

CHINA'S BIGGEST COTTON MILL.

It Belongs to Sheng and Li Hung Chang and Has a Capital of Millions.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

(Copyright, 1900, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

Shanghai, September 19, 1900.—The biggest cotton factory of the Chinese empire is here at Shanghai. It belongs to Li Hung Chang, Sheng, the director of railways and other wealthy Chinese. It has a capital of 2,000,000 taels, and it is a mill which would be enormous in the United States. Its buildings cover sixty acres; it employs 6,000 workmen, and it is now turning out 1,000 pieces of cloth and 50,000 pounds of cotton yarn every twenty-four hours. The factory runs day and night. It has two shifts of workmen, each of which puts in eleven hours and a half, so that let it busy twenty-three hours out of every twenty-four. The mill has 50 looms and 90,000 spindles, and its machinery is as modern and up-to-date as that of any cotton factory of Massachusetts. This factory is run entirely on Chinese capital. It is fed on cotton grown in China, and its employees, men and women, are with one or two exceptions, Chinese.

CHINA'S MODERN COTTON MILLS.
This mill is the first of China's great cotton factories. It is not the only one by any means. There are eight others here at Shanghai. There is one at Soochow, one at Hang Chow and two at Wuchang, 800 miles up the Yangtze. There is another at Hongkong and as soon as this war is over others will start up in different parts of the empire. The Japanese have bought some ground here for a factory, the Germans own some of the factories already running and the probability is that both foreigners and Chinese will now enter the race to supply the Chinese millions with cotton goods manufactured on their own soil.

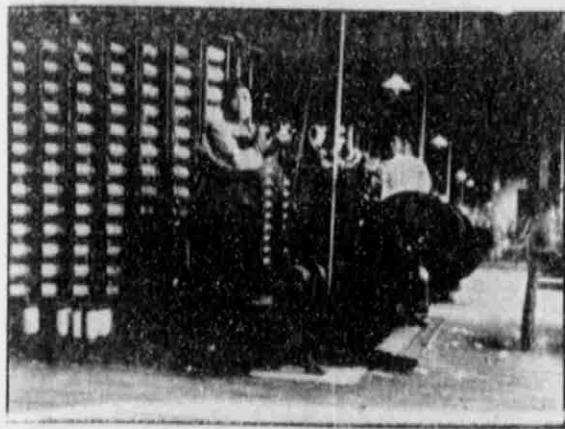
At present there are in central China more than 375,000 spindles running and over 525,000 projected.

BUILT BY AN AMERICAN.

This great mill of Sheng and Li Hung Chang was built by an American. Li and Sheng planned it seventeen years ago, but it was a long time before they could get the machinery made and the mill into operation. It was found that the short-staple cotton would not work with the ordinary American machinery, and it had to be adapted especially to it. This was done by Mr. W. Danforth, a Massachusetts man, who came out here at the instance of the company and was sent back to the United States to test the matter. Mr. Danforth is still the technical foreign adviser of the mill, although he has nothing to do with its direction, this being in the hands of Sheng's brother.

It was with Mr. Danforth that I went over the mill. He tells me he is the only American connected with it, and

How the Chinese Use Modern Machinery—A Walk Through the Factory and a Look at Five Thousand Almond-eyed Working Girls Who Labor for About One Cent Per Hour—The Profits of the Business—A Chat With Consul General Goodnow on American Cottons—How One Yankee Mill Man Lost a Big Shipment—In the Cotton Fields of China—How the Crop is Cultivated and Prepared for the Market—An Enormous House Industry—How China Annually Uses Enough Cotton to Carpet a Three-Foot Path 160 Times Around the World—The Japanese Are Trying to Capture the Chinese Cotton Market.



In Li Hung Chang's Cotton Mill.



Weaving Cotton at Home.

that in all the eight cotton mills of Shanghai not more than a dozen foreigners are employed, although they use something like 25,000 hands. Sheng and Li Hung Chang have another mill in which there is but one foreigner, two other Chinese mills use foreigners as consulting engineers only, and in the factories run by foreign capital there are, as a rule, not more than three or four foreign workmen.

CHINESE FACTORY GIRLS.

