

CHINA AN UNEXPLOITED MINE OF UNTOLD WEALTH.

IT MAY be that the foreign powers now gathered about and so solicitously watching their holdings in China are moved by a disinterested regard for the hapless Manchurian dynasty, which some consider as about to round out its 300 years and more of existence with an abdication. But this would be contrary to all traditions and teachings of history, and the bare supposition would be met by the astute diplomats of any first class power with smiles of incredulity.

They would assure you, if they allowed themselves to speak the truth—though diplomats are said to hold the truth in such high esteem as rarely to presume upon a familiar acquaintance with it—that the sole reason for this concern in the affairs of their oriental neighbor is that there is still supposed to be some milk left in the Chinese teacup. If not, then why this persistent and long continued shaking of the tree and this unseemly scrambling for the fruit thereof?

Said a well known clergyman of Boston about 40 years ago when he found a stretch of beautiful shore on the coast of New England for sale: "The Almighty lent going to make any more country like this, at least during my lifetime, and I'm bound to get all I can of it." Acting upon this assumption, he invested all the money he could raise, and the result is that his heirs today may be classed with the millionaires.

The revered gentleman "knew a good thing when he saw it," he also knew there was likely to be a dearth of good things of the character he coveted. His attitude seems to be that of the great powers in their dealings with China.

Either tacitly or avowedly, the premier of Europe are constantly on the lookout for new worlds to conquer. Their reasonings are various, but their conclusions lead up to the same result: That they must extend the borders of their empires, the confines of their territories. Casting a comprehensive glance over the map of the world to-day, what large extent of territory can we find unappropriated or susceptible of profitable exploitation? Civilized man has carried his conquests almost from pole to pole; he has traversed the burning sands of the Sahara, scaled the snow capped Himalayas and penetrated the remotest recesses of the Andes, with the result that but a small portion of the globe remains unexplored. Future generations, therefore, will have to sit at home by the chimney corner, with no outlet for their ambitions and no possibilities for adding to the garnered treasures of the world.

The world of the nineteenth century was indeed practically a squeezed orange, and explorers, animated by the high desire to add to scientific knowledge, not to speak of rulers desirous of enlarging their material acquisitions, territorial and commercial, were in despair, when just at the right moment, in the nick of time as always happens in the distribution of benefits by a bountiful Creator, as recall the discovery of coal, petroleum, natural gas, etc.,—China loomed large in the eye of the universe. It suddenly came home to all that here at last was the opportunity of the century. Here was the orange which, through the vicissitudes of centuries past, has been preserved intact, in order that it might eventually be squeezed. And doubt not that it will be, for, though the powers may seem to be pondering on the momentous question, "To squeeze or not to squeeze," they will never relax their grip upon the oriental fruit plucked in the gardens of Hesperides so long as a drop of juice remains.

But there is the squeeze legitimate and the squeeze illegitimate, the latter being peculiarly the Chinese method, consisting in taking commerce by the throat and strangling its life out by exactions like the "likin" or local tax. A mutuality of interests will prevent the powers from adopting this method. They will be more likely to pursue the grander scheme of apportioning Chinese territory among themselves for exploitation, to the lasting benefit of

coming generations. Or at any rate that is the way they will put it.

The various allotments, as we know, have already been made, and the only difference now among the despoilers is as to the relative value of their seizures. There is no difference of opinion as to the value of China in its entirety, respecting the vast unexploited treasure in the bowels of the earth. All are agreed that they constitute probably the greatest unappropriated or uninvested body of mineral wealth in the world. It may have been because of this vast accumulation of minerals, chiefly of gold, copper, iron and coal, that China has held herself so seclusive, keeping foreigners from her interior provinces and jealously guarding the secret of her wealth. At least one instance is on record of a viceroy ordering the entire equipment of a large stamping mill, and at the same time

and iron that the northern provinces excel, and in a paper sent out by the merchants of Newchwang, in Manchuria, they say: "The mineral wealth of this province is great, for, besides gold, lead and silver are also found, and there are traces of tin, copper and petroleum. Iron abounds. Most important, however, are the large deposits of coal of various descriptions—anthracite, semianthracite, bituminous, etc.—only requiring machinery to develop a large export trade and compete in the Shanghai market with Tien-tsin and Japan."

