Can any one explain what the 錫拉門衙 is at Peking? This is the place in which the son of the late Hoppo 俊 has taken refuge, his deceased father's house having been confiscated.

E. H. P.

Is it historically correct to say that during the persecutions to which native Christians in Japan were repeatedly subjected during the last two centuries, large numbers of Japanese Christians emigrated to and settled down permanently in Macao?

X. Y. Z.

SAN-YIN-HA-HA.—Will J. M. kindly explain what being chosen for a *San-yin-ha-ha* means [選三音哈哈]?

E. H. P.

REPLIES.

PTOLEMY'S SERICA.—I have to thank the editor of the *China Review* for his notice of my paper on the Sêrica of Ptolemy which appeared in the November-December number. That notice is, however, rendered less valuable by a somewhat serious error on the part of the reviewer, who does not seem to have a knowledge of the system of longitudes adopted by Ptolemy. I, perhaps as it proved foolishly, presumed that my reviewers at least would have possessed a small elemental knowledge of Ptolemy's work before proceeding to criticize his translator, but in this I have been disappointed. The Editor of the *China Review* tells me that Mr Kingsmill ought to explain, if he can, how Ptolemy, 1800 years ago, came to know of the longitude of Greenwich or state where in the above quotation Ptolemy ends and Kingsmill begins. In reply I can duly state my perfect inability to explain so extraordinary a statement except on the supposition that my critic had never seen the inside of Ptolemy's *Geographia*, had never consulted so readily accessible an authority as Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*. As my object in writing the paper was not to explain Ptolemy's method but only to review two chapters of his geography more especially interesting to students in China, I had not thought it necessary to explain that Ptolemy had selected as his prime meridian the most extreme westerly point with which the ancients were acquainted, namely the Fortunate Islands, now the Canaries. Further I had not thought it necessary to review the methods by which Ptolemy had arrived at his longitudes because they have been already treated of by many competent authorities. Suffice it to say that in the absence of chronometers or of instruments and observations sufficiently accurate to be able to deduce the longitude from lunar distances, Ptolemy was driven to adopt a system of dead reckoning. An erroneous estimate of the length of the equatorial degree led to discrepancies in Europe even, and these discrepancies were multiplied in Eastern Asia, from two causes, one the accumulation of error in proceeding further from the starting point, and the other the incorrect estimates of bearings and distances on which he had to rely. In the case of Serica, the comparison existing between Serica itself and Scythia beyond Imaus, led to a still further dislocation. These are points well known to all students of ancient geography, and various attempts have been made to reconcile the errors in Ptolemy's table. See, for instance, Appendix to Cunningham's *Ancient Geography of India*. A would-be critic in the *North China Daily News*, presumably unaware of the literature on the subject, found fault with me on the other hand for daring to question Ptolemy's longitudes, so that between Scylla and Charybdis I scarcely know where to steer. As a rule I have taken little notice of these articles which as a general rule indicate rather the profundity of ignorance on the part of my would-be judges than any errors on my own part. I would gladly hail criticism which would enable me to correct blunders, and I will assure my

critics that I shall cheerfully correct and acknowledge emendations however unfriendly be the spirit in which they were offered. It is, however, a different affair when my translations are judged from *à priori* conclusions by writers who have never even looked into the originals, nor have ever had by education or opportunity the ability to form a judgment. Ethnology, Geography and Comparative Philology, I *may assure them, do not come* by intuition but need careful and discriminating study.

THOS. W. KINGSMILL.

ANSWER TO MR. BALFOUR.—無有入無間, 'The non-existent enters where *there is no crevice.*' *Tau-têh-king, XLIII.* Mr. Balfour wants to know how I reconcile this translation of the Chinese with my 'evident allusion to it,' in my Introduction, p. XV, lines 4 and 5 from bottom. My answer is that there is no allusion to that passage in the Introduction. The Introduction speaks of water, and the allusion is evidently to *Chapter VI*:—'*The Spirit* (like the perennial spring) of the valley never dies,' &c. The non-existent, 無有, is not water.

J. CHALMERS.

PROTEST.—I beg to protest against Mr. Parker's denunciation of the *China Branch of the Asiatic Society*, and his invidious comparison of its 'accommodating' character with that of the *sister Branch in Japan.* (See *ante*, p. 190.)

HERBERT A. GILES.

THE MEANING OF 神器.—After an interval of some months, Mr. Parker condescends to say that he believes the term 神器 was *first applied to the 'Throne'* in reference to Kao Tsu, founder of the Han dynasty. Mr. Parker goes on to say that the Empire is there (?) compared to a stag, and the fight for empire etc., etc. (See p. 185 in reply to Vol. XIV., p. 355).

The query is answered with Mr. Parker's characteristic slovenliness and inaccuracy. It does not matter what Mr. Parker believes or does not believe. But if it is a fact that 神器 was first applied to the Throne at so late a date as that of Kao Tsu of the Han dynasty, how can Mr. Parker 'struggle' to show that I ought to have translated 神器 by 'Throne' in a saying uttered by Lao Tzŭ several centuries before? Unless, indeed, this saying belongs, not as I had imagined to the genuine fraction, but to the bogus bulk, of the *Tao Tê Ching.*'

My copy of the 幼學 takes the following view: 天子賞罰之柄曰神器.

HERBERT A. GILES.

ERRATA.—*China Review*, Vol. XV., p. 194, 2nd column, 3rd line from the bottom, for 'side by side with the Romanized sounds,' read 'side by side with the Romanized Swatow sounds and numbers indicating the Romanized sounds' etc.