

Stepping Forth into the World

The Chinese Educational Mission
to the United States, 1872–81

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Contents

List of Illustrations, Maps, and Tables	ix
Preface	xiii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1 Origins	7
Chapter 2 Recruitment	13
Chapter 3 Preparatory Training	31
Chapter 4 En Route to the New World	39
Chapter 5 The American Host Families	49
Chapter 6 The Chinese Educational Commission	77
Chapter 7 Elementary and Secondary Schooling	87
Chapter 8 The Students in College	115
Chapter 9 Becoming Americanized?	135
Chapter 10 Recall and Return	167
Chapter 11 The Returned Students	183
Conclusion	215
Notes	223
Bibliography	279
Index	303

List of Illustrations, Maps, and Tables

Illustrations

2.1	Six members of first CEM detachment, San Francisco, Calif., September 1872	29
4.1	Two members of first CEM detachment, San Francisco, Calif., September 1872	44
5.1	CEM host, David E. Bartlett of Hartford	58
5.2	CEM host, Martha Burt, Oakham, Mass., ca. 1864	61
5.3	CEM host Thomas Murphy's home and adjacent "Library Building," Granby, Conn., early 1870s	62
5.4	CEM host, Julia (Leavitt) Richards, Washington, Conn., ca. 1890	67
5.5	Liu Jiazhao, with an American friend, Arthur Ketcham, Winsted, Conn., n.d.	69
5.6	Martha Mathews' five "protégés"—and two visitors—in Northampton, Mass., ca. 1875	73
6.1	Chinese Educational Commission headquarters, Hartford	79
6.2	CEC officials, San Francisco, Calif., September 1872	79
6.3	The schoolroom in the CEC headquarters	85
7.1	Students of Holyoke High School, Holyoke, Mass., 1877–79	93
7.2	Hartford Public High School in the 1870s	94
7.3	Williston Seminary, 1879	94
7.4	"Visit of Chinese Students from Connecticut to the Centennial Exhibition" (detail), 1876	110

7.5	“Visit of Chinese Students from Connecticut to the Centennial Exhibition,” 1876	112
8.1	Yale University, Sheffield Scientific School, graduating class of 1881	132
9.1	Phillips Academy baseball team, Andover, Mass., 1881	146
9.2	The Orientals baseball team, Hartford, 1878	146
9.3	Yale University Crew, 1880	148
9.4	Cao Jiayang, with hunting gun	149
9.5	Joseph H. Twichell and Yung Wing, Hartford, January 1882	150
9.6	Payson Congregational Church, Easthampton, Mass., 1880s	154
9.7	Tan Yaoxun with two fellow CEM students, Zhang Xianghe and Kuang Jingyang, Hartford, n.d.	155
9.8	Rong Kui, Springfield, 1880	161
10.1	Hopkins Grammar School, Pi Sigma Tau minstrel show, ca. 10 January 1880	171
10.2	Mrs. Gregory’s eating club, Williston Seminary	172
10.3	CEM students—all Yale men—on the eve of their departure from San Francisco, Calif., September 1881	178
11.1	E. H. Barbour, “As It Was in America”	188
11.2	E. H. Barbour, “As It Is in China”	188
11.3	Rong Shangqian at the Fuzhou Navy Yard School, 1883	195
11.4	Lu Yongquan on an outing in Washington, Conn., 1886, with other alumni of the Gunnery	204
11.5	The first group of Boxer Indemnity scholars going to the United States, with Tang Guoan as escort, 1909	210

Maps

2.1	Origins of the CEM students (by province)	19
2.2	Origins of the CEM students: Pearl River delta (by county)	21
2.3	Origins of the CEM students: Shanghai region (by county)	22
5.1	Initial distribution of the CEM students in southern New England	55

Tables

2.1	CEM students (by detachment)	14
5.1	Initial host family assignments	51
7.1	CEM students in middle schools (by state and locality)	90
7.2	CEM students in public high schools (by state and locality)	96
7.3	CEM students in private academies (by state and locality)	99
7.4	Japanese students in New England secondary schools (by state and locality)	108
8.1	CEM students in colleges (by academic year of enrollment)	116
8.2	Japanese students in eastern colleges, 1867–81 (by state and locality)	124
9.1	Deaths, dismissals, and withdrawals from the CEM (by date)	136
9.2	CEM students in the June 1880 census	138
11.1	Initial postings on return to China	190

Introduction

Study abroad, or more precisely overseas study in the United States, has been from the start a key feature of the “reform and opening” (*gaige kaifang*) policy that China has been pursuing since 1978. Before then the People’s Republic had sent an untold number of students to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, but because of its diplomatic and economic isolation from the rest of the world, scarcely any mainland Chinese had gone to the West. Then, in June 1978, Deng Xiaoping, newly emergent as China’s paramount leader, declared, “I would like to see more students sent abroad. They should mainly study science, and should be sent by thousands instead of dozens ... This is a better way to promote science and education in China.”¹ As a result, in the past three decades an astounding total of 1.2 million Chinese students and scholars have gone abroad, most of them to the United States, where in the academic year 2006–07 alone nearly 88,000 Chinese—67,700 students and 20,100 scholars—were attending, teaching, or conducting research at American colleges and universities. Of these, approximately five to ten percent have been supported by the Chinese government.²

These thousands upon thousands of students and scholars make up the third wave of Chinese students going to America. The second wave were those who went in the years 1909–39, and included the scholars whose studies were paid for out of the surplus Boxer Indemnity funds that the United States remitted in 1908. By the mid-1920s these Boxer Indemnity scholars totaled around 1,600.³ Earlier still were the students of the Chinese Educational Mission, who were the very first group of Chinese to go abroad to study. This book examines their pioneering experiences during their nine years (1872–81) in America.

The Chinese Educational Mission (CEM) to the United States was a project of the late Qing government, in which 120 boys were sent to live and study in New England for an extended period of time. It was an early initiative of the Self-Strengthening Movement (1861–95), when, following the Taiping Rebellion

(1851–64) and the Second Opium War (1856–60), China's leaders realized that they could no longer put off making changes if the ruling Qing dynasty were to survive.⁴ One change they made was to acknowledge the superiority of Western guns and ships by borrowing the advanced military technology of the Western countries. Thus were founded the Jiangnan Arsenal (Jiangnan zhizao zongju) in Shanghai in 1865 and the Fuzhou Navy Yard (Chuanzheng ju) a year later.⁵

Another change was to accept the Western system for conducting international relations. Accordingly, in 1861 foreign envoys were permitted to take up permanent residence in the Chinese capital, Beijing, and a new ad hoc office, known as the Zongli Yamen, was established to deal with these envoys and to serve (in fact if not in name) as China's foreign ministry. Reciprocally, though rather hesitantly, China began to send its own diplomatic representatives abroad. China's first envoy, appointed in 1867, was an American, Anson Burlingame, the retiring US minister in Beijing, who, as he was about to depart for home, was asked to visit the United States and various European nations on China's behalf. Accompanying him were two Chinese deputies from the Zongli Yamen. In 1870 another delegation, this time headed by a Chinese (Chonghou), was dispatched to Europe and America, its primary purpose being to apologize to the French for the casualties and losses they had just suffered in the so-called Tianjin massacre. Only in 1877, when Guo Songtao took up his post as minister to the United Kingdom, did China finally establish a *permanent* legation abroad. The Chinese legation in Washington was set up a year and a half later.⁶

A third change—and a consequence of the previous two changes—was to establish schools dedicated to the study of Western languages and technical training. These were needed to train translators and diplomats to staff the Zongli Yamen and the legations and consulates abroad, as well as to train technicians and engineers to work in the arsenals and shipyards. Thus were founded the Translators College (Tongwen guan) in Beijing in 1862, two similar institutions in Shanghai and Guangzhou in 1864, and technical schools at the Fuzhou Navy Yard in 1867 and the Jiangnan Arsenal in 1868. Both types of schools employed foreigners as teachers.⁷

It was to reduce such dependence upon foreign experts in the future that China, in addition to founding language and technical schools at home, also began to send students abroad to study. In 1875 the Fuzhou Navy Yard School sent five students to Europe—three to France and two to England—and then in 1877 it sent another twenty-six students, again to Europe—fourteen to France and twelve to England. Three of the five students in the first group were abroad for one year; all but three in the second group were abroad for three years. Meanwhile, in 1876, Governor-General Li Hongzhang in Tianjin similarly sent a group of seven officers to Germany to study with the German army; they were away for between two and five years.⁸ The Chinese Educational Mission to the United States in

1872–81, therefore, was not the only study abroad program that China carried out at this time. It was, however, both the earliest and the largest one. Also, its 120 students were abroad for a much longer period of time than other students, and, as we shall see, they pursued a much less narrowly technical course of study.

Although the members of the CEM were the first *group* of Chinese to study in the United States, a few individual Chinese students had gone before them. Fifty years earlier, five Chinese boys attended the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut, which the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) operated from 1817 to 1825. The boys probably had been brought to the United States as crewmen or as servants by New England merchants engaged in the Canton trade, but then were left behind. One of the five students at the Cornwall school, Lieaou Ah-see, was baptized in New York in 1824; another, Alum, later returned to China and served as a translator for Commissioner Lin Zexu in Guangzhou on the eve of the First Opium War (1839–42).⁹ In the 1840s an additional five Chinese boys studied in the United States, all taken there by returning American missionaries. Two of them—A-Bi and Zeng Laishun (Chan Laisun, also Tsang Lai Sun)—were from Singapore, where they were students at an ABCFM school. A-Bi went in 1840 and eventually enrolled in a school in Sewickly, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. Zeng Laishun followed three years later and attended Bloomfield Academy, in Bloomfield, New Jersey. In 1846 he entered Hamilton College, in Clinton, New York, which he attended for two years before he ran out of financial support and returned to China. Though not well known, Zeng Laishun was the first Chinese to attend an American college.¹⁰

The other three Chinese boys who went to America in the 1840s came from Hong Kong. They were Huang Kuan (Wong Foon), Huang Sheng (Wong Shing), and Rong Hong (Yung Wing). All were longtime students of the Rev. Samuel Robbins Brown at the Morrison Education Society School. When Brown left Hong Kong in 1847, he took these three boys with him to his hometown of Monson, Massachusetts, and placed them in the local private school, Monson Academy. Huang Sheng stayed only a year, after which he returned to Hong Kong to work; Huang Kuan and Rong Hong, however, both graduated from Monson Academy in 1850. Afterwards Huang Kuan went to Scotland to study medicine, while Rong Hong—who is better known (by the Cantonese pronunciation of his name) as Yung Wing—enrolled at Yale. Though Yung Wing was not the first Chinese to attend an American college—he was four years behind Zeng Laishun—when he left Yale in 1854 to return to China, he had made a name for himself as the first Chinese graduate of a Western university.¹¹ Huang Kuan graduated from the University of Edinburgh a year later.

In the following decade and a half, at least three more Chinese boys went to the United States to study. Two were sent by American Episcopal missionaries in Shanghai; they were Yan Yongjing (Yung Kiung Yen) in 1854, and Shu Gaodi

(Vung Piau Suvoong) in 1861. Both attended Kenyon College, an Episcopal school in Ohio, from which Yan graduated in 1861 and Shu in 1867. Shu later attended, and in 1873 graduated from, the School of Medicine at Columbia in New York.¹² The third Chinese to study in the United States in the 1860s was Yung Wing's nephew, Rong Shangqin, the oldest son of his older brother, whom Yung took to the US in 1864 (see further discussion in the next chapter). From then until 1868, Rong Shangqin attended Yung's alma mater, Monson Academy, where he was known as Lemuel Yung.¹³

When the 120 members of the Chinese Educational Mission were studying in the United States in the 1870s, they were, of course, not the only Chinese living there. During the previous two decades emigrants from southern China had been streaming to America, particularly the west coast, initially in search of gold, and later on of employment. In particular, the construction of the transcontinental railroad across the American west from San Francisco to Omaha in the late 1860s had created an enormous demand for manual labor, which Chinese flocked to fill. By 1870, according to the federal census, over 63,000 Chinese were living in the United States, of whom almost 50,000 were concentrated in California; a decade later, the Chinese population had grown to 105,000, with 75,000 in California. The CEM students went not to the American west but to the northeast, primarily New England, but even here there were other Chinese besides them. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 had made it economically feasible to transport Chinese laborers from the west coast to the east coast, and several enterprising manufacturers had proceeded to do this as a strikebreaking measure. As a result, in the 1870s, in addition to the CEM students, three other groups of Chinese, each numbering more than one hundred, were also living in the northeastern part of the United States. One group worked in a shoe factory in North Adams, Massachusetts; another, in a cutlery factory in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, west of Pittsburgh; and the third, in a steam laundry in Belleville, New Jersey, near Newark.¹⁴

Both the large concentration of Chinese on the west coast and the importation of Chinese strikebreakers to the east coast were contentious issues in American politics all through the 1870s. As the decade wore on, a growing chorus of critics called for the expulsion of the Chinese (using slogans such as "The Chinese Must Go!") or, at the very least, curbs on further Chinese immigration. Their demands were to culminate in the enactment of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882.¹⁵ The students of the CEM had front-row seats as this drama unfolded.

Finally, it should be noted that the Chinese Educational Mission was not the only organized group of Asian students to study in the United States at this time. Japan, too, had been under assault from Britain and other Western nations and forced, like China, to "open up" to foreign trade and residence, and to accept the imposition of the so-called "unequal treaties." Japan, too, had begun to

initiate reforms, which, unlike China, soon led to a political revolution, the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Even before the Restoration, the Japanese had begun to send students abroad. Some went to Europe, others to the United States. During the 1870s more than two hundred Japanese were studying in American colleges, nearly all of them in the northeastern part of the country, which is also where the CEM students were located.¹⁶ The two groups crossed paths occasionally.

In 1881 the entire Chinese Educational Mission was recalled to China, well short of the fifteen years originally planned. Nearly all of the boy students heeded the call to return. Their re-entry into Chinese life was awkward and difficult. It was not until after China's successive defeats in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95) and the Boxer troubles (1898–1900) that the unusual expertise they had acquired in the United States a quarter of a century earlier finally came to be appreciated and, in time, rewarded. Some of the former CEM students even achieved fame and fortune in the last decade of the Qing dynasty and the first years of the Republic. Zhan Tianyou, for example, won acclaim as the builder of the Beijing–Zhangjiakou (or Peking–Kalgan) railroad, the first railroad built entirely by the Chinese; Liang Cheng (originally known as Liang Pixu) was China's minister to Washington; Liang Dunyan was head of the Foreign Ministry; Tang Shaoyi was the first prime minister of the Republic of China; Tang Guoan was the first president of what became Tsinghua (Qinghua) University (which was founded to prepare the Boxer Indemnity scholars for their studies in the United States); and Zhou Shouchen (or Shouson Chow, originally Zhou Changling) was a leader of the Chinese community in Hong Kong until the end of the Second World War.¹⁷

There are a number of existing studies of the Chinese Educational Mission, all of which draw heavily upon Thomas E. La Fargue's book *China's First Hundred*, published in 1942, and upon La Fargue's unpublished papers in the archives of Washington State University in Pullman, Washington.¹⁸ La Fargue, who taught at what was then known as the State College of Washington, went to China in the difficult summer of 1940—that is, after Japan's invasion of China proper but before Pearl Harbor—and was able to visit Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai, where he interviewed “the few remaining survivors of the Chinese Educational Mission.”¹⁹ La Fargue was primarily interested in what happened to the CEM students after their return to China. This study, on the other hand, focuses on their experiences during their extended stay in the United States.²⁰ Furthermore, this study does not dwell, as so many other works on the CEM do, on those members who subsequently became famous; rather, it is an attempt at a collective biography of all 120 boy students. Since regrettably few of the students left any autobiographical accounts, this study is largely based upon scattered and fragmentary records in local historical societies and educational institutions throughout the American northeast. It examines the students' family background, their selection for the Chinese Educational Mission, their preparatory studies,

their travel to America, their living arrangements with American host families, their schooling and extracurricular activities, their relationship with the CEM headquarters in Hartford, their abrupt return to China, and, very briefly, their subsequent careers.

The historical memory—the reputation—of the Chinese Educational Mission has not always been a positive one. During the first decade or so of Communist rule, study abroad—unless undertaken in the then Soviet Union or Eastern Europe—was generally regarded as politically and culturally suspicious. Those who had studied in the bourgeois West, including the CEM students, were denounced as “running dogs” of imperialism and as traitors.²¹ In recent years, however, as China has embarked on the third wave of study abroad in the West, opinion about the CEM has undergone a fundamental re-evaluation. General interest in the Chinese Educational Mission is now high. For example, a five-part documentary entitled *Youtong (Boy Students)* was shown nationally (and more than once) on China Central Television in 2003.²² In the same year, major exhibitions on the history of Chinese studying abroad were held in Beijing, at the National Museum of China (Zhongguo guojia bowuguan), and in Hong Kong, at the Hong Kong Museum of History; both prominently featured the boy students of the CEM as pioneers.²³ These boys were, indeed, the very first group of Chinese students to “step forth into the world” (*zou xiang shijie*). Who were these students, and what was it like for them when they ventured out into the world?

I

Origins

The Chinese Educational Mission to the United States was an unprecedented undertaking by the Chinese government. Down through the nineteenth century, Chinese education had at its core the Confucian classics and their ethical teachings; its purpose was to prepare students for the civil service examinations and, if the students were successful, for a career in the government. To seek knowledge from any other source would have been considered, at best, a waste of time and, at worst, a betrayal of cultural norms. Indeed, in 1866, when the newly-founded Beijing Translators College, as part of the Self-Strengthening Movement, added (in the words of historian Knight Biggerstaff) “a scientific department to which only members of the traditionally educated elite might be admitted as students,” a leading metropolitan official, Woren, famously protested that “astronomy and mathematics are of very little use,” and that “the way to establish a nation is to lay emphasis on propriety and righteousness, not on power and plotting.”¹ Nevertheless, six years later the Qing government came to sanction the Chinese Educational Mission. This happened largely as a combined result of the vision and lobbying of Yung Wing, the patronage of two influential Qing officials, and, possibly, the recent example of Japan.