It has been found that the Chinese are the equals of any people of the world as factory hands. Mr. Danforth tells me that they learn quickly to handle machinery and that many could take their places in our mills and hold their own. The foreman understands how to control the hands and the work is thoroughly organized. About three-fourths of the employees are women and children. I went through room after room filled with girls weaving and spinning. Some of the women had brought their babies with them. One I remember had laid her almond-eyed little one in a basket between her knees as she worked. The baby was quiet and its choke broke out into dimples as it tickled it.

The factory girls work from 6 to 6 with a half hour at noon for luncheon. They ride to the mill on wheelbarrows, a half dozen sitting on the same barrow, leaning back to back against the wheel, which comes up through the center of the vehicle.

I asked as to their wages and was told that the average was 28 cents in silver or 14 cents in our money a day. The poorest do not get more than 5 cents a day, while very skillful workmen and work women make as much as \$25 gold a month. Such cases are very few. Fourteen cents a day is just a little over one cent an hour, and many of these girls do not earn even half a cent per hour. The night shift is just the same as the day shift, the work

women changing off with each other and working alternately all night or all day for a week at a time.

At the close of the war with Japan, when a number of the new mills were built, wages rose. There was a strike or two and the average went up to an amount here considered enormous, or from 17 to 20 cents of our money per day. Since then they have fallen to their present level, but they will probably rise again with the new mills to be built when the war closes.

IN THE SHOPS.

The interior of one of these big spinning mills is a curiosity. The factory is built of dark gray brick, with enormous rooms running around courts. The buildings are of two stories, well lighted with many windows. Each room has hundreds of modern weaving machines, at each of which are two or more of these Chinese girls, some with big feet and some with little ones. The little-footed maiden hobbles about, swaying this way and that, as they arrange the thread. Some of them sit on benches and turn the reels by pressing their little feet up and down on the pedals. I am told that the women with small feet cannot do as much work as those with the big ones. They have to sit down often, and the big-footed women complain that they are not allowed to rest as much as their smaller-footed sisters.

THE GINNING ROOMS.

The cotton is ginned here in different machines than in America. A great deal of it is ginned before it comes to the factory in rude hand winnowers. In the factory small steel Japanese gins are employed. These are about one-fourth the size of our modern machines, but they will not do one-eighth as much work. They are run by steam and are handled by men and boys.

After the cotton is ginned it is packed away into enormous bales, each about twice as big as the biggest bed tick,

and holding 132 pounds of cotton. The bales are not pressed down, as with us. The bags are fastened into a frame-work, and the coolies put the cotton in with their arms, carrying it up steps to the top. When the bag is full they jump in and tread it down with their feet, and then pile in more until they have the requisite weight.

SOME MODERN INVENTIONS IN CHINA.

I have said that this factory has modern machinery. Its home comes from the United States, but its spinning machinery is from England. The steam engine is a 50-horse-power Corliss, from Philadelphia. I think, which Mr. Corliss invented especially for it. It has an American electric light plant for it, and can keep 6,000 lights burning.

The goods are carried from building to building on the factory railroads. It has its own water works including a large tank and pumping station. The employees go through a fire drill every week and everything as far as possible, is fireproof, one of the structures having a roof of the shape of a tank in which one foot of water is always kept.

I asked Sheng as to how much money the company used in its business. He was rather reticent about giving figures, but said that it used from two to three million taels annually, and told me that it was doing well. Just before the Chinese-Japanese war it was making, so Mr. Danforth said, as much as 20 per cent a year. It is not doing this now, and indeed, some of the other factories have been running at a loss.

IN THE GO-DOWNS.

The warehouses or go-downs of this factory are of vast extent. They are back of the factory proper on the banks of the Whangpoo river, so that the goods can be shipped from them to most parts of China by water. In some of the rooms I found thousands of bales of piece goods, and cotton

yarn. It seemed to me that there were acres of them, and I was told that they represented hundreds of thousands of dollars in actual value. A gang of varmint-like busy packers up the goods and labeling them for shipment, and other gangs were carrying them in and out of the go-downs. In other places they were unloading cotton from the boats, and as I came to the mill I saw men wheeling great bales through the streets on wheel barrows. The bales were strapped on each side of the barrow, rising up so high as to almost hide the man who was pushing it.