Now that the economic alarmists are predicting a shortage in the world's coal supply, and there are indications that England's output is growing less year by year, it will be of interest to note that in the single province of Shansi, lying contiguous to that of Chi-li, in which Peking is situated, it is estimated that coal to the amount of

worked for centuries, cannot afford to make use of coal as fuel because the cost of transportation is so great. This shows how necessary are railways and steamboats to the successful working of mines, of whatever character, and at the same time it is an eloquent commentary on Chinese methods. The mines are the magnets that will draw the railroads to the interior of China, and it will not be long before the concessions obtained by various countries

Native effort toward the development of mines in China has not been wholly lacking, and there are proofs that for many centuries the mineral deposits have been scratched over in a rude way. In fact, coal was in use in China when other countries hardly knew of its existence. Six hundred years ago the famous Venetian traveler, Marco Polo, said: "All over the country of Cathay—as he called China—there is a kind of black stone existing in beds in

and gold. On the way up this great river for hundreds of miles gold is said to be washed from the sands of tributary streams, and as China's western and southwestern provinces of Szechuen and Yunnan are reached the most promising region of the land is brought to view. The Chinese have a proverb that you will never find a badly dressed man in Szechuen, meaning that the natural wealth is so great that all the people are well to do. The same may be said of the adjoining province of Yunnan, which is more tropical in character, but closely competes with Szechuen in variety of minerals and output of its mines. Little is known, however, of the actual condition of the mines in Yunnan, owing to its distance from the centers of trade and foreign influence and the difficulties of travel and transportation. But the mines of this province are said at one time to have given employment to 150,000 men, for the vast resources include coal, iron, copper and quicksilver, besides minor products. In the tin mines of Kuo-chu alone, according to a reliable statistician, more than 100,000

MINING DISTRICT NEAR PEKING.



PAGODA AT PA-LI-CHUAN



SCENE IN ICHANG COPPER REGION



ENTRANCE TO COAL-MINE, UPPER YANGTSE RIVER.



3,000,000,000 metric tons is contained within an area of not over 150 square miles. A recognized expert, the Baron von Richtofen, in 1879 called this province of Shansi one of the most remarkable coal and iron regions in existence. According to Professor Dana's assertion that the state of Pennsylvania then led the world with its 20,000 square miles of coal land, or about half its total area, Baron von Richtofen claimed that the coal area of Shansi was by far greater than that of the American state and could produce in anthracite coal alone the enormous amount of \$30,000,000,000 tons. And this was 30 years ago, before the real possibilities of China were understood. A mining engineer, Mr. N. F. Drake, who has more recently inspected the vast fields of Shansi, reports the coal beds of Tse-chau in that province in many instances from 22 to 23 feet thick on the average, of good, workable anthracite.

The methods employed in mining this coal of Shansi are those in vogue all over China, and are the most primitive conceivable. No explosives are used in getting it out and no steam is used in hoisting it to the surface, no matter how deep the shaft. About 200 pounds are hoisted from the mine at a time by means of a rude wooden windlass, and the loads are drawn to the shaft along the horizontal galleries by men crawling on all fours. The total output of the Shansi mines is not over 50,000 tons per annum, and it is taken to market in small carts drawn by oxen or on pack animals, over trails paved with stones, into which deep ruts have been worn by the traffic of centuries.

Shansi, by the way, lies directly inland about 300 miles from the coast of Shanghai, where, at Kiao-chau, the Germans have a naval base and port of supply which they seized three years ago. It was their declared intention, when they later secured a concession for railways to penetrate the country in the direction of Shansi, thus tapping China's richest provinces; for Shanghai itself, which they aim to control and doubtless will control, is considered well endowed by nature, having large deposits of bituminous and anthracite coal, as well as ordinary iron ore and very fine black oxide of iron. The merchants of Chifu, which is in the northeast part of Shanghai, say in their report on the province's resources, "There are valuable gold and coal mines here, and if only concessions could be obtained to work these the result would be a boon to commerce generally."

