Lack of patriotism is often hurled by foreigners as a reproach to the Chinese. The charge cannot be substantiated, any more than it could be if directed against some nation in Europe. If willingness to sacrifice everything, including life itself, may be taken as a fair test of genuine patriotism, then it will be found, if historical records be not ignored, that China has furnished numberless brilliant examples of true patriots who chose to die rather than suffer dishonour to themselves or to their country. A single instance must suffice.

The time is the close of the thirteenth century, when the Mongols under Kublai Khan were steadily dispossessing the once glorious and powerful House of Sung, and placing the empire of China under alien rule. Disaster followed disaster, until almost the last army of the Sungs was cut to pieces, and the famous statesman and general in command, Wen (pronounced One) T'ien-hsian, fell into the hands of the Mongols. He was ordered, but refused, to write and advise capitulation, and every effort was subsequently made to induce him to own allegiance to the conquerors. He was kept in prison for three years. "My dungeon," he wrote, "is lighted by the will-o'-the-wisp alone; no breath of spring cheers the murky solitude in which I dwell. Exposed to mist and dew, I had many times thought to die; and yet, through the seasons of two revolving years, disease hovered around me in vain. The dank, unhealthy soil to me became Paradise itself. For there was that within me which misfortune could not steal away; and so I remained firm, gazing at the white clouds floating over my head, and bearing in my heart a sorrow boundless as the sky."

At length he was summoned into the presence of Kublai Khan, who said to him, "What is it you want?" "By the grace of the Sung Emperor," he replied, "I became His Majesty's Minister. I cannot serve two masters. I only ask to die." Accordingly, he was executed, meeting his death with composure, and making an obeisance in the direction of the old capital. His last words were, "My work is finished." Compare this with the quiet death-bed of another statesman, who flourished in the previous century. He had advised an enormous cession of territory to the Tartars, and had brought about the execution of a patriot soldier, who wished to recover it at all costs. He was loaded with honours, and on the very night he died he was raised to the rank of Prince. He was even canonized, after the usual custom, as Loyalty Manifested, on a mistaken estimate of his career; but fifty years later his title was changed to False and Foul and his honours were cancelled, while the people at large took his degraded name for use as an alternative to spittoon.

Two names of quite recent patriots deserve to be recorded here as a tribute to their earnest devotion to the real interests of their country, and incidentally for the far-reaching consequences of their heroic act, which probably saved the lives of many foreigners in various parts of China. It was during the Boxer troubles in Peking, at
the beginning of the siege of the legations, that Yuan Ch'ang and Hsu Ching-ch'eng, two high Chinese officials, ventured to memorialize the Empress Dowager upon the fatal policy, and even criminality, of the whole proceedings, imploring her Majesty at a meeting of the Grand Council to reconsider her intention of issuing orders for the extermination of all foreigners. In spite of their remonstrances, a decree was issued to that effect and forwarded to the high authorities of the various provinces; but it failed to accomplish what had been intended, for these two heroes, taking their lives in their hands, had altered the words "slay all foreigners" into "protect all foreigners." Some five to six weeks later, when the siege was drawing to a close, the alteration was discovered; and next day those two men were hurriedly beheaded, meeting death with such firmness and fortitude as only true patriotism could inspire.

The Mongols found it no easy task to dispossess the House of Sung, which had many warm adherents to its cause. It was in 1206 that Genghis Khan began to make arrangements for a projected invasion of China, and by 1214 he was master of all the enemy's territory north of the Yellow River, except Peking. He then made peace with the Golden Tartar emperor of northern China; but his suspicions were soon aroused, and hostilities were renewed. In 1227 he died, while conducting a campaign in Central Asia; and it remained for his vigorous grandson, Kublai Khan, to complete the conquest of China more than half a century afterwards. So early as 1260, Kublai was able to proclaim himself emperor at Xanadu, which means Imperial Capital, and lay about one hundred and eighty miles north of modern Peking, where, in those days known as Khan-baligh (Marco Polo's Cambaluc), he established himself four years later; but twenty years of severe fighting had still to pass away before the empire was finally subdued. The Sung troops were gradually driven south, contesting every inch of ground with a dogged resistance born of patriotic endeavour. In 1278 Canton was taken, and the heroic Wen T'ien-hsiang was captured through the treachery of a subordinate. In 1279 the last stronghold of the Sungs was beleaguered by land and sea. Shut up in their ships which they formed into a compact mass and fortified with towers and breastworks, the patriots, deprived of fresh water, harassed by attacks during the day and by fire-ships at night, maintained the unequal struggle for a month. But when, after a hard day's fighting, the Sung commander found himself left with only sixteen vessels, he fled up a creek. His retreat was cut off; and then at length despairing of his country, he bade his wife and children throw themselves overboard. He himself, taking the young emperor on his back, followed their example, and thus brought the great Sung dynasty to an end.