THE COTTON FIELDS OF CHINA.

I was surprised to find that most of the cotton used here is grown in China. It is cultivated in patches at different places along the Yangtze and in the south. I am told it can be raised all along the Yangtze River and even as far north as Tien Tsin.

The chief cotton fields of the present are south of Shanghai, stretching the country for about one hundred miles back of the seacoast. The plantations range from a fourth of an acre to five acres in size.

The seed is sown broadcast, and the plants come up far more thickly than they do with us. They are thinned out and carefully weeded, being weeded with a long, slender hoe. The cotton is planted too thickly. It is almost as thick as small grain, so thick that the stalks rarely grow to a height of more than three feet. The bolls are so small that it takes forty to fifty of them to make a pound of seed cotton, and they do not average more than six to a stalk. It is believed with belief in cultivation and more careful planting that China might produce a better cotton and a greater quantity.

Picking cotton is largely done by women and girls who go from place to place working for their neighbors. In some parts of China the poor people claim the right to pick any cotton that is ripe after the first frost. At this time most of the crop has been gathered, but there are some bolls which have not yet opened. There is a regular day fixed by the village or district on which this picking may begin, and after that the poor turn out and go for all the cotton in sight. Some of the women walk miles to reach a region where the picking is good, sleeping at night in the fields or in the outhouses until they can gather what is left.

WEAVE AT HOME.

The bulk of the cottons now used in China are manufactured at home. We are shipping more every year and England, India and Germany are drumming the trade. All the imports, however, do not begin to touch the enormous market. The Chinese are clad in cottons. Only the rich can afford to wear silk, and of the four hundred millions at least three hundred and fifty millions can afford nothing else. I have seen it estimated that the Chinaman on the average uses at least twenty yards of cotton a year. Now, there are four hundred million Chinese, and according to this the empire demands at least eight billion yards of this material annually. Eight billion yards is twenty-four billion feet. It is enough at 500 feet to the mile to make a strip four million miles long, enough to reach 106 times around the world, and as each strip would be three feet wide it would carry a roadway three times as wide as Pennsylvania avenue around the globe. Of this amount fifteen-sixteenths is woven in little houses by Chinese women. Much of it is made by the people who raise the cotton, the spinning and weaving being done with hand machines. The cloth is very coarse but closely woven. Much of it is made only seven yards long. In the city of Pootchow about four million pieces are manufactured in this way.

AMERICAN COTTONS IN CHINA.

I have had a chat with Consul General Goodnow about the increase in the consumption of American cotton. He tells me it was very great up to the breaking out of the war, and he predicts that the bulk of the foreign trade will eventually come to us. As it is now the Americans have never tried to push their trade in the Yangtze valley and South China, where, at a rough venture, I should say at least three-fourths of the people live. Our cotton goods are shipped to Shanghai and sent to the north, being consumed in great quantities in Chihli, Shanghai and other northern states, including Manchuria and Mongolia. This region demands a heavy cotton to protect the people from the cold. In most parts of China little fuel is used except for cooking. As winter comes on the Chinese wear coats after coat until he is at last almost buried in furs. A coat, relying on wadded cottons to keep out the cold.

Said Consul General Goodnow: "Our factories begin to export the goods that consume the most cotton, and it may be for this reason that we have entered to the northern trade. At any rate we have almost monopolized it. Since some per cent of all our cotton that came to Shanghai last year was shipped to Tien Tsin, Chee, Foo and Newchwang; three per cent went up the Yangtze valley to be sold in the north of colder provinces; three per cent went into Chekiang, and three per cent remained here in Kiangsu."

"The provinces lower down on the Yangtze and south of Shanghai require a lighter weight, a better bleached and a finer made cotton. This is so on account of the warmer climate. You can't sell heavy linens for winter wear in July in Florida. Our people have evidently supposed all parts of China and the same climate and it was only last year that they began to cater to this middle and south China trade."

"But who gets the trade, Mr. Goodnow?" I asked.