The only mines as yet connected with the coast and a market by railroad are those of Tongshan and Kaiping in the province of Pe-chi-li, which have been quite successfully worked. There are ancient mines in the hills to the westward of Peking, where manual labor is exclusively employed. There the human traction animals draw the coal out in little carts attached to their necks, donkey fashion. The coal is then transported to Peking and Tien-tsin on the backs of camels.

It is worthy of note that while there is an abundance of coal in China and while it costs but a few cents per ton to get it out, people living within a few miles of mines, which have been

and individuals will be utilized, thereby opening up hitherto unknown and undeveloped regions.

There is little doubt that the rights of foreigners in China secured to them by existing treaties will not only be reaffirmed, but extended by negotiations with China in the near future, though even by the former official acts they were well protected. Foreigners were permitted to navigate the rivers and to wander at will throughout the empire; but in the interior, especially in the province of Hunan, travelers and prospectors found a great deal of opposition, in some cases being roughly handled. Theoretically, the foreigner has every right to locate and exploit a mineral vein, but actually he will always encounter some objection which will render that alleged right nugatory. The foreigner is supposed to stick to the settlements assigned him in the treaty ports, and when found wandering about the country is always liable to be set upon by a rabble. This is one of the grievances which the forthcoming negotiations will have to abate, so that the foreigner in China will be as safe there as the Chinaman is now in the United States.

While the southern provinces of China are more celebrated for their vegetable than for their mineral productions, more than traces of copper and coal have been noted in Kwang-tung, which contains the famous city of Canton. As the mountains of the adjoining province of Hunan are reached the mines become more numerous, and in fact, to the northward of Hunan, much has been done toward the development of the mineral wealth.

The vicinities of these two provinces, Chung Chi Tung, was at one time working many coal and iron mines, but owing to the distance between the deposits and the lack of rapid transportation, his ventures are said to have been carried on at a loss. Still he is not only managing the mines, but he is setting up blast furnaces at different points, from one group of which, on the Yang-tse, he derives ore at the river port of Hankow, 75 miles distant, at the price of 50 cents a ton.

the mountains, which the people dig out and burn like firewood. It is true that they have plenty of wood also, but they do not burn it, because these stones burn better and cost less."

It is no longer true that wood is plentiful in China, but it is a fact that the Chinese have learned the art of using coal in a most economical way. Anthracite is powdered and mixed with wet clay, sawdust or manure in the proportion of about seven parts to one, rolled in balls and dried in the sun, and with these coal dust balls and a bit of charcoal the poor cook their meals and warm themselves at trifling expense. When within reach of a coal mine, the poor people obtain their fuel gratis, but it has been estimated that the cost of transportation averages 1 cent per ton for every ten miles, or five times its original cost for mining, which is not over 14 or 15 cents per ton. So it will be seen that the question of developing the many mines of China is independent with that of transportation.

There is one common article of domestic use in China's subterranean treasure house which should not be overlooked, since it has proved profitable both for home consumption and export. This article is salt, a government monopoly from which is derived an annual revenue of nearly 14,000,000 taels. "The salt wells of China," says the United States consul general at Shanghai, "are found in Szechuen, Yunnan and Shansi. The industry which rivals the Amazon in volume and the Missouri in the turbid character of its waters, drains a vast region rich in minerals of every kind, including iron, lead, silver, coal, copper, tin, mercury

tin, and silver. After a week the people were glad to be rid of them at any price, and only \$150 was realized for the lot.

There is now a very well established carrier pigeon service from London to Belgium under the auspices of the Chatelet club. The result of a recent trial of birds liberated in London and homing to Chatelet was that out of 300 birds released one-half reached Chatelet.

men were employed, though at the present time the miners are reduced to less than 20,000 in number.

Spanning some of the rivers of this province and Szechuen are magnificent native built stone and iron suspension bridges. The iron was dug from the hills, and the workmen of the province set up these wonderful monuments of their labor, which would be pronounced creditable productions in any country.