The CEM was, by nearly all accounts, the brainchild of Yung Wing.² Born in 1828, Yung came from a humble farming family in Nanping village, Xiangshan county, Guangdong, two miles from the Portuguese settlement of Macau. (Nanping is now a part of Zhuhai municipality, and Xiangshan county has been renamed Zhongshan.) At an early age his parents sent him to study with Protestant missionary educators in Macau and later, after the First Opium War, in the new British colony of Hong Kong. For several years he attended the Morrison Education Society School, which was founded by Western traders and missionaries and named to honor the memory of Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, who had died in 1834. As previously explained, in 1847, when the headmaster of the school, the Rev. Samuel Robbins Brown, returned to the United States, he arranged for Yung Wing and two other pupils

(Huang Kuan and Huang Sheng) to go with him. The three teenagers were taken to Brown's hometown of Monson, Massachusetts, where they lived across the road from his parents' house and took their meals with them. They also attended Brown's alma mater, Monson Academy. When Yung enrolled in Yale College in 1850, he was once again following in Brown's footsteps.³

After graduating from Yale with a B.A. degree in 1854, Yung Wing returned to China, having spent seven and a half years in the United States. In China, however, he had little success at first in finding suitable employment. On the one hand, he lacked the Confucian education that would have prepared him for the civil service examinations; on the other hand, despite his Western education and command of the English language, he refused to work either as a missionary or as a comprador (the English-speaking head of the Chinese staff in a foreign trading firm, or, as he put it dismissively in his English-language autobiography, "the head servant of servants"). In time he became an independent businessman in Shanghai, specializing in the tea trade. A few years later, with the beginning of the Self-Strengthening Movement, Yung's intimate knowledge of the West finally proved to be a qualified asset. In 1863, he was invited to meet the powerful official Zeng Guofan, who was a prime mover of the self-strengthening effort as well as the commander-in-chief of the campaign to suppress the Taiping Rebellion. Yung joined Zeng Guofan's staff as an expert on foreign matters, and was sent back to the United States to purchase the machinery that became the basis of the Jiangnan Arsenal. (It was on this trip that he took with him his nephew, Rong Shangqin, who, as previously noted, enrolled at Monson Academy in 1864.) As a reward for the successful purchase of the machinery, Yung Wing, though lacking a classical Chinese education and a degree from the civil service examination system, was given a mid-ranking title (*tongzhi*, first-class sub-prefect), and an official position working in Shanghai for the Jiangsu provincial government as a translator.⁴

Yung Wing claimed, in his autobiography, that even before he graduated from Yale, he was already "determined that the rising generation of China should enjoy the same educational advantages that I had enjoyed."⁵ His idea for the Chinese Educational Mission was, in essence, to replicate his own experience on a grand scale. In 1868, he suggested to the Jiangsu governor Ding Richang, who was his superior and a fellow native of Guangdong, that the Qing government send a number of Chinese youths to the United States for an extended period of study. According to the much-quoted account in his autobiography, Yung incorporated this idea, and three other proposals—one of which suggested the formation of a fleet of steamships to transport tribute grain from central to northern China (the genesis of the China Merchants Steam Navigation Company [Zhaoshang ju])—in a four-point petition that Governor Ding Richang presented to the Zongli Yamen, the new proto-Foreign Office.⁶

For various reasons, Yung's proposal did not gain a hearing until two years later, when, in the aftermath of the Tianjin massacre, Ding Richang was summoned north to help Zeng Guofan, then governor-general of Zhili province, resolve the ensuing diplomatic dispute with France (the French consul, along with French priests and nuns, had been the chief victims of the massacre). Governor Ding took Yung Wing with him as his assistant. Capitalizing on this unexpected opportunity, Yung reminded Ding of his "educational scheme," and Ding in turn approached and persuaded Zeng Guofan to lend his weighty support to the plan. Charged with negotiating with the French, Zeng at this point may have keenly felt the need for Chinese who were well trained in Western languages and culture. As a result, in October 1870, Zeng Guofan submitted a memorial to the Qing court endorsing a general proposal, which he credited to Ding Richang (not Yung Wing), "to select [an unspecified number of] intelligent boys and send them to [unspecified] Western countries in order to attend various schools and military and naval academies." He furthermore recommended two men to take charge of the mission; one was Chen Lanbin, the other was Yung Wing.⁷ (They were so appointed later on.) Zeng, who by this time was governor-general of the Liang-Jiang provinces, also summoned Yung to his headquarters in Nanjing for a private conference to discuss the plan further, and he solicited the assistance of Li Hongzhang, his successor as governor-general of Zhili.⁸

When Zeng Guofan's memorial still had not elicited a response from the emperor nearly a year later, he and Li Hongzhang, on 18 August 1871, together submitted a much more detailed and specific memorial, one that was now clearly (though not explicitly) based on Yung Wing's original idea.⁹ Their joint memorial called for 120 young boys—30 a year for four years—to be sent to the United States, where they were to study for fifteen years before returning to China. Like other self-strengthening projects, the aim of the CEM was to emulate the Western countries and master their technical skills. The memorial argued that it was not enough to build shipyards and arsenals and found foreign-language and technical schools at home, as China had begun to do in recent years. It was also necessary to go abroad, to the source of the West's expertise. As an ideological justification for such an audacious proposal, Zeng and Li cited the ancient Confucian philosopher Mencius. Suppose, Mencius had asked hypothetically, a high official of Chu wished his son to speak the language of Qi; what should he do? According to Mencius, the best—indeed the only effective—way to accomplish this was to send the boy to live and immerse himself in Qi for an extended period of time, and thus soak up the language at first hand. Therefore, if China wanted to learn the technological secrets of the West, it should do likewise. When the CEM students returned to China after their lengthy absence, they were to be assigned to various schools, where each would teach the specialty he had learned abroad.

The United States was chosen as the site for the program, Li Hongzhang

explained, on account of the so-called Burlingame Treaty that the Qing had signed with the United States three years earlier. The main purpose of the 1868 treaty, which had been negotiated on behalf of China by the former United States minister to China, Anson Burlingame, was to encourage and regularize the migration of Chinese workers to meet American labor demands after the Civil War (for example, for the construction of the transcontinental railroad). Unlike earlier treaties, which had been forced upon a defeated China, the Burlingame Treaty was not an “unequal” treaty; it, in particular, accorded China “most-favored nation” treatment. One provision, Article VII, explicitly stated, “Citizens of the United States shall enjoy all the privileges of the public educational institutions under the control of the government of China, and *reciprocally, Chinese subjects shall enjoy all the privileges of the public educational institutions under the control of the government of the United States, which are enjoyed in the respective countries by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation ...*” (emphasis added).¹⁰ Thus, Chinese wishing to enroll in public institutions like the United States military and naval academies would be treated the same as other foreigners; if other foreign nationals were allowed to study at West Point or Annapolis, then Chinese would also be. In other words, Chinese would not be discriminated against.

Another reason why the United States was chosen as the destination for the CEM students, aside from the promise of reciprocity in the Burlingame Treaty, was, undoubtedly, Yung Wing’s personal familiarity with the country.

Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang also offered a budget in their joint memorial. According to their estimate, the annual cost of the mission overseas would be sixty thousand *liang* or taels (approximately US\$82,000), and the total cost, over twenty years, would be 1.2 million taels (approximately US\$1,644,000). They recommended that the needed funds come from the Imperial Maritime Customs, and be disbursed by the Shanghai customs house (Jianghai guan).¹¹ The CEM would not be cheap, but its budget paled by comparison with that of the Fuzhou Navy Yard, which called for fifty thousand taels a month, or six hundred thousand taels a year, for operating expenses, in addition to a start-up cost of four hundred thousand taels.¹²

On 15 September 1871, after Prince Gong (Yixin), the head of the Zongli Yamen, had reviewed the proposal and voiced his support, the throne finally approved Zeng and Li’s memorial.¹³ It then took several more months of negotiations before the two provincial officials and Prince Gong could agree on a set of recruitment guidelines.¹⁴ In the course of these negotiations, Zeng Guofan died on 12 March 1872. Meanwhile, Li Hongzhang had kept the United States minister to China, Frederick F. Low, informed of the progress of the proposal, and sought the co-operation of the United States government, including (it would appear) its future help in admitting some of the students into West Point and

Annapolis. In January 1872, he had been able to tell Low, “The plan has now been definitely fixed.”¹⁵

Quite possibly, though it was not so stated, one of motivating factors behind the Qing court’s willingness to sanction this ambitious and expensive study abroad program was the awareness that Japan had recently embarked upon a similar project. In 1862, a decade after the “opening” of Japan, when the country was still under the divided, feudal rule of the Tokugawa shogun and more than two hundred daimyo (regional lords), the shogunate had sent seventeen of its retainers to Holland to study for two years (Holland was the one Western country Japan had dealings with prior to its “opening”). The shogunate’s principal challengers, the domains of Chôshû and Satsuma, quickly followed suit. Thus, in 1863 Chôshû sent five young samurai to England, three of whom stayed for five years; and in 1865 Satsuma sent fifteen, also to England, for between one and ten years.¹⁶ By 1868 at least 153 Japanese had gone abroad as students—thirty-three of them to the United States—though not all were government scholars.¹⁷ Six of the thirty-three students in the United States attended Monson Academy, sent there by Yung Wing’s mentor, the Rev. Samuel Robbins Brown, who in the 1860s had returned to Asia, this time to Japan, as a missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church.¹⁸

Following the Meiji Restoration in 1868, when the Tokugawa shogunate was overthrown and the system of divided rule dismantled, the new centralized regime in Tokyo greatly increased the number of scholars sent overseas. When the Meiji government dispatched Prince Iwakura Tomomi on an around-the-world diplomatic mission at the end of 1871 to see about revising the “unequal treaties” that the Western nations had imposed on Japan, he took with him forty-nine students, thirteen of them on government scholarships and the rest privately supported. Five in the group were, remarkably, young girls, all sent by the Kaitakushi, the minister of development in Hokkaido. The five girls and at least seven of the boys were to study in the United States.¹⁹ The government-funded students, including the girls, were expected to stay abroad for up to ten years.²⁰ The Iwakura embassy left Japan for the West just as the final decisions about the Chinese Educational Mission were being made.

In sum, the CEM was a project of China’s Self-Strengthening Movement. Like other projects of the movement, it sought to enhance China by learning from the West, whose military superiority had been amply demonstrated in the two opium wars. Though innovative and unprecedented, the CEM was never intended to transform China. In this respect, it was quite different from the contemporaneous Japanese study abroad program, whose members in the early Meiji period were sent abroad as trailblazers. The CEM did not challenge or undermine the primacy of the civil service examination system or the Confucian state orthodoxy upon which the examinations were based. To the contrary, as we

shall see, the CEM had to accommodate itself to the strictures of the dominant Confucian ideology and social values. Even so, from the start it faced resistance and criticism from cultural conservatives like Woren. In the end the critics were to have their way. But that was still nine years down the road.

2

Recruitment

To carry out the work of the Chinese Educational Mission—which in Chinese was called Youtong chuyang yiye (lit., Youths going abroad to study)—two ad hoc “bureaus” (*ju*) were established, one in Shanghai and the other, later on, in the United States. Heading the Shanghai office—the Going Abroad Bureau (Chuyang ju)—was Liu Hanqing (also known as Liu Kaisheng), a longtime member of Governor-General Zeng Guofan’s staff.¹ Overall supervision of the CEM was assigned to the Shanghai *daotai*, the intendant of the Suzhou–Songjiang–Taicang circuit (*dao*), who was the highest-ranking administrative official in the city (the governor-general of the Liang–Jiang region and the governor of Jiangsu province had their headquarters in Nanjing and Suzhou respectively). In addition to his domestic responsibilities, the Shanghai *daotai* was also charged with the conduct of foreign affairs, the administration of the foreign trade customs, and the supervision of self-strengthening projects including the CEM.²

Following the Qing court’s authorization of the program in the fall of 1871, the first important task of the CEM was to identify prospective candidates to take part. The final guidelines for the selection of students, arrived at after several months of negotiation between Zeng Guofan, Li Hongzhang, and Prince Gong, specified that the boys meet the following criteria: they were between twelve and sixteen *sui* (years of age), had studied Chinese books for several years, had their family’s permission to go abroad for an extended period of time, were not the only son in their family (who would have the responsibility of looking after aged parents), and ethnically could be either Manchu or Han.³ Unlike the Japanese students selected to accompany the Iwakura embassy, no girls were considered. Once prospective candidates were identified, they were sent to Shanghai, where in the winter of 1871–72 a school was established, in part for the purpose of screening the applicants. Each year for four years, from 1872 to 1875, thirty boys were selected from among the applicants to form a “detachment” (*pi*), or cohort, and were sent to the United States.

Who were these 120 boys who made the final cut for the CEM? Their names, along with their year of birth, their age at time of departure, and their native place (by county) are readily available (see Table 2.1 on pp. 14–17). Although the recruitment guidelines had specified that there should be no discrimination between Manchus and Han, none of the CEM boys was Manchu; that is, none was descended from the people who had conquered China and its Han Chinese population in the mid-seventeenth century, and whose leaders created the Qing dynasty. Until the dynasty ended in 1912, Manchus were the ethnic group that ruled over China. Although they numbered less than two percent of the country's population, they played a large, if seldom acknowledged, role in the Self-Strengthening Movement, particularly with regard to the study of foreign languages. The translators colleges in Beijing and Guangzhou, for example, both drew most or all of their students from among the Manchu minority, and the six students from the Beijing Translators College who accompanied the Burlingame mission abroad in 1868–70 were all Manchu. Indeed, a disproportionately large number of China's pioneering diplomats were Manchu.⁴ Nevertheless, none took part in the CEM; all of the 120 CEM boys were Han Chinese.

Table 2.1 CEM students (by detachment)

ID#	Name	姓名	Native Place*	DOB**	Age***	Remarks
CEM 1 (1872)						
1	Cai Jinzhang	蔡錦章	Xiangshan	1859	14	
2	Cai Shaoji	蔡紹基	Xiangshan	1859	14	SB, Wen: age 13 [= DOB 1860]
3	Cao Jifu	曹吉福	Chuansha, Jiangsu	1860	13	
4	Chen Jurong	陳鉅溶	Xinhui	1860	13	SB, Wen: 姓名 陳鉅鏞
5	Chen Ronggui	陳榮貴	Xinhui	1859	14	
6	Cheng Daqi	程大器	Xiangshan	1859	14	
7	Deng Shicong	鄧士聰	Xiangshan	1859	14	
8	He Tingliang	何廷樑	Shunde	1860	13	SB: 姓名 何廷梁
9	Huang Kaijia	黃開甲	Zhenping	1860	13	
10	Huang Xibao	黃錫寶	Tongan, Fujian	1860	13	
11	Huang Zhongliang	黃仲良	Panyu	1858	15	
12	Kuang Rongguang	鄺榮光	Xinning	1863	10	
13	Liang Dunyan	梁敦彥	Shunde	1858	15	
14	Liu Jiazhao	劉家照	Xiangshan	1861	12	
15	Lu Yongquan	陸永泉	Xiangshan	1859	14	SB: 姓名 陸承泉
16	Luo Guorui	羅國瑞	Boluo	1861	12	
17	Niu Shangzhou	牛尚周	Jiading, Jiangsu	1862	11	
18	Ouyang Geng	歐陽庚	Xiangshan	1859	14	Xu: 姓名 歐陽庚
19	Pan Mingzhong	潘銘鍾	Nanhai	1862	11	Wen: age 10 [= DOB 1863]
20	Qian Wenkui	錢文魁	Shanghai, Jiangsu	1859	14	

(continued on p. 15)