"It goes to the English," was the reply. "They buy our raw cotton and make all the profit of manufacture, carriage and handling. Our factors should exploit this region. It is the most populous part of China and the richest. It is the chief manufacturing district and its trade is of enormous value. The north has its richest lands in the valley of the Yellow river, which is always being flooded, and as a result the people impoverished. From middle and south China come the tea, silk and rice and the most of the factories which furnish China's other exports."

AN INSULT TO GOOD LUCK.

"How should we increase our trade with China?"

"There is one thing the cotton factors need to do right away. They should study the market. They make a mistake in thinking anything will do for the Chinese. In fact, there are few markets which are so particular in little things as this. The Chinese are naturally conservative. They are full of fancies and superstitions, and you must understand these to deal with them. You cannot force them, nor can you offend their sense of propriety without loss."

Take a little incident that happened last year. One of our American mills shipped to Shanghai a big consignment of handkerchiefs for the use of the natives with the Chinese character for good luck stamped on one corner. To the surprise of the shippers was a total loss. The Chinese would not buy them at any price, for every Chinaman thinks too much of good luck to blow his nose upon it.

THE SOUTH AND ITS OPPORTUNITY.
The south can make itself the great clothing factory for the Chinese of the future. The cotton raised here is of such a staple that it can never make the best goods, and the new factories, therefore, need not be considered as competitors of our mills.

"put New Orleans as close to Shanghai as Manchester is now and it will make it one of the chief distributing points for cotton goods."

At present the Japanese are doing what they can to capture the Chinese cotton market. They are importing American cotton for their mills. They took six million dollars' worth of our raw material, while they took only eighty-five thousand dollars' worth of 1899. They have enormous modern mills at work, and they are increasing their output steadily. They are making money and their factories earn from 12 per cent a year.

THE FAILURE OF CONFUCIANISM.

One of the angry and bloody chaos which has threatened the peace of the world will come, among other things, a general perception of the fact that Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism in China have all been gigantic failures. Whatever good things may be said of China we must not forget that the empire is dominated by the iron rule of exclusiveness and hatred of the light. To Confucius China was "the world," and to Confucius China is "the world of heaven." The Chinese wall is a symbol of the hostility which the empire feels towards the outside nations. Worshipping the past it abhors progress. The nation is rightly described as "an old man lying in its cradle." It is the hugest stagnation of undeveloped human energies growing in a graveyard to be found on the face of the earth. Its most prevalent form of worship is the worship of ancestors. The spirits of the dead rule this nation from their urns.—Graham's Magazine.

It Happened in a Drug Store.

"One day last winter a lady came to my drug store and asked for a brand of cough medicine that I did not have in stock," says Mr. C. R. Cassidy, the popular druggist of Ontario, N. Y. "She was disappointed and wanted to know what cough preparation I could recommend. I said to her that I could freely recommend Chamberlain's Cough Remedy and that she could take a bottle of the remedy and after giving it a fair trial if she did not find it worth the money to bring back the bottle and I would refund the price paid. In the course of a day or two the lady came back in company with a friend in need of a cough medicine and advised her to buy a bottle of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. I consider that a very good recommendation for the remedy. The remedy owes its great popularity and extensive sale in a large measure to the personal recommendations of people who have been cured by its use."

We have seen the frail infant when the faint struggle for existence seemed almost ended, resuscitated and made strong by the use of WHITE'S CREAM VERMIFUGE. Price 25 cents. Z. C. M. I. Drug Dept.

A "catch in time saves nine" and a dose of BALLARD'S HOREHOUND SYRUP at the beginning of a cold will save you many weary hours and even days of distressing and harassing cough. Price, 50 cents. Z. C. M. I. Drug Dept.

Corn-huskers' sprained wrists, barbed-wire cuts, burns, bruises, severe lacerations and external injuries of all kind are promptly and happily cured by applying BALLARD'S SNOW-LINIMENT. Price 50 cents. Z. C. M. I. Drug Dept.

Every Lady Knows What it Means when Z. C. M. I. has a

FALL AND WINTER GOODS SALE

IT MEANS THE BEST GOODS IN THE MARKET AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE PRICES.

THE SALE WILL BE ON ALL NEXT WEEK, **October 29th to November 3rd Inclusive.**

HOSIERY AND UNDERWEAR DEPT.