A famous author, Mrs. Bishop, who penetrated to this distant province in her travels, says of an ancient benefactor who flourished 2,000 years ago: "This glorious plain, with its 4,000,000 inhabitants, its prosperous cities and villages, its innumerable palatial farmhouses among cedars, bamboo and fruit trees, its fine bridges, with roofs decorated in lacquer and gold, its stately temples, its boundless fertility and wealth and its immunity for 2,000 years from droughts and floods, are the monument of one man, whose temple on a wooded height above the gorge of the cooing dragon on the Min is one of the most magnificent in China."

China, indeed, considering her restrictions and limitations, has produced some very great men—skilled engineers who have built bridges and canals, lapidaries and sculptors who have carved wonderful creations from jade and crystal, gold and silvermiths who have wrought beautiful jewelry; but the bulk of its vast population needs the infusion of a small percentage of foreign blood before it will fully develop more than a tithe of its raw material in the bosom of the earth.

In the words of an accomplished oriental traveler, "The latent wealth of China is undoubted; she is of greater value than many Indias; her people are peaceful, tractable and easily ruled." But these people are also imitative and shallow, and the day may come, when they shall have learned most of their religion, their arts and sciences from the foreign sources, that they will require his teachings by invading his country with their manufactured products and cause him to rue the day he undertook their tutelage.

TRISTRAM W. WILCOX.

LADY CARRINGTON'S JOKE ON THE PREMIER.

The approaching completion of the Australian federation recalls an amusing story of its earlier days, when Lord Carrington was governor of New South Wales. The premiers of the Australian colonies had gathered in Sydney and were to hold their first meeting at Government House under the presidency of Lord Carrington.

One of their number, who was not remarkable for his personal attractions and has now passed out of political life, thought he would steal a march on the others by securing a private interview with Lord Carrington in advance of the official meeting.

On presenting himself at Government House at an early hour he encountered a remarkably attractive young woman, and asked if Lord Carrington was at home. Being answered in the affirmative, he made this proposition: "My dear, if you will get me ten minutes' conversation with his lordship I will give you a kiss and 10 shillings."

"Give me the 10 shillings," was the reply, "and come this way."

Opening a door, the lady led the way into the library, where Lord Carrington was at work, and introduced the visitor thus:

"Bob, dear, here is a gentleman who is so anxious to see you that he has given me half a sovereign to bring him in."

Of course, the pretty housemaid was Lady Carrington, who had a liking for a joke and also for plain print dresses in the mornings of Sydney's warm days. It was a terrible shock to the visiting Australian premier, and he was very vain during the subsequent conference.

THE TERRIBLE KNOT.

Russia is pre-eminently the country wherein prevails the belief that corporal punishment for lawbreakers is far more effective in its results than any other form of punishment it is possible to administer.

Soldiers, prisoners and peasants seldom escape it for more than a month at a time, though numerous ukases ordain that army men shall not be treated to the rod except by decree of court martial. The cruel sufferings and officers, craving an outlet for their inherent brutality, find ways and means to circumvent the czar's orders. Soldiers whom they dislike or who are too poor to pay for decent treatment are simply placed into the second class, and a second class soldier may be cudgelled without let or hindrance. To cause a soldier's degradation it is only necessary for a petty superior to state that the man has been impudent to him.

Every peasant, his wife and children may be sentenced to 15 blows by the village council, while the higher imperial officials may beat them as much as they like. In a single district 141 peasants were caned lawfully last year; how many received beatings offhand, course, it was impossible to learn.

In the cities official cudgelings are less frequent than in the villages; but every employer can have his apprentice birched by the police for the slightest he can do the birching himself if it feels like it.

In numerous rural districts wholesale canings are in order whenever the tax-paying season arrives. Often the bail of the village council attends the tax collector on his rounds and whips the peasants who don't pay.

In European Russia alone 2,000 persons die under the cane every year while 10,000 are crippled, and a great many succumb to blood poisoning after being punished with canes or switches previously used on other persons.