Table 2.1 continued

ID#	Name	姓名	Native Place*	DOB**	Age***	Remarks
21	Rong Shangqian	容尚謙	Xiangshan	1863	10	
22	Shi Jintang	石錦堂	Jining, Shandong	1859	14	
23	Shi Jinyong	史錦鏞	Xiangshan	1858	15	SB: no age
24	Tan Yaoxun	譚耀勳	Xiangshan	1862	11	SB, Wen: age 13 [= DOB 1860]
25	Wu Yangzeng	吳仰曾	Sihui	1862	11	Wen: age 12 [= DOB 1861]
26	Zeng Dugong	曾篤恭	Haiyang	1857	16	
27	Zhan Tianyou	詹天佑	Wuyuan, Anhui	1861	12	
28	Zhang Kangren	張康仁	Xiangshan	1860	13	SB: 姓名 張康西; Xu: 姓名 張仁康
29	Zhong Juncheng	鍾俊成	Xiangshan	1859	14	SB, Wen: 姓名 鍾進成
30	Zhong Wen Yao	鍾文耀	Xiangshan	1860	13	
CEM 2 (1873)						
31	Cai Tinggan	蔡廷幹	Xiangshan	1861	13	SB: 姓名 蔡朝幹
32	Chen Peihu	陳佩瑚	Nanhai	1863	11	
33	Chen Qiansheng	陳乾生	Yinxian, Zhejiang	1860	14	
34	Deng Guiting	鄧桂廷	Xiangshan	1861	13	Wen: 姓名 鄧桂庭
35	Ding Chongji	丁崇吉	Dinghai, Zhejiang	1860	14	
36	Fang Boliang	方伯樑	Kaiping	1861	13	
37	Huang Youzhang	黃有章	Xiangshan	1861	13	
38	Kuang Jingyuan	鄺景垣	Nanhai	1861	13	
39	Kuang Yongzhong	鄺詠鐘	Nanhai	1861	13	
40	Li Enfu	李恩富	Xiangshan	1861	13	
41	Li Guipan	李桂攀	Xiangshan	1860	14	
42	Liang Jinrong	梁金榮	Xiangshan	1860	14	
43	Liang Pushi	梁普時	Panyu	1863	11	
44	Liang Puzhao	梁普照	Panyu	1861	13	
45	Lu Xigui	陸錫貴	Shanghai, Jiangsu	1861	13	
46	Rong Kui	容揆	Xinhui	1860	14	Xu: native place Xinning
47	Rong Shangqin	容尚勤	Xiangshan	[1850]	[24]	see text
48	Song Wenhui	宋文翹	Xiangshan	1861	13	Tang: native place Macau
49	Su Ruizhao	蘇銳釗	Nanhai	1860	14	
50	Tang Guoan	唐國安	Xiangshan	1860	14	
51	Tang Yuanzhan	唐元湛	Xiangshan	1861	13	
52	Wang Fengjie	王鳳階	Cixi, Zhejiang	1860	14	Xu: 姓名 王鳳階
53	Wang Liangdeng	王良登	Dinghai, Zhejiang	1861	13	Wen: native place Zhenhai
54	Wen Bingzhong	溫秉忠	Xinning	1862	12	
55	Wu Yingke	吳應科	Sihui	1860	14	
56	Wu Zhongxian	吳仲賢	Sihui	1860	14	
57	Zeng Pu	曾溥	Haiyang	[1854]	[20]	see text
58	Zhang Xianghe	張祥和	Wuxian, Jiangsu	1863	11	
59	Zhang Yougong	張有恭	Xiangshan	1862	12	
60	Zhuo Renzhi	卓仁志	Xiangshan	1862	12	

(continued on p. 16)

Table 2.1 continued

ID#	Name	姓名	Native Place*	DOB**	Age***	Remarks
CEM 3 (1874)						
61	Cao Jiajue	曹嘉爵	Shunde	1863	12	SB, Wen: 姓名 曹家爵
62	Cao Jiayang	曹嘉祥	Shunde	1864	11	Wen: 姓名 曹家祥
63	Cao Maoxiang	曹茂祥	Shanghai, Jiangsu	1865	10	
64	Cheng Daye	程大業	Yixian, Anhui	1863	12	Wen: age 13 [= DOB 1862]
65	Huan Weicheng	宦維誠	Dantu, Jiangsu	1865	10	Xu, Wen: 姓名 宦維城
66	Huang Jiliang	黃季良	Panyu	1862	13	
67	Kang Gengling	康賡齡	Shanghai, Jiangsu	1863	12	
68	Kuang Jingyang	鄺景揚	Nanghai	1862	13	Wen: age 12 [= DOB 1863]
69	Kuang Xianchou	鄺賢儔	Nanghai	1863	12	
70	Liang Ruhao	梁如浩	Xiangshan	1863	12	
71	Lin Peiquan	林沛泉	Panyu	1863	12	
72	Lu Zuhua	盧祖華	Xinhui	1864	11	
73	Qi Zuyi	祁祖彝	Shanghai, Jiangsu	1863	12	
74	Rong Yaoyuan	容耀垣	Xiangshan	1865	10	
75	Shen Jiashu	沈嘉樹	Baoshan, Jiangsu	1864	11	Wen: entry missing
76	Sun Guangming	孫廣明	Qiantang, Zhejiang	1861	14	
77	Tang Shaoyi	唐紹儀	Xiangshan	1863	12	
78	Tang Zhiyao	唐致堯	Xiangshan	1862	13	
79	Wu Jingrong	吳敬榮	Xiuning, Anhui	1864	11	
80	Xu Zhenpeng	徐振鵬	Xiangshan	1864	11	
81	Xu Zhixuan	徐之煊	Nanghai	1863	12	Wen: 姓名 徐芝煊; native place Xinhui
82	Xue Youfu	薛有福	Zhangpu, Fujian	1863	12	
83	Yang Changling	楊昌齡	Shunde	1863	12	
84	Yang Zhaonan	楊兆南	Nanghai	1862	13	
85	Yuan Changkun	袁長坤	Shangyu, Zhejiang	1863	12	
86	Zheng Tingxiang	鄭廷襄	Xiangshan	1862	13	
87	Zhou Changling	周長齡	Xin'an	1861	14	Tang: native place Hong Kong
88	Zhou Wanpeng	周萬鵬	Baoshan, Jiangsu	1864	11	
89	Zhu Baokui	朱寶奎	Yangshu, Jiangsu	1862	13	Wen: age 12 [= DOB 1863]
90	Zhu Xishou	朱錫綬	Shanghai, Jiangsu	1865	10	
CEM 4 (1875)						
91	Chen Fuzeng	陳福增	Nanghai	1862	14	SB: 姓名 陳福曾
92	Chen Jinkui	陳金揆	Baoshan, Jiangsu	1864	12	SB: 姓名 陳金達
93	Chen Shaochang	陳紹昌	Xiangshan	1863	13	
94	Feng Bingzhong	馮炳鍾	Heshan	1864	12	Wen: 姓名 馮炳忠
95	Huang Yaochang	黃耀昌	Xiangshan	1863	13	
96	Huang Zulian	黃祖蓮	Huaiyuan, Anhui	1863	13	
97	Jin Dating	金大廷	Baoshan, Jiangsu	1863	13	

(continued on p. 17)

Table 2.1 continued

ID#	Name	姓名	Native Place*	DOB**	Age***	Remarks
98	Kuang Bingguang	鄺炳光	Xinning	1863	13	
99	Kuang Guoguang	鄺國光	Xinning	1863	13	
100	Li Rugan	李汝淦	Huating, Jiangsu	1865	11	Xu: 姓名 朱汝淦; Wen: 姓名 李汝金
101	Liang Aodeng	梁鰲登	Nanhai	1865	11	SB: 姓名 梁登鰲; Xu, Tang: 梁金鰲
102	Liang Pixu	梁丕旭	Panyu	1864	12	
103	Lin Lianhui	林聯輝	Nanhai	1861	15	
104	Lin Liansheng	林聯盛	Nanhai	1862	14	
105	Liu Yulin	劉玉麟	Xiangshan	1863	13	
106	Lu Dezhang	陸德彰	Chuansha, Jiangsu	1863	13	SB, Wen: 姓名 陸德章
107	Pan Sichi	潘斯熾	Nanhai	1865	11	
108	Shen Dehui	沈德輝	Cixi, Zhejiang	1864	12	
109	Shen Deyao	沈德耀	Cixi, Zhejiang	1862	14	
110	Shen Shouchang	沈壽昌	Shanghai, Jiangsu	1865	11	Wen: native place Jiading
111	Sheng Wenyang	盛文揚	Xiangshan	1864	12	
112	Tan Yaofang	譚耀芳	Xiangshan	1866	10	
113	Tang Ronghao	唐榮浩	Xiangshan	1863	13	
114	Tang Rongjun	唐榮俊	Xiangshan	1862	14	
115	Tao Tinggeng	陶廷賡	Nanhai	1864	12	
116	Wang Renbin	王仁彬	Wuxian, Jiangsu	1864	12	
117	Wu Huanrong	吳煥榮	Wujin, Jiangsu	1863	13	
118	Wu Qizao	吳其藻	Xiangshan	1864	12	
119	Zhou Chuan'e	周傳譚	Jiading, Jiangsu	1863	13	
120	Zhou Chuanjian	周傳諫	Jiading, Jiangsu	1865	11	

* Native place: All in Guangdong province, unless otherwise stated.
** Date of birth: In Chinese lunar year, with equivalent Western year (e.g., jiwei 己未 = XF 9 = 1859).
*** Age in Chinese years (*sui*) at time of departure.
Sources: *Shen bao* [SB], TZ 11/6/11, pp. 2–3; 12/5/2, p. 2; 13/6/24, pp. 2–3; GX 1/9/4, p. 2.
Tang Yuanzhan, “You-Mei liuxue tongren xingming lu.”
Wen Bingzhong, “Zuixian liu-Mei tongxue lu.”
Xu Run, *Xu Yuzhai nianpu*, pp. 17a–23b.
Note: XF = Xianfeng; TZ = Tongzhi; GX = Guangxu.

The CEM boys were extraordinarily young. Originally Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang had proposed that the applicants' age be between thirteen and twenty *sui*; they subsequently lowered the minimum age to twelve, but kept the maximum age at twenty. Prince Gong and the Zongli Yamen pointed out, however, that if a CEM student were twenty when he left for America, he would be in his mid-thirties when he returned to China. The unstated significance of this was that at that age it would be likely that his father or mother would soon die, and if that were to occur he would have to take an extended leave from government service

to mourn the passing of his parent. It was as a result of this argument that the final guidelines for the selection of the students set the minimum age at twelve *sui*, but lowered the maximum age to sixteen.⁵ (The Chinese—and the Japanese too—considered a newborn to be one *sui* old; therefore the Chinese age is usually one year older than the Western age.)

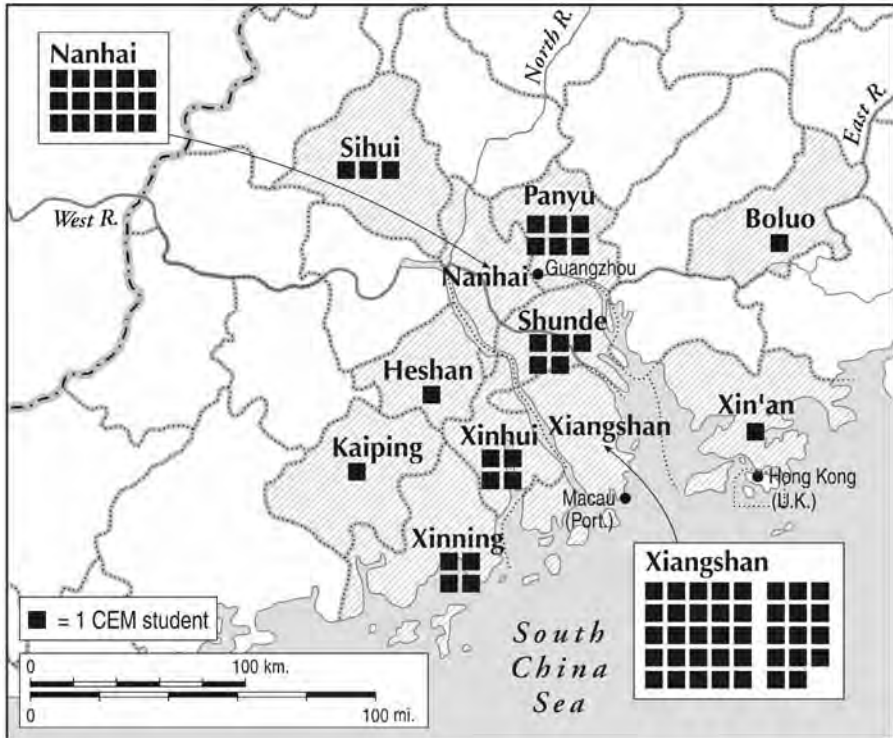
As it turned out, twenty-five of the 120 boys who were chosen for the CEM were younger than twelve at the time of their departure from China, and two were older than sixteen. The two older boys were Zeng Pu (#57) and Rong Shangqin (#47), who (as noted in the next chapter) were both late additions to the CEM's second detachment; in 1873, when the detachment arrived in the United States, Zeng was twenty *sui* and Rong was twenty-four.⁶ The remaining ninety-three students all fell within the statutory range of twelve to sixteen *sui*; indeed eighty-eight were between twelve and fourteen.⁷ By way of comparison, the CEM boys were significantly younger than Zeng Laishun and Yung Wing, who, when they first arrived in the United States in the 1840s, were eighteen and twenty *sui* respectively. The CEM boys were also younger by about half a decade than their contemporary Japanese male counterparts, who seem to have ranged in age from fifteen to twenty-five years. For example, Kaneko Kentarô, one of the boys to travel with the Iwakura embassy, was nineteen years old when he arrived in the United States in 1872. On the other hand, the CEM boys were about the same age as the five Japanese girls who came with Iwakura; on arrival, the girls ranged from eight to sixteen *sui*.⁸

More so perhaps than their youth, the most striking element of the CEM students' profile concerned their geographical origins. In terms of native place, they came almost entirely from just two of the eighteen provinces of China proper; eighty-three (or sixty-nine percent) were from Guangdong and twenty-two (or eighteen percent) were from Jiangsu, with the remaining thirteen percent coming from just four other provinces: eight were from Zhejiang, four from Anhui, two from Fujian, and one from Shandong (see Map 2.1). In other words, only one student was from northern China (Shandong), and only four were from an interior province (Anhui). Everyone else was from the southeast coast, the part of China with the longest as well as the most direct exposure to the maritime West. Of course, it should be borne in mind that in the Chinese context at this time "native place" was usually defined as the locale where one's ancestors came from rather than the place of one's birth. Thus, while Zhan Tianyou (#27) was listed as one of the four natives of Anhui, he actually was born and grew up in Nanhai county, Guangdong.⁹ Similarly, the native place of Zeng Dugong (#26) and his older brother, Zeng Pu is listed as Haiyang county, in eastern Guangdong, but both boys were born in Shanghai.¹⁰ However, because geographical mobility was relatively low in pre-modern times, it may be supposed that in most instances the CEM boy's native place was, in fact, where he was born and grew up.

The CEM boys were, thus, basically divided between a very large group of Cantonese and a smaller group of Shanghainese. Of the eighty-three boys whose native place was in Guangdong province, the overwhelming majority (seventy-four) came from Guangzhou prefecture, in the Pearl River delta, the heartland of Cantonese speakers. Of these seventy-four, an astounding thirty-nine came from a single county: Xiangshan (later renamed Zhongshan in honor of its famous native son, Sun Yat-sen [Sun Zhongshan]). The other thirty-five came from the following counties in Guangzhou prefecture: fifteen were from Nanhai county, six were from Panyu, five from Shunde, four from Xinhui, four from Xinning, and one from Xin'an. As for the nine boys from Guangdong whose native place lay outside Guangzhou prefecture, three hailed from Sihui, two (the Shanghai-born Zeng brothers) from Haiyang, and one each from Boluo, Heshan, Kaiping, and Zhenping (see Map 2.2). Some of these other counties, notably Sihui, Heshan, and Kaiping, were also predominantly Cantonese-speaking. The two Zeng brothers from Haiyang, though, were not Cantonese but Teochiu (that is, natives of the Chaozhou region).¹¹ In short, most CEM students were, ethno-linguistically, Cantonese. In this respect, they seemingly resembled the Chinese laborers who had been streaming to the west coast of the United States under the terms of the Burlingame Treaty. It should be noted, however, that though these two groups both came from the Pearl River delta, they each came from a different part of the delta. Most Cantonese laborers on the American mainland were from Xinning (later renamed Taishan) county, which was home to only four CEM students.¹² On the other hand, most of the Cantonese students came from Xiangshan, which, like Xinning, was an emigrant community but generally sent its people (including, for example, Sun Yat-sen) to the Hawaiian Islands rather than to the American mainland.

While nearly two-thirds of the CEM students were from the Pearl River delta of Guangdong, most of the rest came from the lower Yangtze River region around Shanghai. Specifically, twenty-two boys were from the following nine Jiangsu counties, all but three of which were administratively within the Suzhou–Songjiang–Taicang circuit: seven were from Shanghai, four from Baoshan, three from Jiading, two from Chuansha, two from Wuxian, and one each from Dantu, Huating, Wujin, and Yanghu. Another eight boys were from neighboring Zhejiang province: three from Cixi county, two from Dinghai, and one each from Qiantang, Shangyu, and Yinxian. Altogether, the thirty boys from southern Jiangsu and northern Zhejiang made up one-quarter of the student body of the Chinese Educational Mission (see Map 2.3 on p. 22).

This geographical imbalance resulted from the great difficulty the CEM had in finding willing participants. This was a problem it shared with the other educational initiatives of the self-strengthening era.¹³ In the late nineteenth century, the route to personal and familial success in China still lay through the



Map 2.2 Origins of the CEM students: Pearl River delta (by county). Map by Philip Schwartzberg.

Confucian-based civil service examination system, which had no place for a non-traditional education whether acquired at home (at institutions such as the translators colleges) or abroad. Thus, based on very fragmentary information about the parentage of only one-sixth of the boys, it appears that only four CEM boys came from scholar-official families: Liang Pixu (#102), Li Enfu (#40), Rong Kui (#46), and Liu Yulin (#105). Liang Pixu of Panyu, better known in later life as Liang Cheng, though the son of a merchant, was the nephew (on his father's side) of Liang Zhaohuang, a metropolitan degree holder (*jinshi*) of 1853, who in the early 1870s rose to hold the high-ranking post of prefect of Shuntian, the region surrounding the imperial capital.¹⁴ Li Enfu from Xiangshan was the grandson of a low-ranking official—what Li later called a “Literary Sub-Chancellor,” probably a sub-director of schools (*xundao*)—in Fengshun county, in the eastern part of the province. In addition, Li's paternal uncle (and adoptive father) had been studying for the civil service examinations at the time of his early death.¹⁵ Rong Kui of Xinhui was the son of a senior licentiate (*gongsheng*) and the grandson of a prefectural examiner of taxes

(*xuankesi dashi*).¹⁶ Finally, according to Liu Yulin's tombstone in Macau, his great-grandfather had been a senior licentiate by purchase, and his grandfather, a prefectural director of schools (*jiaoshou*).¹⁷

The Chinese elite's disinterest in study abroad stood in sharp contrast to the attitude of the contemporary Japanese. Among the Japanese students attending American institutions of higher learning in the late nineteenth century, over eighty percent were of elite status; according to historian James Conte, they were of "samurai or noble origins." Indeed, of the forty-four male students who accompanied Iwakura abroad, twenty were members of the nobility (*kazoku*) and the other twenty-four were from the samurai elite (*shizoku*). None, apparently, was a commoner.¹⁸

The chief recruiters for the CEM were Yung Wing (for the first detachment only) and Xu Run. A leading Cantonese businessman in Shanghai, Xu Run had been the chief comprador at the large British trading firm, Dent and Company; in 1873, he resigned as comprador and went to work as the second-in-command of the newly-founded China Merchants Steam Navigation Company.¹⁹ With the scholar-official elite by and large unwilling to sign their sons up for the CEM, Yung Wing and Xu Run, and a few other associates, resorted to using kinship and native-place ties to come up with the requisite candidates, who generally were not of scholar-official origins.