Our Hosiery and Underwear Department is complete in every detail.

Being sole agents for the Celebrated

YPSILANTI & MUNSING

KNIT UNDERWEAR,

with other well known brands in connection, places us in a position to meet every demand in Style, Quality and Price.

A visit to our Hosiery Counter will demonstrate to the knowing and careful buyer that Z. C. M. I. for quality, variety and price is the place to purchase Hosiery. We do not sell cheap goods, but we do sell good goods cheap.

At our store you can find

UNDERSKIRTS

In endless variety of style, color, quality and price. A new line of KNIT SKIRTS just arrived, not yet unpacked.

An elegant line of

MUSLIN UNDERWEAR

direct from the world's fashion centers just arrived.

SPECIALS FOR THIS WEEK.

50 Doz. Ladies' Fleece Lined Balbriggan Union Suits. Good values at 75c. Next week only **50c Each.**

50 Doz. Ladies' Fast Black Cotton Hose, Fleece Lined. Worth 35c. Next week **20c Pair.**

50 Doz. Children's Black Cotton Hose, Winter Weight and Fleece Lined, only **15c Pair.**

Worth double.

50 Doz. "Samples" Odds and Ends in Ladies' and Children's Black Cotton Hose, to be closed out **Below Cost.**

CLOAK DEPARTMENT SPECIALS.

SILK WAISTS, THIRD OFF.

What's left of Colored Silk Waists will be discounted 33 1/3 per cent. That will make a

\$3.50 Waist - \$2.35
\$4.50 Waist - \$3.00
\$5.00 Waist - \$3.35
\$6.00 Waist - \$4.00
\$6.50 Waist - \$4.35
\$9.00 Waist - \$6.00
...AND SO ON...

TEA GOWNS, THIRD OFF

All our Flannel, Cashmere, Challie and Henrietta Tea Gowns only Two-Thirds the Regular Prices.

CHILDREN'S JACKETS, HALF PRICE

One lot of Children's Jackets, ages 6 to 12, all wool goods, nicely trimmed. Instead of \$3.00 they'll be \$1.50

MISSSES' SKIRTS, HALF PRICE.

Entire line of Misses' Skirts ranging from \$2.00 to \$6.00 will be closed out at just half.

LADIES' SKIRTS, HALF PRICE

One lot of Ladies' Skirts, Plaids and Checks. Prices were \$2.50 to \$6.50. They'll now be \$1.25 to \$3.25.

INFANT'S GOODS,

Comprising Short and Long Slips and Skirts, Bonnets and Caps in white and colors, Knitted Sacques and Booties, also full assortment of Kid Moccasins just arrived, in all colors.

HOSE TO MATCH

Ask to see our ICE WOOL

Shawl Fascinators,

Very beautiful for evening wear. Prices **75 to \$3.00.**

ALL COLORS

STAPLE DEPT.

We have a beautiful line of GOLF CLOAKINGS which we will offer in our Sale next week at—

15 Per Cent Off

We will sell for this week all LADIES' CLOTHS at—

20 Per Cent Off

All 27 inch EIDERDOWNS worth 60c, will be sold at **30c Per Yard**

A Beautiful line of APLIQUE SWISS EMBROIDERED & LINES SCARFS, PILLOW SHAMS, LUNCH CLOTHS, TRAY CLOTH, and DOYLIES, we will sell at

20 Per Cent Off

NOTION DEPT.

Just received New and Special line

LADIES' LACE TIES.

AT LOWEST PRICES.

HANDKERCHIEFS

IN EVERY STYLE AND QUALITY.

Ladies' Scalloped and Embroidered Handkerchiefs worth regular 25c, next week—

15c

New and Elegant line Fancy Ribbons just received.

GLOVE DEPT.

Ladies' Suede (undressed kid) REAL KID Gloves, blacks, modes and grays, all sizes, worth \$1.50, next week—

\$1.25

Ladies' English Cape Prix. Seam Gloves, just the thing for shopping and School wear. Special shades, all sizes, next week—

\$1.25

CORSET DEPT.

Styles and Prices to suit all. Largest and Most Complete Stock in the City.

Z. C. M. I.

T. G. WEBBER, Superintendent.

Z. C. M. I.