The grandeur of Kublai Khan's reign may be gathered from the pages of Marco Polo, in which, too, allusion is made to Bayan, the skilful general to whom so much of the military success of the Mongols was due. Korea, Burma, and Annam became dependencies of China, and continued to send tribute as such even up to quite modern times. Hardly so successful was Kublai Khan's huge naval expedition against Japan, which, in point of number of ships and men, the insular character of
the enemy's country, the chastisement intended, and the total loss of the fleet in a
storm, aided by the stubborn resistance offered by the Japanese themselves--
suggests a very obvious comparison with the object and fate of the Spanish
Armada.

Among the more peaceful developments of Mongol rule at this epoch may be
mentioned the introduction of a written character for the Mongol language. It was
the work of a Tibetan priest, named Baschpa, and was based upon the written
language of a nation known as the Ouigours (akin to the Turks), which had in turn
been based upon Syraic, and is written in vertical lines connected by ligatures.
Similarly, until 1599 there was no written Manchu language; a script, based upon
the Mongol, was then devised, also in vertical lines or columns like Chinese, but
read from left to right.

Under Kublai Khan the calendar was revised, and the Imperial Academy was
opened; the Yellow River was explored to its source, and bank-notes were made
current. The Emperor himself was an ardent Buddhist, but he took care that proper
honours were paid to Confucius; on the other hand, he issued orders that all Taoist
literature of the baser kind was to be destroyed. Behind all this there was
extortionate taxation, a form of oppression the Chinese have never learned to
tolerate, and discontent led to disorder. Kublai's grandson was for a time an honest
ruler and tried to stem the tide, but by 1368 the mandate of the Mongols was
exhausted. They were an alien race, and the Chinese were glad to get rid of them.

Chinese soldiers are often stigmatized as arrant cowards, who run away at the
slightest provocation, their first thought being for the safety of their own skins. No
doubt Chinese soldiers do run away--sometimes; at other times they fight to the
death, as has been amply proved over and over again. It is the old story of marking
the hits and not the misses. A great deal depends upon sufficiency and regularity of
pay. Soldiers with pay in arrear, half clad, hungry, and ill armed, as has freque-

Underneath a mask of complete facial stolidity, the Chinese conceal one of the
most exciteable temperaments to be found in any race, as will soon be discovered
by watching an ordinary street row between a couple of men, or still better,
women. A Chinese crowd of men--women keep away--is a good-tempered and
orderly mob, partly because not inflamed by drink, when out to enjoy the Feast of
the Lanterns, or to watch the twinkling lamps float down a river to light the
wandering ghosts of the drowned on the night of their All Souls' Day, sacred to the
memory of the dead; but a rumour, a mere whisper, the more baseless often the
more potent, will transform these law-abiding people into a crowd of fiends. In
times when popular feeling runs high, as when large numbers of men were said to
be deprived suddenly and mysteriously of their queues, or when the word went
round, as it has done on more occasions than one, that foreigners were kidnapping children in order to use their eyes for medicine,—in such times the masses, incited by those who ought to know better, get completely out of hand.

A curious and tragic instance of this excitability occurred some years ago. The viceroy of a province had succeeded in organizing a contingent of foreign-drilled troops, under the guidance and leadership of two qualified foreign instructors. After some time had elapsed, and it was thought that the troops were sufficiently trained to make a good show, it was arranged that a sham fight should be held in the presence of the viceroy himself. The men were divided into two bodies under the two foreign commanders, and in the course of operations one body had to defend a village, while the other had to attack it. When the time came to capture the village at the point of the bayonet, both sides lost their heads; there was a fierce hand-to-hand fight in stern reality, and before this could be effectively stopped four men had been killed outright and sixteen badly wounded.