For example, in the winter of 1871–72, Yung Wing returned to his native Nanping village in Xiangshan county, Guangdong, to personally seek out relatives and friends who would consent to their sons joining the first contingent of students scheduled to leave for the United States in mid-1872. Yung Wing himself was or had been married to a woman named Zheng from Suzhou, but they had no children of their own.²⁰ (He was later to marry an American, by whom he had two sons.) His brother, however, had four sons, the second of whom was Rong Shangqian (#21). As Shangqian recalled, "I was gleaned in the little peanut patch of my maternal grandfather's small farm when I was told to go home to pay my respects to the uncle who had come from Shanghai." That was how Rong Shangqian was nominated for the CEM's first detachment.²¹ At the time, his older brother, Shangqin, was already living in the United States, having been sent about nine years earlier—almost certainly at Yung Wing's instigation and expense—to study at Monson Academy. In 1873 Rong Shangqin was added to the CEM as a member of the second detachment. A year later, in 1874, their younger brother, Rong Jue (Yung Tcheuk), also went to study in the United States; then only eight *sui*, he may have been too young to qualify for the CEM, so he went as a self-supported student.²² In addition to these two nephews, two other relatives of Yung Wing—both distant cousins—were members of the CEM. One, Rong Yaoyuan (#74) of Xiangshan, was his cousin "four times removed."²³ The other, even more distantly related, was Rong Kui, from the low-ranking scholar-official family in

Xinhui, an adjacent county.²⁴ The Rong lineage thus provided four members of the CEM.

Xu Run, the Shanghai comprador whom Zeng Guofan had appointed to help with recruitment, was a Xiangshan native as well. One of the two CEM boys with the Xu surname, Xu Zhenpeng (#80), came from the same village, Beiling, as Xu Run; they were most likely related.²⁵

Xu Run's business associate in Shanghai, Tang Tingshu, was yet another Xiangshan native who helped with recruitment. Known also as Tang Jingxing (Tong King Sing), he and two brothers had been Yung Wing's classmates at the Morrison Education Society School in Hong Kong. Tang Tingshu later rose to become the Shanghai comprador for Jardine, Matheson and Company, the leading British firm on the China coast. In 1873 Li Hongzhang appointed Tang to take over the China Merchants Steam Navigation Company, with Xu Run as his deputy. Tang's older brother, Tingzhi, also worked for Jardine, Matheson and succeeded him in 1873 as its Shanghai comprador.²⁶ Tang Tingshu and Tang Tingzhi each had a son in the fourth CEM detachment: Tang Ronghao (#113) and Tang Rongjun (#114), respectively.²⁷ Two other CEM boys, Tang Shaoyi (#77) and Liang Ruhao (#70), were reputedly nephews of Tang Tingshu.²⁸ Yet three other CEM boys carried the Tang surname, Tang Guoan (#50), Tang Yuanzhan (#51), and Tang Zhiyao (#78), with Yuanzhan and Zhiyao coming from the same eponymous village (Tangjia *cun*) as Tang Tingshu, and with Guoan coming from an adjacent village. All seven boys were probably related to Tang Tingshu as well as to each other.²⁹

Finally, the CEM's two translators, Zeng Laishun and, later, Kuang Qizhao, contributed at least three and possibly five family members to the CEM. The Singapore-born, Hamilton-educated Zeng Laishun was the father of Zeng Dugong and Zeng Pu. Leaving Hamilton College in 1848, Zeng Laishun had gone to Guangzhou as a missionary assistant, and then to Shanghai as a comprador and businessman. (It was in Shanghai that his two eldest sons were born.) In 1866 he went to work for the Qing government as the English instructor at the newly-founded Fuzhou Navy Yard School. In 1871 he was appointed the CEM's first translator.³⁰

A year later Kuang Qizhao, a native of Xinning county, succeeded Zeng Laishun as the CEM's translator. His nephew, Kuang Rongguang (#12), was a member of the first detachment.³¹ In addition to Rongguang, two other CEM boys from Xinning shared the Kuang surname. The fact that they also shared an element ("*guang*") in their personal name suggests that all three—Rongguang, Bingguang (#98), and Guoguang (#99)—were closely related to each other and thus also to Kuang Qizhao. For the record, there were four other CEM boys with the Kuang surname, but they were from Nanhai county and may not have been related to the Kuangs of Xinning.

Kinship and native-place ties clearly figured prominently in the background of the CEM students. Indeed, close to one-third of the 120 boys (37) may have belonged to sets of brothers or cousins. As previously noted, Zeng Dugong and Zeng Pu were brothers, and so were Rong Shangqin and Rong Shangqian. Tang Ronghao and Tang Rongjun were first cousins, as were Tang Shaoyi and Liang Ruhao. There were also the three Kuangs from Xinning (Rongguang, Bingguang, and Guoguang) who were, most likely, brothers or paternal cousins. Other pairs of CEM boys who have been identified as brothers were Huang Zhongliang (#11) and Huang Jiliang (#66); Tan Yaoxun (#24) and Tan Yaofang (#112); Liang Pushi (#43) and Liang Puzhao (#44); Lin Lianhui (#103) and Lin Liansheng (#104); and Shen Dehui (#108) and Shen Deyao (#109).³²

Others who, from their common surname coupled with a common (sub-county) native place, were, if not brothers, probably at least cousins, included Deng Shicong (#7) and Deng Guiting (#34) of Shangzha village, Xiangshan; Zhang Kangren (#28) and Zhang Yougong (#59) of Nanping village, Xiangshan; Li Enfu and Li Guipan (#41) of Shagang market (*xu*), Xiangshan; Wu Yingke (#55) and Wu Zhongxian (#56), of Sihui city; and Cao Jiajue (#61) and Cao Jiexiang (#62) of Hengxu village, Shunde.³³ In addition, the four Kuangs from Nanhai county—Jingyuan (#38), Yongzhong (#39), Jingyang (#68), and Xianchou (#69)—all seem to have come from the same place, Dongcun (East village). Furthermore, Jingyuan shared a common element (“*jing*”) in his personal name with Jingyang, and, according to the obituary for their American host, he and Xianchou were cousins. All this suggests that the four Kuangs of Nanhai were closely related members of the same lineage.³⁴ Similarly, although their sub-county native place is not known, Zhou Chuan’e (#119) and Zhou Chuanjian (#120), of Jiading, Jiangsu, shared a common county of origin, a common surname, and, most significantly, a common phonetic element in their personal name (“*chuan*”). They too were most likely kin. Finally, the two Tan brothers, Yaoxun and Yaofang, were, according to their father, close relatives of Zhang Kangren, possibly cousins, despite the difference in surname and in native village.³⁵

While kinship ties were often reinforced by sub-county native-place ties (particularly in south China, where single-lineage communities were common), native-place ties could exist independently from kinship ties. Thus, as noted, Tangjia village in Xiangshan was home not just to five of the six Tangs in the CEM, but also to Liang Ruhao. Similarly, Nanping village was home not only to three of the four Rong boys, but also to Zhang Kangren and Zhang Yougong. In addition, Shangzha village was home to Deng Shicong and Deng Guiting, and also to Cai Tinggan (#31), Huang Youzhang (#37), and Liang Jinrong (#42). These three Xiangshan villages, which today are all part of Zhuhai municipality, together accounted for sixteen of the 120 CEM boys.³⁶

Aside from native place, there is disappointingly little information on other aspects of the family background of the CEM boys. Only a handful of autobiographical accounts exist, and these tend to focus on the CEM experience itself. There is, however, a memoir by Zhong Wenyu (better known in later life as Chung Kun Ai, or C. K. Ai), the second cousin of a CEM boy, Zhong Wenyao (#30), which recalls their boyhood in the late 1860s (note the shared generational element [*wen*] in their personal names). The two boys grew up together in the ancestral village of Xishan (Western Hills), in Xiangshan county, a four-mile walk from Macau. Xishan was, according to Ai's recollections, "a small village," not even big enough to host a periodic market; except for a small local shop, it had "no stores nor restaurants." In the generation of their common great-grandfather, the Zhong family was "very poor," but their respective grandfathers both did well in business. Zhong Wenyao's grandfather had gone into the tea trade in Guangzhou, while C. K. Ai's owned a store in Macau, which he oversaw from Xishan: "His steward came to our village at stated intervals to make his financial reports." As a result, the two grandfathers "owned much rich land" that was "cultivated by tenant-farmers on a share business." They also jointly built an ancestral hall in the village for their lineage, which doubled as a school. Ai's grandfather was sufficiently wealthy to maintain three wives, while Zhong Wenyao's had two. When Ai was a year old, his father, like many others from Xiangshan, went to Hawaii, where he operated a store on the Big Island; like most migrants, he initially left his wife and children behind. Zhong Wenyao's father, on the other hand, stayed in Xishan. Both boys attended the clan school. In 1878, Ai's father returned to Xiangshan to take his family to Hawaii, where Ai was to spend the rest of his life. By then Zhong Wenyao, too, had left his native village, with the first contingent of the CEM.³⁷

It is difficult to say how representative Zhong Wenyao's boyhood was of the CEM. Zhong came from rural surroundings, which is likely true of many—perhaps most—other CEM boys. Nevertheless, a number of CEM boys grew up in an urban environment, even if their native county was predominantly rural. Wu Yingke and Wu Zhongxian, for example, were natives of Sihui, a rural county northwest of Guangzhou, but they themselves lived "within the East Gate" of the county seat.³⁸ Tang Yuanzhan was one of the five Tangs who were natives of Tangjia village, Xiangshan, but he personally was born and brought up in the nearby Portuguese colony of Macau, as were two other Xiangshan boys: Shi Jinyong (#23) and Song Wenhui (#48).³⁹ Similarly, Zhou Changling (#87), who in later life was better known as Zhou Shouchen (Shouson Chow), was recorded as a native of Xin'an (now Bao'an) county, but he was born and grew up in Hong Kong (which, before its cession to the British in 1842, was a part of Xin'an).⁴⁰ Furthermore, the home counties of some CEM boys encompassed major metropolitan centers, such as Shanghai (in Shanghai county) and Guangzhou

(which was administratively divided between Nanhai and Panyu counties). It is likely that many of the boys from those counties—seven from Shanghai, fifteen from Nanhai, and six from Panyu—grew up in an urban setting. For example, the family of Liang Pushi and Liang Puzhao, natives of Panyu, resided in the commercially bustling Xiguan district of Guangzhou.⁴¹ And, as previously noted, Zeng Dugong and Zeng Pu, the two brothers from Haiyang county, Guangdong, actually spent their childhood in Shanghai, and later, in Fuzhou.

Even if most CEM boys grew up in rural surroundings, it is hardly likely that “Only the sons of humble homes” and “farm boys in rags” participated in the program, as the late-Qing diplomat and poet Huang Zunxian put it, perhaps in an excess of poetic imagination, in a celebrated poem.⁴² Or that, as sociologist Hui Huang mistakenly asserts, “All were peasant boys who had not received much Chinese education.”⁴³ So far as one can tell, few or none of the CEM boys came from truly humble homes or were ill-educated peasants. To the contrary, since one of the requirements for enrollment in the CEM was several years of prior study, only families of some means and culture would have qualified.

Such being the case, the CEM seems to have appealed to two particular social groups. One was what might be called the “unorthodox” elite, that is, those individuals who had parlayed an unconventional education or employment into quasi-conventional (that is, quasi-official) elite status during the self-strengthening period. These people generally came from the southeast coast of China, and constituted what historian Paul Cohen calls “pioneer reformers of the littoral.”⁴⁴ The fathers of at least six CEM boys fit into this category. Chief among them were Zeng Laishun, Yung Wing, and Tang Tingshu (Tong King Sing). All three had received a Western-style education, whether in Singapore, Hong Kong, and/or the United States, and by the early 1870s each had been officially rewarded with a title, rank, and/or position in the Qing administrative system for his contributions to the Self-Strengthening Movement.⁴⁵

Three other CEM fathers with an unorthodox social background were Qi Zhaoxi, Huang Yuechuan, and Tang Tingzhi, who were “native” employees of the Imperial Maritime Customs, the new sino-foreign governmental agency that was created at the beginning of the self-strengthening period and headed by Robert Hart and other Westerners. Qi Zhaoxi, father of Qi Zuyi (#73), had learned French and English while working for the customs in Shanghai in the mid-1860s.⁴⁶ Huang Yuechuan, father of Huang Kaijia (#9), was an interpreter at the Shantou (Swatow) customs house in Guangdong.⁴⁷ And Tang Tingzhi (Tong Mow Chee), father of Tang Rongjun, had been on the staff of the customs service in the 1860s.⁴⁸

The other—and probably larger—social group that took an interest in the CEM was merchants. Indeed, a majority of the twenty or so CEM boys whose social background is known had fathers who were merchants, often living and

working (away from their families) in Hong Kong or one of the dozen “treaty ports” which had been recently opened by treaty to foreign trade and residence. Some of these merchants were, or had been, engaged in foreign trade. For example, as previously mentioned, Tang Tingshu and Tang Tingzhi succeeded one another as the comprador for Jardine, Matheson in Shanghai. The father of Xue Youfu (#82) worked at a foreign trade firm (*yanghang*) in Xiamen.⁴⁹ Tang Shaoyi’s father was a tea exporter in Shanghai.⁵⁰ The father of Liang Pushi and Liang Puzhao was in the tea and silk businesses in Shanghai and Jiujiang.⁵¹ Zhong Wenyao’s grandfather had, as previously noted, made and lost a fortune exporting tea in Guangzhou around the time of the First Opium War.⁵² The forebears of Zhan Tianyou had also been in the tea business, but had gone bankrupt.⁵³

Other CEM fathers were engaged in more general kinds of business. The father of Wen Bingzhong (#54), of Xinning, had been a carpenter by trade but, after moving to Hong Kong in 1856, had “acquired property, mostly shops in the Chinese business section” of Sheung Wan.⁵⁴ The father of Ding Chongji (#35), of Dinghai, Zhejiang, was a beancurd maker in nearby Ningbo.⁵⁵ Yet other CEM boys whose fathers were merchants (with no specified place or line of business) included Liang Dunyan (#13), Zhang Kangren, and Rong Yaoyuan.⁵⁶ Even Li Enfu’s scholar-official family in Xiangshan was not without its commercial connections; a cousin was a businessman in Shanghai, while the husband of one of his aunts, also in Shanghai, was “a comprador in an American tea warehouse.” Like Zhan Tianyou, Li Enfu was recruited for the CEM by a relative; his cousin, on a visit home to Xiangshan from Shanghai, described the mission in such glowing terms that Li’s widowed mother was persuaded to let him go.⁵⁷

Why would such relatively well-to-do families agree to allow their sons to participate in the Chinese Educational Mission? One reason might be that, whether because of their own unconventional education or their line of work as business people, they were more directly exposed to the outside world than, say, the classically educated scholar-officials, which perhaps made them less reluctant to send their sons abroad to study. Another, probably more compelling reason, was that the CEM offered an alternative route to achieving the coveted status of the scholar-official. As amply demonstrated by the success of Tang Tingshu, Yung Wing, and Zeng Laishun, mastery of a Western education could lead to government employment and an elite social standing almost equal to that achieved through success in the highly competitive civil service examination system. As Rong Kui retrospectively put it, “When the Mission was established, another avenue, as it were, was thrown open to boys who had the desire to enter Government service in time to come. Here, then, some parents saw a grand opportunity for their boys to achieve political distinction.”⁵⁸

Indeed, once the candidates were selected for the CEM, their formal status became that of “government students” (*guansheng*), who, according to a

dictionary of official terminologies, were equivalent to “students of the Imperial Academy” (*jiansheng*).⁵⁹ In other words, they were considered to have passed the lowest of the three levels of the civil service examination system. As such, they became stipendiaries of the state, and, as a down payment, they were each allotted a travel and clothing allowance of 790 taels (US\$1,185).⁶⁰ Thereafter, on official occasions, they were required to dress and comport themselves accordingly. Thus, according to Wen Bingzhong, they were each given a set of official robes, including a long gown (*changpao*), a short jacket with long sleeves (*magua*), and a pair of satin shoes, along with, in the words of Li Enfu, “the cadet’s gilt button and rank” (see Illustration 2.1). Furthermore, according to Wen, “They were



Illustration 2.1 Six members of first CEM detachment, San Francisco, September 1872. Thomas Houseworth and Co., *Pacific Coast Scenery* (San Francisco: T. Houseworth and Co., 1872). Courtesy of the Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.

instructed how to behave before the officials and trained in the rules of etiquette.” Finally, according to Li, “Large posters were posted up at the front doors of our homes, informing the world in gold characters of the great honor which had come to the family.”⁶¹ All of this was much like the formal recognition given to those who had succeeded in the civil service examinations.⁶²

In return, the CEM boys were expected to study hard and be obedient; otherwise they could be expelled from the program and sent back to China. Further, they were prohibited from “quitting in midstream,” from either extending or cutting short their stay abroad; from “going into private business for themselves in China or abroad on the completion of their studies;” and from “applying for naturalization as a foreigner” (*ruji waiyang*).⁶³ (Japanese students sent abroad at the beginning of the Meiji era were similarly prohibited from changing their nationality.)⁶⁴ Their fathers, too, had to sign an agreement, such as the one that Zhan Tianyou’s father executed on 22 April 1872, promising, “When his son had completed his technical [*jiyi*] studies, he would accept on his return whatever official assignment and would not remain abroad to work.” This document also explicitly released the Qing government from all liabilities should his son become ill or die while overseas.⁶⁵

In sum, the identities of the 120 boys who were ultimately selected for the CEM are well known. However, what is known about them is quite limited. They were all Han. They were all boys. Most were very young, generally in their early teens. Nearly all came from the southeastern part of China. Many were related to at least one other member of the CEM by kinship and/or native-place ties. They were all required to have had some prior education and hence, presumably, were not poor peasants. Few, so it appears, were members of the scholar-official elite. Rather, they seem to have come from among “pioneer reformers of the littoral” and merchants. In other words, they were drawn from a tiny sliver of the overall Chinese population.