The knot has three things of leather as thick as a finger, a yard long and cut triangular. The thongs are often braided, increasing their capacity for inflicting ragged wounds.

The executioner holds the knot in both hands, dragging the long thong upon the ground between his legs. At a given signal he raises it toward the top of his head by a vigorous movement, and then instantly draws it down toward his knees. The thong whips through the air and, descending on the body of the victim, twists around like hoops of iron. The sufferer wins only a pair of linen drawers and lies on his face on a frame diagonally inclined, his hands fastened to one end and his feet to the other end. By these means his body is so drawn out that he is absolutely incapable of making a single movement, yet when the fearful whistles touch him the poor wretch bounds up as if struck by a powerful electric current.

THE KING OF SPAIN'S TUTOR.

In Madrid there has been a good deal of talk over the rise and fall of Colonel Ciriuela, late professor to his juvenile majesty King Alfonso XIII. Ciriuela, who was only a volunteer captain in Cuba, distinguished himself in the guerrilla warfare and, after having been into ambush and killed the celebrated Antonio Maceo, was promoted to the rank of colonel. On returning to Spain Ciriuela was received as a hero, and the queen regent appointed him as military instructor of the king. As the colonel was a poor man and had a large family, this seemed a great stroke of luck for him. Unfortunately, he was no courtier, and his manners—or, want of them—soon gave offense. He treated his pupil like an ordinary recruit, so as to make him a thorough efficient soldier.

This, of course, did not do at all, and the king both hated and feared him. Recently affairs came to a climax. The drill hour came, and the king did not appear before his instructor. Much displeased, Colonel Ciriuela set off in search for his pupil. Being met by the queen, he inquired of her where the little king was, and learned that his majesty had been sent to the country to play. That Ciriuela, unable to hide his indignation, exclaimed, "It seems of the king want to make a shepherd of the king instead of a soldier!" The next day Ciriuela learned from the minister of war that he was dismissed from his post as military instructor to the king, and he was transferred to a small garrison in Andalusia.



CHUNG CHI TUNG, VICEROY OF HUNAN AND HUPEH.

LITTLE NUGGETS OF KNOWLEDGE.

A nugget weighing 1 1/2 ounces was found recently in the Urei gold mines at Oriskany, in the government of Oregon.

A complete set of Mafeking siege postage stamps has been sold at a London auction for \$150, and two sets of Mafeking paper money for \$110.

Prince Arthur of Connaught, having

passed through Etton, has entered the Royal Military college at Sandhurst as a gentleman cadet.

Tourists traveling in Italy are warned against eating small birds served with potatoes or otherwise. A number of cases of poisoning after eating such birds led at last to investigations, which showed that the birds had been

handled carelessly by persons who took off their feathers for milliners and used arsenic to preserve them.

The laborers on the sewage farms near Berlin have to work 17 hours a day and receive \$11 a month, besides field produce. Their dwellings are said to be in a frightful condition. In some cases a single room is occupied by four to five married couples.

A. R. Fowler, the "armless forger,"

who is serving a sentence in the South Carolina penitentiary and who was formerly a preacher, is writing a book entitled "From Pulpit to Penitentiary."

He writes with a pen tied to the stump of his arm below the elbow.

At Thurso, in Caithness-shire, the extreme northeastern part of Scotland, by what was considered a fortunate train of circumstances the people drove ashore at one time no less than 106 bot-

tlenease whales. After a week the people were glad to be rid of them at any price, and only \$150 was realized for the lot.

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let, 200 miles distant, within 15 minutes of such other.

In those parts of Armenia where the massacres took place three years ago and where the impoverished natives to support them.

Hereafter bells that can be heard at a distance of 500 feet must be attached to all private scavenger wagons in Chicago, and these bells must be rung con-

tinuously while the wagons are in service, which may be between sunset and sunrise.

A Belgian has designed an apparatus for racing automaton figures across a stage on bicycles, consisting of endless chains carried by pulleys under the tracks, the latter having central slots through which connection is made with the bicycle, power being applied to the chains to drive the figures.