Considering how squalid many Chinese homes are, it is all the more astonishing to find such deep attachment to them. There exists in the language a definite word for *home*, in its fullest English sense. As a written character, it is supposed to picture the idea of a family, the component parts being a "roof" with "three persons" underneath. There is, indeed, another and more fanciful explanation of this character, namely, that it is composed of a "roof" with a "pig" underneath, the forms for "three men" and "pig" being sufficiently alike at any rate to justify the suggestion. This analysis would not be altogether out of place in China any more than in Ireland; but as a matter of fact the balance of evidence is in favour of the "three men," which number, it may be remarked, is that which technically constitutes a crowd.

Whatever may be the literary view of the word "home," it is quite certain that to the ordinary Chinaman there is no place like it. "One mile away from home is not so good as being in it," says a proverb with a punning turn which cannot be brought out in English. Another says, "Every day is happy at home, every moment miserable abroad." It may therefore be profitable to look inside a Chinese home, if only to discover wherein its attractiveness lies.

All such homes are arranged more or less on the patriarchal system; that is to say, at the head of the establishment are a father and mother, who rank equally so far as their juniors are concerned; the mother receiving precisely the same share of deference in life, and of ancestral worship after death, as the father. The children grow up; wives are sought for the boys, and husbands for the girls, at about the ages of eighteen and sixteen, respectively. The former bring their wives into the paternal home; the latter belong, from the day of their marriage, to the paternal homes of their husbands. Bachelors and old maids have no place in the Chinese scheme of life. Theoretically, bride and bridegroom are not supposed to see each other until the wedding-day, when the girl's veil is lifted on her arrival at her
father-in-law's house; in practice, the young people usually manage to get at least a
glimpse of one another, usually with the connivance of their elders. Thus the
family expands, and one of the greatest happinesses which can befall a Chinaman
is to have "five generations in the hall." Owing to early marriage, this is not nearly
so uncommon as it is in Western countries. There is an authentic record of an old
statesman who had so many descendants that when they came to congratulate him
on his birthdays, he was quite unable to remember all their names, and could only
bow as they passed in line before him.

As to income and expenditure, the earnings of the various members go into a
common purse, out of which expenses are paid. Every one has a right to food and
shelter; and so it is that if some are out of work, the strain is not individually felt;
they take their rations as usual. On the death of the father, it is not at all uncommon
for the mother to take up the reins, though it is more usual for the eldest son to take
his place. Sometimes, after the death of the mother--and then it is accounted a bad
day for the family fortunes--the brothers cannot agree; the property is divided, and
each son sets up for himself, a proceeding which is forbidden by the Penal Code
during the parents' lifetime. Meanwhile, any member of the family who should
disgrace himself in any way, as by becoming an inveterate gambler and
permanently neglecting his work, or by developing the opium vice to great excess,
would be formally cast out, his name being struck off the ancestral register. Men of
this stamp generally sink lower and lower, until they swell the ranks of
professional beggars, to die perhaps in a ditch; but such cases are happily of rare
occurrence.

In the ordinary peaceful family, regulated according to Confucian principles of
filial piety, fraternal love, and loyalty to the sovereign, we find love of home
exalted to a passion; and bitter is the day of leave-taking for a long absence, as
when a successful son starts to take up his official appointment at a distant post.
The latter, not being able to hold office in his native province, may have a long and
sometimes dangerous journey to make, possibly to the other end of the empire. In
any case, years must elapse before he can revisit "the mulberry and the elm"--the
garden he leaves behind. He may take his "old woman" and family with him, or
they may follow later on; as another alternative, the "old woman" with the children
may remain permanently in the ancestral home, while the husband carries on his
official career alone. Under such circumstances as the last-mentioned, no one,
including his own wife, is shocked if he consoles himself with a "small old
woman," whom he picks up at his new place of abode. The "small old woman" is
indeed often introduced into families where the "principal old woman" fails to
contribute the first of "the three blessings of which every one desires to have
plenty," namely, sons, money, and life. Instances are not uncommon of the wife
herself urging this course upon her husband; and but for this system the family line
would often come to an end, failing recourse to another system, namely, adoption,
which is also brought into play when all hope of a lineal descendant is abandoned.
Whether she has children or not, the principal wife—the only wife, in fact—never loses her supremacy as the head of the household. The late Empress Dowager was originally a concubine; by virtue of motherhood she was raised to the rank of Western Empress, but never legitimately took precedence of the wife, whose superiority was indicated by her title of Eastern Empress, the east being more honourable than the west. The emperor always sits with his face towards the south.

