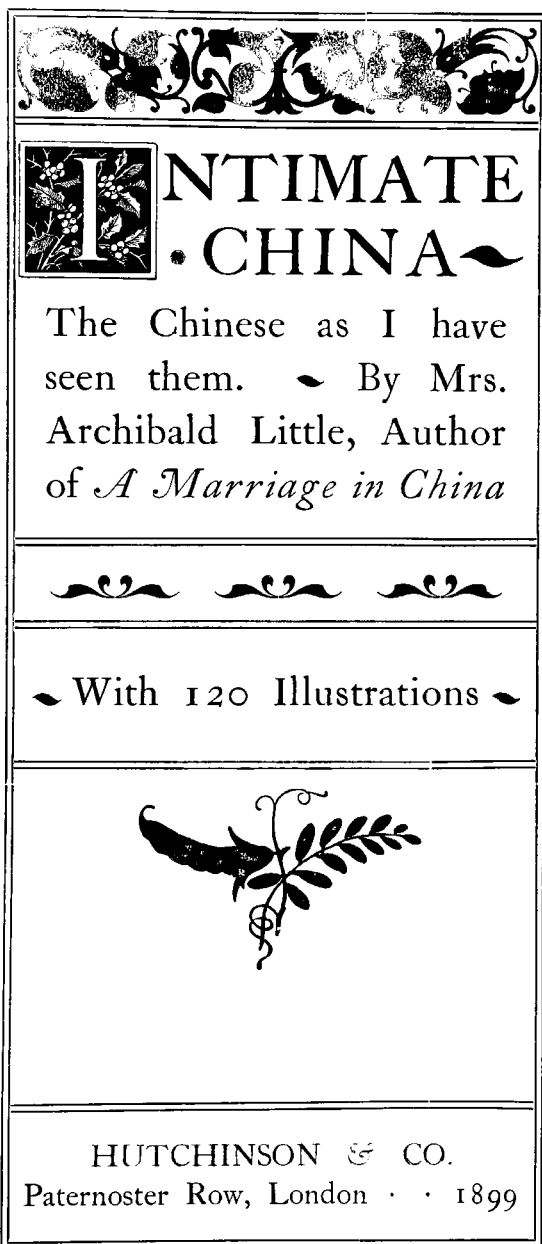
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## DRY STATEMENTS.

(TO BE CARRIED WITH THE READER, IF POSSIBLE.)

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THE Chinese Empire is rather larger than Europe.

Being on the eastern side of a great continent, it has the same extremes of climate as are to be found in the United States.

Fruits, flowers, and crops vary in like manner.

Peking is on about the same parallel as Madrid, Chungking as Cairo, Shanghai as Madeira.

The population of China is over ... .. 385 millions.

That of the British Isles in 1891 not quite ... .. 38 „

That of France in 1896 ... .. 38½ „

One alone of China's eighteen provinces, Kiangsu, has over ... .. 39½ „

The Russian nation, already extending over one-sixth of the globe, while China only extends over a little more than one-twelfth, musters little over 129 millions, and thus has about one-third of the Chinese population, with about twice its territory to stretch itself in.

There is no Poor Law in China. There are no Sundays.

It is considered very unwomanly not to wear trousers, and very indelicate for a man not to have skirts to his coat; consequently our European dress is reckoned by Chinese as indecorous.

Chinese begin dinner with dessert or Russian *sakouska*, and finish with hot soup instead of hot coffee.

Their cooks are second only to the French; their serving-men surpass the Germans.

Chinese love children; are ready to work day and night for their masters; and if occasion demand, to be beaten in their place, or even, if needs be, to die for them.

In fine, although in all details unlike ourselves, a great race, with some magnificent qualities.

7, PARK PLACE, ST. JAMES'S, S.W.