Conclusion

The Chinese Educational Mission to the United States in the 1870s is usually considered only within the context of modern Chinese history, but it was more than simply a Chinese event. By its very nature it was a transnational undertaking, and as such it should be examined also from the perspective of Asian American history as well as East Asian comparative history.

From the point of view of modern Chinese history, the significance of the CEM was its place in the Self-Strengthening Movement. Begun in 1872, it was among the earliest initiatives of the movement. It was the first, as well as the most ambitious, of the four study abroad programs that the Qing government launched in the late nineteenth century (the other three programs, which sent naval and military cadets to Europe, involved a total of only thirty-eight students). When the CEM students returned to China in 1881, most were assigned to work in other self-strengthening projects that, perhaps by no coincidence, were just then getting underway. The CEM students were thus instrumental in the operations of such innovative enterprises as the Telegraph Administration, the Kaiping Mines, the Tianjin Naval Academy, and the Tianjin Medical School, as well as the Zongli Yamen and the newly-established diplomatic corps. Also, seven returned students died in battle during the Sino-French and Sino-Japanese wars. The CEM's relationship to self-strengthening was central.

Perhaps the most conspicuous feature of the CEM is how young and ill-prepared the boys were when they set off for the United States. They were younger (by about six years) than Zeng Laishun and Yung Wing when those two pioneering students went to America a generation earlier; they were also younger than the Chinese naval and military students who were sent to Europe in the mid-1870s. Furthermore, unlike Zeng Laishun and Yung Wing, the CEM boys had received very little instruction in Western learning prior to their departure from China. With few exceptions, they knew no English when they applied for the program, and their training at the CEM preparatory school in Shanghai was of

short duration. On arrival in New England there was no alternative but to assign them to the care of volunteer surrogate families, much like modern-day “home stay” programs for high-school students from foreign countries.

At a time when Confucianism and the examination system still reigned supreme and opportunities for acquiring a Western education in China were practically nonexistent, the promoters of the CEM were limited in their choice of candidates. The youthfulness of the CEM boys in the 1870s (as graphically depicted in Illustrations 2.1 and 4.1) may be contrasted with the maturity of the Boxer Indemnity scholars in the 1910s and 1920s (see Illustration 11.5), who, when they arrived in the United States, had no need for host families and home schooling and were immediately ready to tackle the challenges of American colleges and universities. The Boxer Indemnity scholars, of course, had grown up in a very different environment, when, following the failure of the Self-Strengthening Movement at the end of the century, Confucianism had been discredited and a hierarchy of “new schools” had replaced the examination system.

The CEM boys were unusually prone to cultural assimilation. Not only were they young and naive, they had also been intentionally dispersed throughout western Massachusetts and Connecticut, living mostly in small towns and villages in groups of no more than two or four in order to facilitate the learning of English. It should therefore be no surprise that as they learned the language, made American friends, and attended American schools they readily adopted American dress, took up American pastimes, and began to behave like Americans. At the same time they began to lose their grip on their own language and culture, and they resented and sometimes resisted the efforts of the Chinese Educational Commissioners in Hartford to make them study Chinese and perform the Confucian rituals.

However, the students’ cultural assimilation, while far-reaching, was by no means without limits. Though they generally stopped shaving their forehead, which was part of the Manchu-imposed hairstyle for Chinese men, they did not (with only two exceptions) abandon the queue. Though they attended religious services and many converted to Christianity, some even organizing a missionary society, they all (with one exception, Zeng Pu [or Elijah Laisun]) stopped short of formally joining a church. Nor did they, unlike Associate Commissioner Yung Wing, become naturalized as American citizens. Finally, when they were ordered to go home, they all (with only two exceptions) obeyed (though six eventually made their own way back to the United States). In short, contrary to the concerns and accusations of their critics, the CEM students did not entirely “go native,” and they did not turn their backs on their own country.

The CEM is often considered a failed venture because the program was cut short in midstream; the students were abroad for only six to nine years rather than the fifteen years originally envisaged. The assumption seems to be that if only

they could have completed their studies, the students might have been able to play a more important role on their return to China than they did. Nevertheless, in that not-so-brief span of time the boys, who when they arrived in New England barely spoke English, had managed to work their way through the American educational system; by the time they were recalled, fully half of them had enrolled or were about to enroll in college and three had even graduated. Clearly, if the program had not been aborted, most of the students would have completed their collegiate studies, and those who had graduated from college before their fifteen years were up would have been able to enroll in graduate school and/or pursue some sort of professional internship. But would this have made a difference to their subsequent careers or to China? Probably not. The three students who did complete their collegiate studies—Zeng Pu, Ouyang Geng, and Zhan Tianyou, all of them graduates of Yale's Sheffield Scientific School—were utilized no differently than all the other CEM students on their return to China; they too were assigned to self-strengthening projects, namely the Kaiping Mines and the Fuzhou Navy Yard School. Moreover, their accomplishments in their assigned positions were no more distinguished than those of their cohorts.

In other words, even if the CEM had not been curtailed, the returned students would not have revolutionized Chinese society. The reason is that self-strengthening was never intended to transform China. Its aims were far more modest. They were to borrow the superior technology of the West in order to protect the cultural essence of the Confucian order. The circumscribed role that the CEM students played on their return to China was precisely what was expected of them. It was only after the Confucian order had been shaken at the end of the century that the students were finally able to play a transformative role. Self-strengthening may have been a failure, but the CEM itself, though truncated, was not.

The returned students themselves, however, were understandably unhappy that their talents were not better utilized. Some subsequently “ran away” (as Tang Guoan put it) from their official assignments and sought positions in the private sector as translators and English secretaries in foreign trading firms and American consulates. They felt that they were being mistreated. But viewed objectively and in the context of the times, the returned students were not treated badly at all. The one glaring and well-publicized exception occurred on their return to Shanghai, when they were forced to travel through the streets on clunky wheelbarrows, exposed to the ridicule of gawking bystanders, and confined briefly to dingy quarters. Otherwise, on the rest of their return trip—whether across the United States by train or across the Pacific by ship—they had all traveled in first-class accommodations, as they had when they first went to the United States. Furthermore, once they were released from their initial “captivity” in Shanghai, they were given assignments in various governmental agencies and rewarded with

appropriate official ranks. Granted, the posts that they were given were not in the regular bureaucracy but in self-strengthening projects; nevertheless, the ranks that they received were identical to those awarded to regular bureaucrats. There is, in short, little evidence that the returned CEM students were dealt with as “traitors.”

To the contrary, for the students themselves (and their families) the CEM had served them well as a vehicle of upward social mobility. Like other self-strengthening initiatives, study abroad had little appeal for members of the orthodox scholar-official elite, who continued to concentrate on the Confucian canon in preparation for the civil service examinations and in hopes of joining the regular bureaucracy. As a result, with only a few exceptions, the families that provided the candidates for the CEM did not belong to the scholar-official elite. This did not mean, however, that the CEM families were necessarily poor; since one of the requirements for admission to the program was several years of prior study, those families were most likely fairly well-off economically. The boys were overwhelmingly from the two most commercialized parts of China, the Pearl River delta of Guangdong province and the Shanghai region; their fathers may have been merchants, perhaps with a stake in foreign trade. By birth, then, the CEM boys were not members of the scholar-official elite, but once they were selected for the program they were immediately classified as “government students” and thereafter were expected to dress and behave like scholar-officials. Furthermore, when they returned from the United States, they were given posts in the government and awarded corresponding ranks in the civil and military service. They (and their families) had become a part of the scholar-official elite. While it was not the orthodox elite, which was limited to those who had passed the Confucian-based examination system, it was nevertheless a part of the elite and recognized as such.

From the standpoint of East Asian history, the CEM may be compared and contrasted with the study abroad programs of contemporary Japan. Japan began sending students abroad in the mid-1860s, about half a decade earlier than China, initially to Europe and then increasingly to the United States. Japan also sent more students abroad in the 1870s than China, including, remarkably, a handful of girls to the United States. Like the Chinese, most Japanese students destined for the United States went to the northeastern part of the country, with the two groups sometimes attending the same schools at the same time. Just as there were among the Chinese students in the 1870s a few who were self-supported, so the Japanese included both self-supported and government-funded students (though the ratio between the two is unclear). Perhaps the most striking difference between the Chinese and the Japanese students was in their family background. Whereas CEM students most definitely did not come from the ranks of China’s orthodox social elite, the Japanese students were almost entirely drawn from the nobility and the samurai elite.

Another striking difference was that with some exceptions (among them the five girls), the Japanese students were generally a few years older than the CEM students, and they were generally better prepared academically, both in their native language and in English. Once they had arrived in the United States, they usually did not require the services of surrogate parents and home schooling, unlike all but three of the CEM students (Rong Shangqin and the two Zeng brothers). The Japanese were more likely to attend higher schools of learning than the CEM boys, half of whom had not advanced beyond high school when they were recalled. The Japanese also attended a wider selection of colleges and pursued a broader range of course work than the Chinese students. Like the Chinese, most went to liberal arts colleges, technical schools, or comprehensive universities and were enrolled in either the classical or the scientific curriculum. But unlike the Chinese, the Japanese students also attended normal schools (teachers colleges) and the U.S. Naval Academy, and some majored in subjects such as law and agriculture. In the period before 1882, many more Japanese (upwards of forty) had graduated from an American college, whereas only seven Chinese had—three from the CEM and four non-CEM, including Yung Wing. And only one Chinese (Shu Gaodi, or V. P. Suvoong, from the Columbia Medical School) had earned a graduate degree by 1882, while many more Japanese had done so (see Table 8.2). Of course, if the CEM had not been recalled in 1881, the gap between the Chinese and the Japanese would in time have been greatly narrowed.

Like the CEM, the Japanese study abroad program was subject to recall. In 1873 Japan ordered its government-funded students in the United States to come home. The reasons were the excessive cost of the program as well as dissatisfaction with the low quality of the students' academic work. Only those who arranged private funding were allowed to remain behind. (In a similar situation seven years later, the CEM's Tan Yaoxun and Rong Kui were able to defy the order to return to China because they managed to secure independent financial support with the help of Leonard Bacon and Yung Wing.) What was different between the CEM and the Japanese program is that, after making some changes, the Japanese started their program up again, whereas, despite the efforts of Yung Wing, the Chinese did not.

The Japanese students abroad before 1873 faced some of the same problems as the CEM students with regard to cultural assimilation. Under the Tokugawa shogunate Japanese students dressed in bulky, flowing costumes similar to the gowns with long, puffy sleeves that the Chinese students wore when they arrived in the United States; Japanese men also wore their hair in a topknot that was vaguely similar to the shaved forehead and queue of Chinese men. The two groups were thus equally disadvantaged when attempting to adjust to American culture. In 1873, however, the new Meiji government did away with

the Tokugawa customs and adopted Western clothing and hairstyle. Thereafter Japanese students had an easier time than the CEM students in adapting to American culture, and they were subject to fewer taunts than the queue-wearing Chinese students. In the same year, the Meiji government lifted the Tokugawa ban on Christianity; as a result, Japanese students were not prohibited from joining a Christian church, as the CEM students were. Also, Japanese students, perhaps because they were generally older and better educated in their native language and culture, were not required to keep up with their Japanese studies; the CEM boys, on the other hand, had to devote a part of their daily home schooling to Chinese lessons and to go to the CEC headquarters in Hartford (“Hell House”) every three months for additional lessons. Nor did the Japanese students, at least until the turn of the century, have to contend with anything comparable to the anti-Chinese movement in the United States during the 1870s. In short, Japanese students, especially after 1873, had far fewer difficulties than the CEM students fitting into American society.

Similarly, the first Japanese students to go abroad, the ones sent in the late Tokugawa, had identical problems as the CEM students fitting in when they returned home. For both groups, because of the unconventional education they had acquired abroad, there was no place for them in the regular bureaucracy. The returned students from Satsuma could only find employment as “specialist technicians” on the fringes of the government, just as the returned CEM students were assigned to a variety of self-strengthening projects outside the governmental mainstream. In Japan, however, the employment opportunities for the returned students brightened considerably after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, as a number of educational institutions were founded or expanded, creating a need for expertise in Western subjects. In China such new schools were not to be established until the New Policies era after the Boxer Rebellion. Though the returned CEM students flourished during the New Policies era, the schools themselves had come a quarter century too late to benefit them.

Finally, from the perspective of Asian American history, the CEM students should be recognized as among the earliest Asians to come to and live in the United States. They were a part of the first wave of Chinese to arrive during the three decades between the Gold Rush and the Chinese Exclusion Act, when there were as yet no restrictions on immigration to the United States. They alone constituted one-tenth of one percent of the 105,465 Chinese in the United States who were tabulated in the 1880 federal census. The CEM students were also among the first groups of Chinese to take advantage of the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 to come to the east coast of the United States, joining the shoemakers in Massachusetts, the cutlery workers in Pennsylvania, the laundrymen in New Jersey, as well as individual laundry workers and storekeepers.

The CEM students shared some similarities with these other early Chinese in the United States. Most were Cantonese speakers from the Pearl River delta of South China, though they tended to come from Xiangshan (Zhongshan) county rather than Xinning (Taishan) county, which is where most other Chinese to the United States came from. All were young males, and except for the two Zeng (or Laisun) brothers whose father was the CEC's translator, all had left their families behind in China. Also, they were sojourners. They had not come to the United States as settlers; rather, their objective was to study, then return home to China.

Despite such similarities, the CEM students led very different lives from the other Chinese in America. Whereas most other Chinese were poor manual laborers with little or no formal education, the students generally came from well-to-do (though not scholar-official) families and were possessed of some education even before they were selected for the CEM. As government scholars the students had all their transportation expenses paid for and they traveled in first-class accommodations; they did not have to indenture themselves, as many laborers did, in order to pay for their ocean voyage, which furthermore was in steerage. Once in the United States the CEM students were well integrated into elite American society. They were dispersed across southern New England and lived with (and were practically adopted by) well-established, middle-class American families. They attended some of the best high schools and colleges in the country. They mingled easily and on a basis of near equality with elite Americans, including, on one memorable occasion at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, the president of the United States. The laborers, on the other hand, were often ghettoized in factory dormitories or Chinatowns and had few associations with middle-class Americans; what associations they did have were often awkward and certainly not on a basis of equality.

Not only were the CEM students different from the other Chinese in the United States, but also they generally kept their distance from them. Though both groups traveled across the Pacific in both directions on some of the same steamships, the students in their first-class cabins took no interest in and had no contact with the other Chinese traveling in steerage. Nor did they, during their stay in the United States, have much to do with the other Chinese, some of whom, like the shoemakers in North Adams, Massachusetts, lived and worked not far from them. As junior members of the Chinese scholar-official elite, the students shared the disdain of that elite toward the lower, manual-working classes.

Because of their different social status, the two groups were affected differently by the anti-Chinese movement of the era, which was to culminate in the signing of the Chinese Exclusion Act the year after the students left the country. The CEM students were denied admission to the Naval Academy at Annapolis, when by treaty they should have been admitted as the Japanese had been. But otherwise they did not experience the sting of discrimination and

vituperation so commonly felt by the laborers; to the contrary, the students were almost always favorably reported upon in contemporary newspapers. In other words, the “anti-Chinese” movement of the 1870s was directed less at the Chinese as a race than at unskilled manual laborers (“coolies”), who were accused of driving down factory wages, breaking strikes, and reviving slavery; the movement was more anti-coolie than anti-Chinese. If the CEM students had stayed on beyond 1881, they would have been exempt from most provisions of the Chinese Exclusion Act. As Chinese, they would have been denied the right of naturalization, but as students, one of the four exempt groups, they would have been allowed to freely enter and leave the country, unlike the unskilled workers.

Though nearly all CEM students went home to China and subsequently made their careers there, a few did not. When they were recalled, two of the students chose to stay, and in the next several years six others made their way back to the United States. These eight students were able to resume their interrupted studies, and they all settled down in the United States. They were no longer sojourners. They married, though because of the shortage of Chinese women in the country, when they married it was almost invariably to a non-Chinese. And when they died, they had their bones buried in the United States. They and their families were among the founding members of the emergent Chinese American community.

In sum, the CEM boys, who (like some Japanese) bravely “stepped forth into the world,” played a significant role not only in the Self-Strengthening Movement in China, but also in the history of Asians in the United States.

Notes

Abbreviations used in Notes: DG = Daoguang, XF = Xianfeng, TZ = Tongzhi, GX = Guangxu.