The story of Sung Hung, a statesman who flourished about the time of the Christian era, pleasantly illustrates a chivalrous side of the Chinese character. This man raised himself from a humble station in life to be a minister of state, and was subsequently ennobled as marquis. The emperor then wished him to put away his wife, who was a woman of the people, and marry a princess; to which he nobly replied: "Sire, the partner of my porridge days shall never go down from my hall."

Of the miseries of exile from the ancestral home, lurid pictures have been drawn by many poets and others. One man, ordered from some soft southern climate to a post in the colder north, will complain that the spring with its flowers is too late in arriving; another "cannot stand the water and earth," by which is meant that the climate does not agree with him; a third is satisfied with his surroundings, but is still a constant sufferer from homesickness. Such a one was the poet who wrote the following lines:

Away to the east lie fair forests of trees,
From the flowers on the west comes a scent-laden breeze,
Yet my eyes daily turn to my far-away home,
Beyond the broad river, its waves and its foam.

And such, too, is the note of innumerable songs in exile, written for the most part by officials stationed in distant parts of the empire; sometimes by exiles in a harsher sense, namely, those persons who have been banished to the frontier for disaffection, maladministration of government, and like offences. A bright particular gem in Chinese literature, referring to love of home, was the work of a young poet who received an appointment as magistrate, but threw it up after a tenure of only eighty-three days, declaring that he could not "crook the hinges of his back for five pecks of rice a day," that being the regulation pay of his office. It was written to celebrate his own return, and runs as follows:

"Homewards I bend my steps. My fields, my gardens, are choked with weeds: should I not go? My soul has led a bondsman's life: why should I remain to pine? But I will waste no grief upon the past; I will devote my energies to the future. I have not wandered far astray. I feel that I am on the right track once again."

"Lightly, lightly, speeds my boat along, my garments fluttering to the gentle breeze. I inquire my route as I go. I grudge the slowness of the dawning day. From afar I descry by old home, and joyfully press onwards in my haste. The servants
rush forth to meet me: my children cluster at the gate. The place is a wilderness; but there is the old pine-tree and my chrysanthemums. I take the little ones by the hand, and pass in. Wine is brought in full bottles, and I pour out in brimming cups. I gaze out at my favourite branches. I loll against the window in my new-found freedom. I look at the sweet children on my knee.

"And now I take my pleasure in my garden. There is a gate, but it is rarely opened. I lean on my staff as I wander about or sit down to rest. I raise my head and contemplate the lovely scene. Clouds rise, unwilling, from the bottom of the hills: the weary bird seeks its nest again. Shadows vanish, but still I linger round my lonely pine. Home once more! I'll have no friendships to distract me hence. The times are out of joint for me; and what have I to seek from men? In the pure enjoyment of the family circle I will pass my days, cheering my idle hours with lute and book. My husbandmen will tell me when spring-time is nigh, and when there will be work in the furrowed fields. Thither I shall repair by cart or by boat, through the deep gorge, over the dizzy cliff, trees bursting merrily into leaf, the streamlet swelling from its tiny source. Glad is this renewal of life in due season: but for me, I rejoice that my journey is over. Ah, how short a time it is that we are here! Why, then, not set our hearts at rest, ceasing to trouble whether we remain or go? What boots it to wear out the soul with anxious thoughts? I want not wealth: I want not power: heaven is beyond my hopes. Then let me stroll through the bright hours, as they pass, in my garden among my flowers; or I will mount the hill and sing my song, or weave my verse beside the limpid brook. Thus will I work out my allotted span, content with the appointments of Fate, my spirit free from care."

Besides contributing a large amount of beautiful poetry, this author provided his own funeral oration, the earliest which has come down to us, written just before his death in A.D. 427. Funeral orations are not only pronounced by some friend at the grave, but are further solemnly consumed by fire, in the belief that they will thus reach the world of spirits, and be a joy and an honour to the deceased, in the same sense that paper houses, horses, sedan-chairs, and similar articles, are burnt for the use of the dead.
Abstract: Although climate science suggests that the Yuan era in China witnessed a number of natural disasters, historians have yet to consider such data in their accounts. Keywords: Mongols, Yuan China, natural disasters, 13th century, 14th century. The Mongolian Yuan dynasty (1271–1368 CE) was unique in Chinese history: while it ruled over the largest territory in Chinese history, it was much shorter lived than. Dr. Li Tana, China in the World Centre College of Asian and Pacific Studies The Australian National.