The Chinese literati seldom employ their talents in writing for the stage; and they reap little glory from productions of this kind, because theatrical entertainments are rather tolerated than authorised in China. The ancient sages of the nation have constantly decried them, and considered them as destructive sources of corruption. The first mention made of theatrical pieces in history, is where an emperor of the dynasty of the *Chang* is praised for having forbidden this kind of frivolous and dangerous amusement. Several remonstrances were presented to *Siuen-ti*, of the dynasty of the *Tcheou*, in which he was intreated to banish from his court these spectacles, the effects of which could not fail of being fatal to morality and good order. Another emperor was deprived of his honours, for having too great a fondness for the theatre, and frequenting the company of comedians. It is in consequence of this manner of thinking, which is universal in China, that halls set apart for the acting of plays, are put upon a level with houses of prostitution, and intirely confined to the suburbs of those cities where they are erected.

The Chinese Gazette takes the earliest opportunity of publishing the name of the most obscure soldier who has displayed courage and intrepidity in combat; it announces to the whole empire an act of filial piety, or an example of female modesty, even when exhibited by the humblest rustic: but the authors of these papers would be exposed to the severest punishment, did they dare to insult the nation, by entertaining them with the character and success of a buffoon, with the description of a new dance, or with the graces and figure of a comedian.