Introduction

1. As quoted in Wang Yingjie, “Working with U.S. Higher Education: A Chinese Perspective,” in Shepherd Laughlin, ed. *U.S.-China Educational Exchange: Perspectives on a Growing Partnership* (New York: AIFS Foundation, and Institute of International Education, 2008), p. 99.
2. Shepherd Laughlin, “Trends and Models of Academic Exchange Between China and the U.S.,” pp. 4–5, and Yang Xinyu, “National Policy Goals: PRC Government Activities Supporting U.S.-China Exchange,” p. 38, both in Laughlin, *U.S.-China Educational Exchange*.
3. See Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China’s Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900–1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Stacey Bieler, “Patriots” or “Traitors”: *A History of American-Educated Chinese Students* (Armonk, N.Y., and London: M. E. Sharpe, 2004).
4. On the first decade of the Self-Strengthening Movement, see Mary Clabaugh Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: The T’ung-Chih Restoration, 1862–1874*. Second printing, with additional notes (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), especially chaps. 9–11.
5. See Thomas L. Kennedy, *The Arms of Kiangnan: Modernization in the Chinese Ordnance Industry, 1860–1895* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978); David Pong, *Shen Pao-chen and China’s Modernization in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
6. See Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *China’s Entrance into the Family of Nations: The Diplomatic Phase, 1858–1880* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).
7. Knight Biggerstaff, *The Earliest Modern Government Schools in China* (1961; reprint, Port Washington, N.Y., and London: Kennikat Press, 1972).

8. Steven A. Leibo, “The Sino-European Educational Missions, 1875–1886,” *Asian Profile*, 16: 444–448 (1988); Biggerstaff, *Earliest Modern Government Schools*, pp. 228–235; Y. C. Wang, *Chinese Intellectuals and the West, 1872–1949* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966), pp. 45–48.
9. Thomas La Fargue, “Some Early Chinese Visitors to the United States,” *T’ien Hsia Monthly*, 11: 136–140 (1940); Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (1985; reprint, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005), pp. 56–57, 212, 224 n. 12; for more on the Cornwall school and another of its Chinese students, see Karen Sánchez-Eppler, “Copying and Conversion: An 1824 Friendship Album ‘from a Chinese youth,’” in Monica Chiu, ed., *Asian Americans in New England: Culture and Community* (Durham, N.H.: University of New Hampshire Press, 2009), pp. 1–41. My thanks to Prof. Evelyn Hu-DeHart, of Brown University, for bringing to my attention the article by Sánchez-Eppler.
10. Edward J. M. Rhoads, “In the Shadow of Yung Wing: Zeng Laishun and the Chinese Educational Mission to the United States,” *Pacific Historical Review*, 74: 22–26 (2005).
11. Yung Wing, *My Life in China and America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1909), chaps. 2–5; Edmund H. Worthy, Jr., “Yung Wing in America,” *Pacific Historical Review*, 34: 266–274 (1965).
12. My thanks to Aileen Caldwell at the Archives, Kenyon College, for information about Yan and Shu. On Yan, see also his biographical sketch in the Chinese online encyclopedia, <http://www.hudong.com/wiki/顏永京> (accessed 12 January 2010); on Shu, see also “Hartford’s First Chinese Student,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, 17 February 1879, p. 2; *Catalogue of the Alpha Delta Phi* (New York: Executive Council of the Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity, 1899), p. 557; *Catalogue of Officers and Graduates of Columbia University from the Foundation of King’s College in 1754* (New York, 1906), p. 253; David Wright, *Translating Science: The Transmission of Western Chemistry into Late Imperial China, 1840–1900* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 239 n. 144.
13. On the identification of Lemuel Yung as Rong Shangqin, see La Fargue’s note card on Rong Shangqin, Folder 10, Box 1, Thomas La Fargue Papers, 1873–1946, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University Libraries, Pullman, Wash. On Rong Shangqin’s relationship to Yung Wing, see Rong Yingyu [Yung Ying-yue], “Rong Ruolan shi Rong Hong de erzi ma?” (Is Rong Ruolan Yung Wing’s son?), *Jindaishi yanjiu*, 2003 no. 4, p. 292. My thanks to the late Richard Yung, in Singapore, for bringing Rong Yingyu’s article to my attention.
14. On these three groups of Chinese in the northeast, see, respectively, Frederick Rudolph, “Chinamen in Yankeedom: Anti-unionism in Massachusetts in 1870,” *American Historical Review*, 53: 1–29 (1947); Edward J. M. Rhoads, “Asian Pioneers in the Eastern United States: Chinese Cutlery Workers in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, in the 1870s,” *Journal of Asian American Studies*, 2: 119–155 (1999); and Daniel Liestman, “Chinese Labor at the Passaic Steam Laundry in Belleville,” *New Jersey History*, 112 (1–2): 21–33 (1994).

15. See Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).
16. John E. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850–80* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000); James T. Conte, “Overseas Study in the Meiji Period: Japanese Students in America, 1867–1902” (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1977).
17. Thomas E. La Fargue, *China’s First Hundred: Educational Mission Students in the United States, 1872–1881* (1942; reprint, Pullman, Wash.: Washington State University Press, 1987).
18. See, in particular, Shi Ni, *Guannian yu beiju: Wan-Qing liu-Mei youtong mingyun pouxi* (Sense and tragedy: An analysis of the fate of the boy students in the United States in the late Qing; Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 2000); Qian Gang and Hu Jingcao, *Da-Qing liu-Mei youtong ji* (Chinese Educational Commission Students; Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 2003).
19. La Fargue, *China’s First Hundred*, p. xviii. See also Thomas L. Kennedy’s informative introduction to the reprint edition. La Fargue’s research notes and the materials that he collected, including precious photographs, make up the bulk of the La Fargue Papers at Washington State University. The photographs have been digitized and are available online at the website of the university library.
20. Other scholars have also focused on this aspect of the CEM experience. See, in particular, Edwin Pak-wah Leung, “The Making of the Chinese Yankees: School Life of the Chinese Educational Mission Students in New England,” *Asian Profile*, 16: 401–412 (1988); Chris Robyn, “Building the Bridge: The Chinese Educational Mission to the United States—A Sino-American Historico-Cultural Synthesis, 1872–1881” (Masters thesis, Department of History, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1996).
21. See, in particular, Bieler, “Patriots” or “Traitors”; see also, Ye, *Seeking Modernity*, p. 3.
22. Qian Gang and Hu Jingcao were responsible for the television documentary; their book on the CEM is a companion volume to the documentary.
23. The exhibit in Beijing was entitled “Learning Overseas and Succeeding in China” (Qixue haiwai jiangong Zhonghua); the one in Hong Kong, “Boundless Learning: Foreign-Educated Students of Modern China” (Xuehai wuyai: Jindai Zhongguo liuxuesheng zhan). Each exhibit produced a bilingual catalogue.

Chapter 1 Origins

1. Biggerstaff, *Earliest Modern Government Schools*, p. 108; for Woren’s comments, see Ssu-yü Teng and John K. Fairbank, *China’s Response to the West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 76.
2. For a dissenting opinion, see Dong Shouyi, *Qingdai liuxue yundong shi* (A history of the study abroad movement during the Qing period; Shenyang: Liaoning renmin

- chubanshe, 1985), pp. 78–81, which minimizes Yung Wing’s role as the originator of the CEM. See note 6 below.
3. On Brown, see his autobiographical sketch in *Biographical Memoranda Respecting All Who Ever Were Members of the [Yale] Class of 1832* (New Haven, 1880), pp. 25–42; and William Elliot Griffis, *A Maker of the New Orient, Samuel Robbins Brown, Pioneer Educator in China, America, and Japan: The Story of his Life and Work* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1902).
 4. Yung Wing, *My Life*, chaps. 6–15 (the reference to compradors is at p. 77); Worthy, “Yung Wing in America,” pp. 274–275.
 5. Yung Wing, *My Life*, p. 41.
 6. Yung Wing, *My Life*, pp. 170–175. Dong Shouyi, *Qingdai liuxue yundong shi*, p. 79, doubts the veracity of Yung’s account concerning this four-point petition, which, as he points out, is not otherwise substantiated. If so, this would not be the only inaccuracy in Yung’s autobiography.
 7. Yung Wing, *My Life*, pp. 176–181; Zeng Guofan, memorial, TZ 9/9/16 (10 October 1870), in Gu Dunrou, “Rong Hong nianpu changbian chugao—Chuangban liuxueju yibai zhounian jinian—Liuxueju shiqi (1872–1881)” (An extended chronological biography of Yung Wing—Commemorating the centenary of the establishment of the study abroad bureau—The period of the study abroad bureau [1872–1881]), *Tushuguan xuebao* (Journal of Library Science), 11: 53 (1971).
 8. Yung Wing, *My Life*, p. 183; Gu Dunrou, “Rong Hong nianpu,” pp. 53–54.
 9. Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang, joint memorial, TZ 10/7/19 (3 September 1871), in *Yangwu yundong* (The foreign affairs movement; Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1961), 2: 153–157; translated in Lo Hsiang-lin, *Hong Kong and Western Cultures* (Tokyo: Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, and Honolulu: East West Center Press, 1963), pp. 100–108. Qing memorials are dated according to when an imperial rescript (or response) was issued, which in this case was 3 September 1871 (TZ 10/7/19). The memorial was actually submitted on TZ 10/7/3 (18 August 1871); see Gu Dunrou, “Rong Hong nianpu,” pp. 54, 57. The story of “Chu learning the language of Qi” is in *Mencius*, Book III, Part B, Section 6.
 10. On the Burlingame Treaty, see Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *China and the Overseas Chinese in the United States, 1868–1911* (Fayetteville, Ark.: University of Arkansas Press, 1983), pp. 24–29; Hsu, *China’s Entrance into the Family of Nations*, p. 169; for text of the treaty, see Charles I. Bevans, comp., *Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America, 1776–1949* (Washington: Department of State, 1971), 6: 680–684.
 11. Regarding the tael–dollar exchange rate, Yung Shang Him and William Hung both say it was roughly 1 tael = US\$1.37; see Yung Shang Him (Rong Shangqian), *The Chinese Educational Mission and Its Influence* (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd, 1939), p. 14; William Hung, “Huang Tsun-hsien’s Poem ‘The Closure of the Educational Mission in America,’” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 18: 59 n. 8

- (1955). However, Yung Wing, writing in 1872, cites an exchange rate of 1 tael = US\$1.67; see Yung Wing to Noah Porter, Shanghai, 17 February 1872, in Yung Wing, Papers (on microfilm), HM 18, Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, New Haven, Conn. On the other hand, Edwin K. Buttles, in 1881, wrote that the market rate in Shanghai was 1 tael = US\$1.20; see Buttles to Joshua Kimber, Shanghai, 22 October 1881, in Folder 12, Box 4, China Mission Records, RG 64, Archives of the Episcopal Church, USA, Austin, Tex. For this book, I will split the difference and calculate that 1 tael = US\$1.50.
12. Pong, *Shen Pao-chen*, pp. 246–247.
 13. Prince Gong et al., memorial, TZ 10/8/1 (15 September 1871), in Gu Dunrou, “Rong Hong nianpu,” p. 57.
 14. Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang, joint memorial, TZ 11/1/19 (27 February 1872), and Prince Gong et al., memorial, 11/4/11 (17 May 1872), in *Yangwu yundong*, 2: 157–161. Gu Dunrou, “Rong Hong nianpu,” pp. 59–60, mistakenly dates Prince Gong’s memorial as 11/1/22 (3 March 1872).
 15. Frederick F. Low to Hamilton Fish, Beijing, 5 February 1872, and enclosures, in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office), 1872, pp. 130–132.
 16. Conte, “Overseas Study in the Meiji Period,” pp. 9–14; Andrew Cobbing, *The Satsuma Students in Britain: Japan’s Early Search for the “Essence of the West”* (Richmond, Surrey: Japan Library, 2000), pp. 11–13. See also Thomas R. H. Havens, *Nishi Amane and Modern Japanese Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 47–56; Ivan Parker Hall, *Mori Arinori* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), chap. 2. Nishi was sent by the shogunate; Mori, by Satsuma.
 17. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers*, p. 51.
 18. Griffis, *Maker of the New Orient*, p. 206; “Oriental Students in Monson Academy,” *Monson Spirit*, 9 September 1933, clipping in the Archives Department, Wilbraham and Monson Academy, Wilbraham, Mass.
 19. Kume Kunitake, comp., *The Iwakura Embassy, 1871–73: A True Account of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary’s Journey of Observation through the United States of America and Europe*, vol. 1, *The United States of America*, trans. Martin Collcutt (Chiba: Japan Documents, 2002), pp. xxx, 404; Akiko Kuno, *Unexpected Destinations: The Poignant Story of Japan’s First Vassar Graduate*, trans. Kirsten McIvor (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1993), pp. 49–59. For a list of the Japanese students who went abroad in late Tokugawa and early Meiji, see Ishizuki Minoru, *Kindai Nihon no kaigai ryūgakushi* (A history of study abroad in modern Japan; Kyoto: Mineruva Shobō, 1972), pp. 300–339; for the names of the students who accompanied Iwakura, see Miyagi Takashi, *Amerika no Iwakura shisetsudan* (The Iwakura embassy in America; Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1992), pp. 10–12. My thanks to Prof. Sophia Lee for referring me to the work by Miyagi.
 20. Katalin Ferber, “Professionalism as Power: Tajiri Inajirō and the Modernisation

of Meiji Finance,” in Janet Hunter and Cornelia Storz, eds. *Institutional and Technological Change in Japan’s Economy, Past and Present* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 28–29; Barbara Rose, *Tsuda Umeko and Women’s Education in Japan* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 11; Kuno, *Unexpected Destinations*, p. 52.

Chapter 2 Recruitment

1. Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang, joint memorial, TZ 11/1/19 (27 February 1872), in *Yangwu yundong*, 2: 157–158; Hung, “Huang Tsun-hsien’s Poem,” p. 59 n. 6; Yung Wing, *My Life*, p. 185; Qi Zhaoxi, “You Meizhou riji” (A diary of travels in America), in *Zou xiang shijie congshu* (Stepping forth into the world, a collection of writings), comp. Zhong Shuhe (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1985), vol. 2: 229, 235. On the place of the “bureau” (*ju*) in the late Qing administrative system, see Leung Yuen-sang, *The Shanghai Taotai: Linkage Man in a Changing Society, 1843–90* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), pp. 93, 161.
2. On the duties of the Shanghai *daotai*, see Leung, *Shanghai Taotai*, esp. pp. 22, 73.
3. See Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang, joint memorial, TZ 10/7/19 (3 September 1871), in *Yangwu yundong*, 2: 155–156; Prince Gong et al., memorial, 10/8/1 (15 September 1871), in Gu Dunrou, “Rong Hong nianpu,” p. 57; Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang, joint memorial, 11/1/19 (27 February 1872), in *Yangwu yundong*, 2: 158; and Prince Gong et al., memorial, 11/4/11 (17 May 1872), in *Yangwu yundong*, 2: 160.
4. Edward J. M. Rhoads, “Self-Strengthening and Manchu-Han Relations,” in Hao Yanping and Wei Xiumei, eds. *Tradition and Metamorphosis in Modern Chinese History: Essays in Honor of Professor Kwang-Ching Liu’s Seventy-fifth Birthday*, (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1998), vol. 2: 1018–1021; Su Jing, *Qingji Tongwen guan ji qi shisheng* (The translators colleges of the Qing period and their teachers and students; Taipei: self-published, 1985), pp. 138–140.
5. Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang, joint memorials, TZ 10/7/19 (3 September 1871) and 11/1/19 (27 February 1872), and Zongli Yamen, memorial, TZ 11/4/11 (17 May 1872), all in *Yangwu yundong*, 2: 155, 158, 160.
6. On Zeng Pu’s (Elijah Laisun’s) age, see Yale University, *Obituary Record of Graduates*, 1891, p. 67, which says he was born in 1854. On Rong Shangqin’s (Lemuel Yung’s) age, see Rong Yingyu, “Rong Ruolan,” p. 292, which quotes the Rong family genealogy as saying that he was born in DG 30 (1850); however, another source, Charles C. Godfrey, ed., *Class of 1877, Sheffield Scientific School, 1877–1921* (New Haven: The Class Secretaries Bureau, [1921]), p. 146, gives his birth date as 1854.
7. It should be noted that the students’ listed date of birth is not always accurate. For example, the listed date of birth for Tang Shaoyi (#77) is TZ 2, which is most closely equivalent to 1863. However, according to the research of Liang Chaorun and Tang Shijin, his true date of birth is XF 11, which is most closely equivalent to 1861, or two years earlier. Actually, since Tang Shaoyi was born at the very end of the lunar

