

**Ch'ien Lung's Reply to George III of 1793:**

"We, by the Grace of Heaven, Emperor, instruct the King of England to take note of our charge.

Although your country, O King, lies in the far oceans, yet inclining your heart toward civilization you have specifically sent an envoy respectfully to present a state message, and sailing the seas he has come to our Court to kowtow and to present congratulations for the imperial birthday, and also to present local products, thereby showing your sincerity...

The Celestial Emperor, ruling all the four seas [i.e., the world], simply concentrates on carrying out the affairs of Government properly, and does not value rare and precious things... In fact, the virtue and power of the Celestial Dynasty has penetrated afar to the myriad kingdoms, which have come to render homage, and so all kinds of precious things from 'over mountain and sea' have been collected here, things which your chief envoy and others have seen for themselves. Nonetheless we have never valued ingenious articles, nor do we have the slightest need for your country's manufactures."

**Poetic lines composed by the Emperor Ch'ien L'ung on the occasion of Lord Macartney's visit in 1793:**

"Now England is paying homage...  
My Ancestors' merit and virtue must have reached their  
distant shores.

Though their tribute is commonplace, my heart approves  
sincerely.  
Curios, and the boasted ingenuity of their devices, I prize  
not.  
Though what they bring is meager, yet,  
In my kindness to men from afar I make generous return,  
Wanting to preserve my good health and power."