



Walrond, "Graphic" photo. CATHEDRAL LIBRARY, ATTACHED TO BISHOPSCOURT.

SOME GLIMPSES OF BISHOPSCOURT, AUCKLAND.

Chinese Buttons of Honour.

The mandarins of China are divided into nine classes, who wear distinctive buttons (Man-ting) on their hats and display ornamental embroideries (Ku-siu) on their breasts.

The first class wear a button of coral red (Shan-hu) corresponding to the colour of a cock's comb, since the cock (Ki-hung) is the bird that adorns their breast.

The second class are gorgeous with

a robe on which a peacock (Kung-tsioh) is emblazoned, while from the centre of a red fringe of silk upon the hat rises a sapphire blue (Yuen-tsing) button.

While the first class is almost entirely reserved for members of the Imperial family and the highest officials and generals of the empire, the second class is occasionally awarded to foreigners who have distinguished themselves in the Chinese service without having become naturalised Chinese subjects, the only exception of a coral button having been conferred upon a

European being Sir Robert Hart, Inspector-General of the Maritime Customs.

The button of the third class is an opaque, dark purple stone (Tsz-fan), and the bird depicted on the robe is the pelican (Tang-ngo); the legend of this bird's feeding its young from its own breast is current in China for the inspiration of her literati, who consider this class the acme of their ambition.

A light blue (Yuh-lan) button and a golden pheasant (Kiu-ki) distinguish the fourth class, in which the higher

grades of military field officers are reckoned.

The fifth class wear a clear crystal (Shui-tsing) button on the hat and a silver pheasant (Peh-hien) on the breast; in this class and in the following mostly rank the higher subaltern officers.

The sixth class are entitled to wear a jalestone (Juh) button and an embroidered stork (Kiau-tsing).

An embossed gold button (Hwang-kin) and a partridge (Che-ku) are the rank of the seventh class; smaller literati, interpreters, and Inland Revenue (Lee-kin) officers are proud of this distinction.

In the eighth the gold button becomes a plain brass one (Tung-poh), and the partridge is reduced to a quail (Ngan-shun), while the ninth-class mandarin has to be contented with silver (Yin) for his button and with a sparrow (Mah-tsiu) for his emblem.

Buttons and embroideries are only worn in full dress both by civil and military mandarins, that is, buttons on felt hats in winter and turned-down straw shades in the summer months, and embroideries correspondingly on the fronts and backs of long, dark-blue silk Court robes, or short military jackets of similar colour.

The often-displayed very valuable chains of jade and other precious stones are merely ornamental and optional and no sign of rank; they are not considered the correct thing beneath the third class.

The peacock feather is an individual military distinction granted for valour, and can be gained by a mandarin of any class.

The yellow jacket is the highest military honour, very rarely bestowed, and only on great generals, while the Order of the Double Dragon and other decorations are mostly reserved for foreigners, and are not often worn by Chinese subjects.

"Yes, sir," said the sad looking man, "I am one of the few people who can tell with accuracy how the stock market will go."

"How do you manage it?"

"Easily. I get interested in a stock and put up my money. Then I can sit down and feel morally certain that it will go the other way."



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