- year, his birth date was in January 1862. See Liang Chaorun and Tang Shijin, “Tang Shaoyi de jiashi ziliao” (Materials on Tang Shaoyi’s ancestry), in *Tang Shaoyi yanjiu wenji* (A collection of research essays on Tang Shaoyi; [Guangzhou?]: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1989), pp. 343–344.
8. Ardath W. Burks, “Japan’s Outreach: The Ryūgakusei,” in Ardath W. Burks, ed. *The Modernizers: Overseas Students, Foreign Employees, and Meiji Japan* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985), p. 151; Kume, *Iwakura Embassy*, vol. 1, p. 404. On Kaneko Kentarō, see his entry in Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaneko_Kentarō (accessed 9 September 2009).
 9. Ling Hongxun, “Zhan Tianyou xiansheng nianpu” (A chronological biography of Zhan Tianyou), in Ling Hongxun and Gao Zonglu, eds. *Zhan Tianyou yu Zhongguo tielu* (Zhan Tianyou and China’s railroads; Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan Jindaishi yanjiusuo, 1977), p. 70.
 10. Rhoads, “In the Shadow of Yung Wing,” p. 30.
 11. Rhoads, “In the Shadow of Yung Wing,” p. 23.
 12. Madeline Yuan-yin Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration Between the United States and South China, 1882–1943* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 30–31.
 13. See Biggerstaff, *Earliest Modern Government Schools*, pp. 71–74.
 14. Tang Yuanzhan, “You-Mei liuxue tongren xingming lu” (A directory of fellow students in America), in *Rong Hong yu liu-Mei youtong* (Yung Wing and Chinese Educational Commission Student [*sic*]; Zhuhai: Zhuhai shi bowuguan and Zhuhai Rong Hong yu liu-Mei youtong yanjiu hui [2006]), p. 47; Wei Xiumei, comp., *Qingji zhiguan biao* (Offices and personnel in the late Qing period: Metropolitan officials and high officials in provinces and dependencies, 1796–1911; Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 1977), Part II, Renwu lu (Biographical directory), p. 69.
 15. Yan Phou Lee (Li Enfu), *When I Was a Boy in China* (Boston: D. Lothrop Company, 1887), pp. 8, 15. On the sub-director of schools (also called “assistant director of studies”), see H. S. Brunnert and V. V. Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China*, rev. N. Th. Kolessoff, trans. A. Beltchenko and E. E. Moran (1911; reprint, Taipei: Zhuo Liu Qingdi, 1964), no. 857, and T’ung-tsu Ch’ü, *Local Government in China under the Ch’ing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 9–10, 162.
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 46. Qi Zhaoxi, “You Meizhou rijì,” p. 265.
 47. Xu Run, *Xu Yuzhai nianpu*, p. 17b; Wong Kai Kah (Huang Kaijia) to Mrs. [Fannie] Bartlett, Shanghai, 28 January 1882 (typescript), in Folder 4, Box 1, La Fargue Papers, Washington State University.
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Index

- Abbott, John S. C., 63
Ai, Chung Kun – *see* Zhong Wenyu
Akenson, Donald H., 35
Alford, Clara J., 56, 57, 60
American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), 3, 63, 159
American host families, geographical distribution, 50; social, educational, and religious background, 57–63; called “teachers” (*shi* 師), 64; compensation and reimbursement, 64–5; motivation, 65–6; similar arrangements with Japanese students, 63, 65, 66; obligations toward CEM students, 66, 68, 71; replacement host families, 72–3; political beliefs, 170; dismay at recall, 180
Amherst College, 119, 129
Amherst, Massachusetts, 63, 210
Angell Treaty, 172
Annapolis – *see* United States Naval Academy
anti-Chinese movement in U.S., 4, 43–4, 46, 168–72, 221–2
Asylum Hill Congregational Church, 103, 152, 159
Atwell, Harriet G., 50, 64, 83
autograph books, 143–4
Avon, Connecticut, 60–1, 163
Baark, Erik, 197
Bacon, Leonard, 63, 65, 66, 164
Bagg, Lyman, 131
Barbour, Erwin H., 187
Bartlett, David E., 33, 56, 57, 58 (fig.), 59, 65, 110
Bartlett, Fannie, 70, 88, 107, 137, 176, 211
Bartlett, Mary L., 70, 176
baseball, 144–6, 177–8
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, 4, 169
Belleville, New Jersey, 4, 169
Bestor, Randall, 56, 59, 62, 73
bicycling, 148
Bieler, Stacey, 185
Biggerstaff, Knight, 7
Blakeslee, Fred Gilbert, 144–5
Blakeslee, Helen E., 103, 107 211
Boston, Massachusetts, 169
Boxer Rebellion Indemnity Scholarship (Gengzi peikuan jiangxuejin 庚子賠款獎學金), 209
Brown, Samuel Robbins, 3, 7–8, 11, 33, 57–8, 107
Burbank, Julia and Katherine, 71, 74, 103
Burlingame, Anson, 2, 10, 42

Burlingame Treaty, 10, 123, 168, 172

Burt, Martha E., 60, 61 (fig.), 71, 72

Cai Guozhen 蔡國楨, 158

Cai Jinzhang (#1), 66, 67, 69, 89, 154–5, 162

Cai Shaoji (#2), 88, 92, 119, 146 (fig.), 152, 159, 176, 186, 200

Cai Tinggan (#31), 25, 42, 71, 92, 150; post-CEM career, 198, 201, 207, 212, 213

Camp, Walter, 145, 147

Cao Jiajue (#61), 25, 57, 65, 135

Cao Jiaxiang (#62), 25, 57, 73 (fig.), 103, 147, 149 (fig.), 178–9

Cao Jifu (#3), 33, 137, 151

Cao Maoxiang (#63), 57, 199

Capron, Samuel Mills, 77, 102

Carlson, Ellsworth C., 199

Carrington, Edward and Sarah T., 72, 162–3

cartes de visite, 143

CEM and Japanese students compared, 164, 218–20; in gender, 13; in age, 18; in social background, 23; in prior preparation, 36–7; in living arrangements, 63–4, 65, 66, 75; in college, 129–30, 132; in post-return employment, 189

CEM students, recruitment and selection, 13–28, 36; age, 18, 89, 92, 183, 207, 213, 215, 216; geographical origins, 18–20; compared to Zeng Laishun and Yung Wing, 18, 36, 39, 46, 75, 183, 215–6; family background, 21–3, 26–8, 218; prerogatives as “government students,” 28–9, 41, 44, 46, 112–3, 179, 218; stipends and allowances, 28, 64, 130; dress and hairstyle, 29, 111, 148–9; contractual obligations, 30; prior

education, 32–4; preparatory studies in Shanghai, 34–6; en route to New England, 40–6; associations with other Chinese, 42, 169–70, 180, 221; assigned to American host families, 50–7; anglicization of personal names, 66–8; home schooling, 68–70, 88–9; dismissals, withdrawals and early deaths, 71–2, 135–7, 151, 157, 160–3; reassigned to replacement host families, 72; emotional ties to host families, 73–4, 211–2; Chinese study and ritual requirements, 83–5, 160, 162; in middle and secondary schools, 87–8, 89–92, 95–101, 104, 105–6, 159; toured Centennial Exhibition, 109–13; adopted American dress, 111, 148–9; in college, 115–9, 121–2, 130, 132–3; barred from U.S. military and naval academies, 123; extracurricular activities, 130–1; graduation from college, 131–2; enumerated in 1880 census, 137–42; collected and exchanged *cartes de visite* and autographs, 143–4; participated in sports, 144–8, 186–7; obeyed queue requirement, 149–51; interest in Christianity, 152–7, 187; socializing with young women, 157, 187; weakened command of Chinese language, 158, 183; refrained from naturalization, 158; raised funds for famine relief in China, 158–9; impact of anti-Chinese movement on, 170–1; assigned to telegraphy class, 174; reaction to news of recall, 174–5; departure from New England, 175–7; en route home to China, 177–80; reception in Shanghai, 184–5; reunion with families, 186; longing for America, 186–7; initial employment

- on return, 188–203, 217; enhanced status during post-Boxer decade, 207–10; diminished role after 1911 Revolution, 212–3
- Centennial Exhibition, 42, 109–13
- Chan Laisun – *see* Zeng Laishun
- Chapman, Hannah E., 61
- Chelsea, Massachusetts, 170
- Chen Fuzeng (#91), 135
- Chen Jinkui (#92), 60, 145, 198
- Chen Jurong (#4), 103, 105, 118, 130, 133, 143, 146 (fig.), 178 (fig.)
- Chen Lanbin 陳蘭彬, 9, 40, 78, 79 (fig.), 82, 165; as minister to the US, 80, 168, 173
- Chen Peihu (#32), 131, 178 (fig.), 203
- Chen Qiansheng (#33), 57, 137
- Chen Ronggui (#5), 119, 131, 176
- Chen Shaochang (#93), 137
- Cheng Daqi (#6), 135, 196
- Cheng Daye (#64), 57
- Cheong Mon Cham, 107, 115
- China Famine Relief Fund, 158–9
- China Merchants Steam Navigation Company (Zhaoshang ju 招商局), 8, 23, 24, 199
- Chinese Christian Home Mission, 154, 161
- Chinese Educational Commission (CEC), selection of American host families and communities, 49–50, 56; instructions to and oversight of host families, 64, 70, 71; headquarters building, 77–8, 181; staff, 78–82, 86, 137–8, 143, 165; duties, 82–3; role in boys' selection of schools and course of study, 102, 104–5; prohibition on queue cutting and on church membership, 149–50, 151, 156–7; attempts to reverse Americanization, 160–2, 165
- Chinese Educational Mission (CEM, Youtong chuyang yiye 幼童出洋肄業), as part of Self-Strengthening Movement, 2, 121; historical reputation, 6; origins, 7–12; budget, 10, 130, 168; preparatory school in Shanghai, 32, 34–6; adult escorts for students, 40; compared with modern “home stay” programs, 75; recalled, 167–74; attempts to reverse recall, 180–1
- Chinese Exclusion Act, 4, 158, 172, 205, 222
- Chinese immigrants in the U.S., 4, 20, 45, 169–70, 220; compared with CEM students, 20, 45, 46–7, 221–2; CEM defectors and returnees, 203–7, 222
- Chinese poetry, 144
- Chinese students abroad, in modern times, 1; Boxer Indemnity scholars, 1, 209, 216; military and naval students in Europe, 2, 123, 215; in the U.S. before CEM, 3–4, 7–8, 133, 219
- Chow, Shouson 周壽臣 – *see* Zhou Changling
- Christianity, faith of American host families, 59, 62–3, 66, 153; influence within CEM, 151–7, 161–3, 216
- Chun Lung, 107, 115, 132
- civil service examination system, 7, 20–1, 207
- Clark, Isabel G. and Harriet M., 56, 61, 137
- Cobbing, Andrew, 189
- Cohen, Paul A., 27
- Colebrook, Connecticut, 72, 162, 163, 207
- Columbia College (now University), 4, 119–21, 129, 132, 205
- Confucianism, 7, 11–12, 34, 84; Confucian worship, 85, 162
- Connecticut River valley, 56
- Conte, James T., 23, 123

- Crossett, Jonathan, 81
- Danforth, A. W., 196
- Day, Guy B., 56, 59, 65, 72
- Deng Guiting (#34), 25, 89
- Deng Shicong (#7), 25, 70, 73 (fig.), 103, 105, 118, 143, 147, 152
- Deng Xiaoping 鄧小平, 1
- Dickerman, Hervey S. and Nancy B., 59, 62, 137, 211
- Ding Chongji (#35), 28, 121, 137, 186, 198, 208, 213
- Ding Richang 丁日昌, 8–9
- Dwight, R. Ogden, 59
- Easthampton, Massachusetts, 101, 153–5, 163
- Elliot, Charles William, 122
- Emerson, Edward B., 59, 72
- Fang Boliang (#36), 89, 104, 175, 196, 197
- Fay, Lydia Mary, 34
- Feng Bingzhong (#94), 186
- football, 145, 147
- Foreign Ministry (Waiwu bu 外務部), 208, 209; *see also* Zongli Yamen
- Foreign Mission School, 3
- Fuzhou Navy Yard (Chuanzheng ju 船政局), 2, 10
- Fuzhou Navy Yard School, 2, 24, 167, 189, 195
- Gardner, Eugene C. and Harriet H., 56, 57, 59, 62, 78, 159, 211
- Garfield, James A., 172, 177
- Going Abroad Bureau (Chuyang ju 出洋局), 13
- Goldthwaite, Charlotte, 103
- Government Central School (Queen's College), 33, 35
- government students (*guansheng* 官生) – *see under* CEM students
- Granby, Connecticut, 62, 70
- Grant, Ulysses S., 82, 113, 123, 171–2, 173
- Guangxu 光緒 Emperor, 167, 168, 174
- Gunnery (school), 89
- Guo Songtao 郭嵩燾, 2
- Gyory, Andrew, 172
- Haddad, John, 111
- Hall, E. Edwin, 56, 59
- Hamilton College, 3
- Hammond, Charles, 32
- Harrington, Julia (Mack), 60, 62
- Hart, Robert, 27, 111
- Harte, Bret, 171
- Hartford, Connecticut, 77–8, 89, 92, 103, 148, 152–3, 176, 181
- Hartford Public High School, 92–5, 102, 104, 106, 107, 109, 118, 119, 211
- Harvard University, 119–23, 132
- He Tingliang (#8), 73 (fig.), 121
- Hebron, Connecticut, 50, 136–7
- Herrick, William D. and Josephine B., 59, 60, 73
- Hillhouse High School, 92, 95, 109, 118
- Holyoke High School, 95, 103–4, 106, 118
- Holyoke, Massachusetts, 145, 212
- Hong Kong, 7, 33, 212–3
- Hopkins Grammar School, 88, 95, 118, 147, 170
- Houseworth, Thomas, 43
- Huan Weicheng (#65), 57
- Huang, Hui, 27
- Huang Jiliang (#66), 25, 195
- Huang Kaijia (#9), 27, 88, 92, 106, 119, 146 (fig.), 152, 176, 178 (fig.); post-CEM career, 184–5, 186, 201, 209, 211
- Huang Kuan 黃寬, 3, 8

- Huang Sheng 黃勝, 3, 8, 40, 168; sons, 106–7, 175–6
- Huang Xibao (#10), 135
- Huang Yaochang (#95), 88, 103, 174, 186, 196, 200, 203
- Huang Youzhang (#37), 25, 162, 203
- Huang Zhongliang (#11), 25, 101, 119, 131, 152, 176, 198
- Huang Zulian (#96), 57, 101, 198
- Huang Zunxian 黃遵憲, 27, 180
- Hubbell, G. B., 174
- Hubbell, Stephen, 59, 88, 137
- hunting and shooting, 147, 178–9
- Huntington, Massachusetts, 102
- Hyde, Alexander, 59, 65, 69, 159
- Iwakura embassy, 11, 23, 43, 45, 63
- James, Jesse, 46
- Japan, as possible stimulus for CEM, 11; CEM students' stopover in, 40–1, 180
- Japanese students abroad, 4–5, 11, 36–7, 63–4, 65, 66, 107–9, 123–9; post-return employment prospects, 189
- Jiangnan Arsenal (Jiangnan zhizao zongju 江南機器製造總局), 2, 8, 31, 196; technical school attached to, 2, 32, 196
- Jin Dating (#97), 60, 74, 174, 175, 186, 187, 199
- Johns Hopkins University, 129, 132
- Kagwin, Berijah H., 59, 62, 137, 212
- Kaiping Mines (Kaiping kuangwu ju 開平礦務局), 199
- Kanda Naibu, 63
- Kang Gengling (#67), 72, 147
- Kellogg, Charles H. and Mary A., 57, 59, 60, 65
- Kellogg, Edward W., 103, 163
- Kellogg, Mary L., 60–1, 157
- Kellogg, William H., 72, 81, 86, 110, 181
- Kemble, J. H., 41
- Kenyon College, 4
- Korean Customs Service, 200
- Kuang Bingguang (#98), 24, 25, 56, 57
- Kuang Guoguang (#99), 24, 25, 56, 57, 211
- Kuang Jingyang (#68), 25, 56, 101, 137, 155 (fig.), 208
- Kuang Jingyuan (#38), 25, 57, 73 (fig.), 137, 155, 162
- Kuang Qizhao 鄺其照, 24, 35, 40, 80–1, 86, 110; guardian for non-CEM boy, 64, 83, 150
- Kuang Rongguang (#12), 24, 25, 73 (fig.), 74, 131, 137, 176, 199
- Kuang Xianchou (#69), 25, 56, 101, 137
- Kuang Yongzhong (#39), 25, 57, 89, 146 (fig.), 147, 195
- Kuno Akiko, 65
- La Fargue, Thomas E., 5, 185, 206, 207
- Lafayette College, 119, 120, 129, 131
- Laisun, Elijah – *see* Zeng Pu
- Laisun, Spencer – *see* Zeng Dugong
- Lamson, Elizabeth (Cook), 60, 74
- Lamson, Martha E., 60
- Lane, John W. and Mary H., 57, 59, 60, 73, 180
- Lee, Massachusetts, 159
- Legge, James, 41
- Lehigh University, 119, 129, 130, 205
- Li Enfu (#40), family and educational background, 21, 25, 28, 34; as a government student, 29–30; in Shanghai, 31–2, 35–6; en route to New England, 41, 43, 46; with host family, 50, 57, 69, 74; in secondary school, 101, 105; at Yale, 131, 147; and Christianity, 153, 157; post-CEM career, 198, 205–6

- Li Gui 李圭, 42, 43, 45, 46, 84, 111, 151
- Li Guipan (#41), 25, 68, 73, 144, 146 (fig.), 157, 205
- Li Hongzhang 李鴻章, role in Self-Strengthening Movement, 2, 31, 121, 174, 196–200; initiator and overseer of CEM, 9–11, 17, 42, 77, 122, 123; and CEM's recall, 168, 172, 173; and disposition of returned students, 189–202
- Li Rugan (#100), 57, 101
- Li Shibin 李士彬, 167
- Li, Lillian M., 158
- Liang Aodeng (#101), 135
- Liang Cheng 梁誠 – *see* Liang Pixu
- Liang Dunyan (#13), family and educational background, 28, 33; in middle and secondary school, 88, 92, 95, 101, 105, 106; in college, 115, 131, 133, 176, 178 (fig.); baseball player, 145, 146 (fig.), 178; post-CEM career, 5, 197, 200, 208, 209, 211, 212
- Liang Jinrong (#42), 25
- Liang Pixu (#102), 21, 145, 146 (fig.); post-CEM career, 5, 186, 187, 197, 198, 202, 208–9, 210–11, 213
- Liang Pushi (#43), 25, 27, 28, 56, 137
- Liang Puzhao (#44), 25, 27, 28, 56, 137
- Liang Ruhao (#70), 24, 25, 34, 36, 56–7, 103; post-CEM career, 198, 200, 208, 213
- Lin Lianhui (#103), 25, 67, 199, 201
- Lin Liansheng (#104), 25
- Lin Peiquan (#71), 200
- Liu Hanqing 劉翰清, 13, 32
- Liu Jiazhao (#14), 60, 68, 69 (fig.), 71, 72, 105, 131, 159, 178 (fig.)
- Liu Kunyi 劉坤一, 168
- Liu Qijun 劉其駿, 81, 110
- Liu Yulin (#105), 21, 23, 202, 208
- Lowell, Massachusetts, 71
- Lu Dezhang (#106), 57
- Lu Xigui (#45), 57
- Lu Yongquan (#15), 66–70, 74, 89, 133, 147, 178 (fig.), 204 (fig.); post-CEM career, 204–5
- Lu Zuhua (#72), 65
- Luo Guorui (#16), 72, 92, 115, 133, 186
- Mackenzie, J. Kenneth, 198–9
- Manchus, 14; men's hairstyle, 149
- Maritime Customs (Haiguan 海關), 10, 27, 200, 208, 213
- Marsh, James H., 59, 62
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), 104, 119, 121, 129
- Matthews, Martha Ely, 61, 72, 74, 137, 211
- McClellan, Alexander and Rebekah B., 56–9, 71, 211
- Merriam, A. R., 153, 156
- Miller, Dorcas C., 56, 61, 62, 65, 137
- Möllendorff, P. G. von, 200
- Monson Academy, 3, 4, 8, 11, 32, 89, 107
- Monson, Massachusetts, 8
- Moody, Dwight, 152–3
- Moore, Emma, 61
- Morgan School, 95, 175
- Mori Arinori, 63, 65, 75, 77
- Morrison Education Society School, 3, 7, 24
- most-favored nation treatment, 10, 123, 168
- Mount Holyoke Seminary (now College), 60
- Murphy, Thomas D., 59, 62, 65, 70
- Nagai Shigeko, 63, 65
- Natchaug High School, 95, 118
- naturalization, 30, 158, 205
- New Britain High School, 95
- New Haven, Connecticut, 164

- New Policies (*xinzheng* 新政), 207, 212
 New York City, 173
 Niu Shangzhou (#17), 33, 40–1, 43, 44
 (fig.), 57, 151, 162, 169, 187
 non-CEM Chinese students in U.S., 40, 50,
 106–7, 115, 132, 175–6, 181, 219
 North Adams, Massachusetts, 4, 169
 Northampton High School, 95, 118
 Northampton, Massachusetts, 101
 Northrop, Birdsey G., 49, 63, 64, 75, 110,
 112
 Northrop, Luther H., 59, 63, 65, 70, 72, 89
 Norwich, Connecticut, 102, 205
 Norwich Free Academy, 95, 102, 118

 Oakham, Massachusetts, 60
 Orientals (baseball team), 145
 Ou Eliang 區譔良, 40, 80, 165, 167
 Ouyang Geng (#18), 72, 92, 115, 131,
 132 (fig.), 133, 178 (fig.); post-CEM
 career, 195, 202, 208, 217

 Pan Mingzhong (#19), 63, 72, 89, 92, 115,
 135
 Pan Sichi (#107), 196
 Pasco, Maria L., 61
 Pearl River delta, 20, 47
 Phelps, Charles L. and Charlotte M., 50,
 56, 57, 59, 62, 74
 Phelps, William Lyon, 105, 144, 147, 148,
 157
 Phillips Academy, 93, 95, 102, 104, 109,
 118, 145, 210–11
 Phillips, Ellen (Griswold), 60
 Phillips Exeter Academy, 95, 104, 118,
 145
 Pleasant Valley, Connecticut, 50
 Porter, Noah, 49, 122, 180
 Post, Mary Jane, 56, 57, 61
 Potwin, Clara, 212
 Potwin, Thomas S., 58, 59, 73

 Prince Gong (Yixin) 恭親王 奕訢, 10, 17

 Qi Zhaoxi 祁兆熙, 27, 40, 42, 43, 71
 Qi Zuyi (#73), 27, 40, 101, 131, 178 (fig.)
 Qian Wenkui (#20), 33, 104, 151
 Queen's College – *see* Government Central
 School
 queue and queue-cutting, 149–51, 163,
 164, 216

 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 115, 119,
 121, 129, 133
 Revolution of 1911, 212
 Richards, Julia (Leavitt), 60, 66, 67 (fig.),
 74, 204–5
 Rockville High School, 95
 Rogers, Carrie E., 60
 Rong Hong – *see* Yung Wing
 Rong Jue 容爵, 23, 106, 175, 176
 Rong Kui (#46), 144, 161 (fig.); family
 background, 21, 23–4; in Shanghai,
 31, 34–6; with host family, 50, 57, 73,
 74, 101, 137; and Christianity, 151–7;
 clashes with CEC, 85–6, 161, 163; at
 Yale, 131, 163; post-CEM career, 207
 Rong Shangqian (#21), family background,
 23, 25; en route to New England, 43,
 45; as CEM student 66–7, 71, 74, 85,
 103, 105; recalled to China, 174–5,
 177; post-CEM career, 184–5, 195
 (fig.), 195–6, 201
 Rong Shangqin (#47), family background,
 4, 25; early arrival in the U.S., 4, 8,
 32–3, 65, 68; late addition to CEM,
 18, 23, 33, 39, 87; no host family,
 56; at Yale, 115; premature return to
 China, 135
 Rong Siji 容思濟, 82, 175
 Rong Weiquan 容渭泉, 82, 175
 Rong Yaoyuan (#74), 23, 28, 183, 187,
 203, 212

- Rong Zengxiang 容增祥, 40, 80, 81, 82, 143
 rowing, 147, 187
 Rudolph, Frederick, 115, 122, 131
 Rutgers College (now University), 107, 123
- San Francisco, 43–4, 177–9
 school system in New England, 87, 88–9, 92–5, 119–20, 157; curriculum choices, 103–4, 120–1, 122; pedagogy, 105
 schools (*sishu* 私塾) in China, 34
 Self-Strengthening Movement, 1–3, 8–9, 11–12, 31, 174, 183, 189–201, 213, 215, 217
 Shanghai, 13, 20, 24, 31–2, 34, 184–5, 196
 Shanghai Cotton Cloth Mill (Shanghai jiqi zhibu ju 上海機器織布局), 196
 Shanghai *daotai*, 13, 31, 40, 184–5
 Sheffield Scientific School – *see under* Yale College
Shen bao 申報 (Shanghai news), 31
 Shen Dehui (#108), 25, 50, 56, 57, 84, 85–6; expelled from CEM, 136–7
 Shen Deyao (#109), 25, 50, 56, 57, 68, 70, 74; expelled from CEM, 136–7; post-CEM career, 199, 200, 203
 Shen Jiashu (#75), 68, 72
 Shen Jinwu 沈金午, 81, 175
 Shen Shouchang (#110), 57, 185, 197, 198
 Shi Jintang (#22), 89, 135, 159
 Shi Jinyong (#23), 26, 64, 89, 105, 136, 159
 Shu Gao di 舒高第, 3–4, 133, 219
 Sizer, Theodore R., 93, 105
 Smith, Carl T., 33
 Smith, William B. and Virginia T., 103
 Societas Condita Causa Augendarum Rerum Chinsensium Christiana, 154–6, 161
 Somerville High School, 95, 118
 Song Wenhui (#48), 26, 73, 106, 176, 207
 Song Yaoru 宋耀如 (Charles Jones Soong), 169, 187, 212
 South Hadley Falls High School, 95, 101
 Springfield Collegiate Institute, 88, 89
 Springfield High School, 88, 95, 118
 Springfield, Massachusetts, 50, 58–9, 87–8, 89, 153, 159, 162, 170, 211
 Staying Abroad Office (Zhuyang ju 駐洋局) – *see* Chinese Educational Commission
 Stebbins, Milan C., 72, 88
 Stevens Institute of Technology, 119, 129, 132
 Stevens, James R. and Cornelia, 103
 Stratford, Connecticut, 72
 Su Ruizhao (#49), 34, 73 (fig.), 208
 Sun Guangming (#76), 69, 135
 Sun Yat-sen 孫中山, 20, 212
 Sun Yunjiang 孫雲江, 81
- Taishan 台山 (county) – *see* Xinning
 Tan Yaofang (#112), 25, 162, 183, 203
 Tan Yaoxun (#24), 25, 60, 71, 72, 105, 153, 155 (fig.), 161–4, 207
 Tang Guoan (#50), 24, 175; with host family, 72, 73 (fig.), 211; in secondary school, 101, 118; at Yale, 122, 130, 131; and Christianity, 151, 154, 155, 162; post-CEM career, 5, 202, 209, 210 (fig.)
 Tang Ronghao (#113), 24, 25, 56, 201
 Tang Rongjun (#114), 24, 25, 27, 56, 170
 Tang Shaoyi (#77), family background, 24, 25, 28, 33, 158; as CEM student, 56, 103, 144, 157; post-CEM career, 5, 186, 200, 206, 209–13
 Tang Tingshu 唐廷樞, 24, 27, 28, 199
 Tang Tingzhi 唐廷植, 24, 27, 28

- Tang Yuanzhan (#51), 24, 26, 71, 150, 208, 213
- Tang Zhiyao (#78), 24
- Telegraph Administration (Dianbao zongju 電報總局), 174, 196–7, 207–8
- Tianjin, 196–200
- Tianjin Arsenal (Jiqi ju 機器局), 198
- Tianjin Medical School (Yixue guan 醫學館), 198–9
- Tianjin Naval Academy (Shuishi xuetang 水師學堂), 198
- Tong King Sing 唐景星 – *see* Tang Tingshu
- Torpedo School (Shuilei xuetang 水雷學堂), 198
- Translators College (Tongwen guan 同文館), 2, 7, 14, 31–2
- transportation, modes of, rickshaws, 31; sedan chairs, 39; ships, 39–43, 179–80; railroads, 41, 45, 50, 77, 177; horse-drawn carriages, 44, 50; wheelbarrows, 184, 185
- Tsinghua College (now University) (Qinghua xuetang 清華學堂), 5, 209
- Tsuda Umeko, 63
- Twain, Mark, 78, 163, 173
- Twichell, Joseph H., friend of Yung Wing, 60, 150 (fig.), 156, 170; pastor of Asylum Hill Congregational Church, 78, 103, 152–3; intercession on behalf of CEM, 161, 163, 173; friend of CEM students, 176, 206, 211
- Twichell, Mary Delight, 60, 72
- United States Military Academy, 10, 123
- United States Naval Academy, 10–11, 123
- Vaille, Henry R. and Sarah L., 50, 56–9, 60, 69, 73, 74, 137, 153
- Vernon, Connecticut, 206
- Wang Fengjie (#52), 57, 159, 198, 201
- Wang Liangdeng (#53), 137, 201
- Wang Renbin (#116), 86, 88, 101, 137, 147
- Washington, Connecticut, 66, 69–70, 147, 205
- Water Conservancy Bureau (Shuili ju 水利局), 196
- Wen Bingzhong (#54), family background, 28; on the CEM boys' dress, 29, 148–9; in Shanghai, 35–6; en route to New England, 40, 42, 43; with host family, 73, 211–2; in secondary school and college, 106, 119, 120, 169; and Christianity, 151, 187; on baseball game in San Francisco, 177–8; post-CEM career, 186, 187, 203
- Wesleyan Academy, 87, 109, 118
- West Point – *see* United States Military Academy
- Westfield High School, 95
- Wilbraham, Massachusetts, 89
- Wilkinson, Endymion, 84
- Williams, Emily C., 56, 61
- Williams, S. Wells, 164
- Willimantic, Connecticut, 143, 145, 176
- Williston Seminary, 93, 95, 102, 104, 106, 109, 170; Christian converts at, 118, 152, 153–4, 156
- Wong Foon – *see* Huang Kuan
- Wong Shing – *see* Huang Sheng
- Worcester County Free Institute of Industrial Science (now Worcester Polytechnic Institute), 119, 129, 130, 132, 206
- Woren 倭仁, 7, 12
- Worswick, Angelina, 145
- Wu Huanrong (#117), 86, 88, 101, 137, 144
- Wu Jingrong (#79), 69, 103, 159
- Wu Qizao (#118), 103, 196, 208

- Wu Yangzeng (#25), 137, 148, 176, 183, 184, 199
- Wu Yingke (#55), 25, 26, 57, 89, 102, 207
- Wu Zhongxian (#56), 25, 26, 57, 73, 144, 146 (fig.), 200, 208
- Wu Zideng 吳子登, 137, 143, 160–2, 165, 167, 172, 173, 175, 179–80
- Xiangshan 香山 (county), 7, 20, 23, 25, 26, 34
- Xinning 新寧 (county), 20
- Xu Jiayou 徐嘉猷, 50, 64, 83, 106, 150, 175, 176, 181
- Xu Run 徐潤, 23–4, 33; cousins of, 36, 39, 50
- Xu Zhenpeng (#80), 24, 103, 207
- Xue Youfu (#82), 28, 67, 145, 179, 180, 186, 195
- Yale College (now University), 3, 8, 115, 118–22, 130–3, 147, 152, 163–4, 204, 206; Sheffield Scientific School, 104, 120, 121; Japanese students at, 123, 189
- Yamagawa Kenjirō, 37, 189
- Yamakawa Sutematsu, 37, 63, 65, 109, 164
- Yan Fu 嚴復, 198
- Yan Yongjing 顏永京, 3–4
- Yang Zhaonan (#84), 73, 195
- Yangtze River delta, 20
- Ye Yuanjun 葉源濬, 79 (fig.), 81
- Youtong* 幼童 (*Boy Students*) (television documentary), 6
- Yuan Changkun (#85), 137, 175, 196
- Yuan Shikai 袁世凱, 209–10, 212
- Yung, Lemuel – *see* Rong Shangqin
- Yung Wing 容闈, early history, 3, 7–8, 18, 27, 28, 39, 144, 158, 183, 215; proponent and shaper of CEM, 8–9, 35–6; as associate commissioner of CEM, 9, 78, 80, 82; recruitment of students and staff, 23, 33, 35; marriage, 23, 61, 157; establishment of CEC, 46, 49, 75; selection of host families and host communities, 50, 56, 57–8; overseer of CEM students, 71, 102, 105, 121–2, 123, 136–7; assigned to legation in Washington, 80, 160; attitude toward students' Americanization, 86, 143, 149, 150 (fig.), 165; and Christianity, 152, 156–7; solicitation for famine relief in China, 159; helped Tan Yaoxun and Rong Kui, 162–3; awarded honorary degree, 170; attempted to forestall or mitigate CEM's recall, 172–5, 180–1
- Zeng Dugong (#26), family background, 18, 20, 24, 25, 27; assisted with English instruction, 33, 34; no American host family, 56; known by Western name, 68; American schooling, 87–8, 115; and Christianity, 151, 152; possible visits to Chinese workers, 169; returned to China and post-CEM career, 135, 203
- Zeng Guofan 曾國藩, 8–10, 17, 31, 123
- Zeng Laishun 曾來順, early history, 3, 18, 24, 27, 28, 36, 39, 183, 195, 215; English instructor at CEM's preparatory school, 33; translator on CEC staff, 40, 79 (fig.), 80, 82, 86, 169; member of Christian church, 152
- Zeng Pu (#57), family background, 18, 20, 24, 25, 27, 33; late addition to CEM, 18, 33, 39; assisted with English instruction, 34; no American host family, 56; known by Western name, 68; in secondary school, 88; at Yale, 88, 115, 131, 217; expelled from CEM, 150–1, 157; and Christianity, 151, 152, 216; possible visits to

- Chinese workers, 169; returned to China and post-CEM career, 133, 135, 200
- Zhan Tianyou (#27), family and educational background, 18, 28, 34, 158; family's promissory agreement with CEM, 30; in Shanghai, 36; with host family, 63, 211; anglicized name, 66; in middle and high school, 72, 89, 92, 146 (fig.); at Yale, 115, 130, 132, 132 (fig.), 133, 217; returned to China and post-CEM career, 5, 178 (fig.), 195, 208, 211
- Zhang Deyi 張德彝, 42
- Zhang Kangren (#28), 25, 28, 101, 106, 152, 178 (fig.), 205
- Zhang Xianghe (#58), 57, 67, 68, 154, 155 (fig.), 203
- Zhang Yougong (#59), 25, 72, 174, 175
- Zheng Tingxiang (#86), 103, 157, 206
- Zhong Juncheng (#29), 68, 101, 136, 146 (fig.), 148, 151, 159, 203
- Zhong Wenyao (#30), family and educational background, 26, 28, 34; en route to New England, 44 (fig.); with host family, 72, 74; in secondary school, 92, 106; at Yale, 119, 130, 131, 147, 148 (fig.); interest in Christianity, 152; returned to China and post-CEM career, 178 (fig.), 202, 208, 211
- Zhong Wenyu 鍾文宇, 26, 34
- Zhongsan 中山 (county) – *see* Xiangshan
- Zhou Changling (#87), 5, 26, 33, 200, 208, 212–3
- Zhou Chuan'e (#119), 25, 56, 57, 73, 101
- Zhou Chuanjian (#120), 25, 56, 57, 73, 101, 147, 157
- Zhou Fu 周馥, 197, 201
- Zhou Wanpeng (#88), 137, 174, 208, 212
- Zhu Baokui (#89), 105, 147, 170, 179, 201, 208
- Zhu Xishou (#90), 57
- Zhuhai 珠海 (municipality), 7, 25
- Zhuo Renzhi (#60), 102, 105, 162
- Zongli Yamen 總理衙門, 2, 8, 10, 17, 174, 202; *see also* Foreign Ministry