

JOHN BULL IN HONG KONG.

How He Took a Mass of Barren Rocks and Built
Upon It the Richest Colony in the World.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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Hongkong, December 15, 1900.—Hongkong is the little Chinese giant of John Bull's colonial creations. If Uncle Sam can do as well with the Philippines he will have the greatest empire of the far east, and will control the trade of the western Pacific. This rocky little island is so small that you can walk around it in a day. It is only eleven miles long and on the average about three miles wide. When John Bull got it it was so barren that weeds would not grow upon it. It was infested by pirates, and its only inhabitants were a few fishermen, who lived in huts on the shores. The Chinese laughed at them and gave it away. This was less than sixty years ago. Now Hongkong is one of the chief ports of the world. The British empire has only three which surpass it. Eight million tons of shipping enter its harbor every year, and its annual trade amounts to two hundred and fifty million dollars. Fifty thousand Chinese vessels visit it every twelve months, and it has great steamers connecting it with North America, Australia and Europe and all parts of the Pacific and Indian oceans. You may count fifty ocean steamers at anchor at one time in its harbor, and it is perhaps the busiest port of the world.

Just now there is a big North German Lloyd steamer at the docks loading for Europe. One of the French mail has just left for Saigon and Singapore, on its way to Marseilles, and a P. and O., carrying the English mails, left today for Shanghai. Hongkong has five lines of steamers connecting it with Vancouver, Seattle, Portland and San Francisco, and it will soon have one to San Diego. There are many ships which go regularly from here to Manila, and two lines which visit Manila on their way to Australia. The fare to Manila is \$30, gold; to San Francisco, \$20, and to Europe, \$300 and upward.

THE CITY OF VICTORIA.

The world knows this port as Hongkong, and you frequently see mention of the city of Hongkong. There is no such thing. Hongkong is merely the name of the island and colony; the name of the city and port is Victoria. It was so named by the land was taken over by the English in 1843 in honor of Queen Victoria, who granted the charter. Victoria is a beautiful city and a curious one. If you will imagine mountains, 1,800 feet high, rising upward at an angle of about forty-five degrees from a hill-locked harbor, you will have an idea of its site. The city runs around the shore, and rises in terraces up the sides of the mountains to a distance of 400 feet. Thus far it is solidly built. Beyond are scattered residences of the well-to-do English clear to the top of the peak. Running up through the houses and extending to the great hotel on the peak you see two black iron tracks. These belong to the Peak railway, which carries passengers up and down every few moments during the day.

DIG BUILDINGS.

The business end of Victoria is at the foot of the hills. Much of it is on land reclaimed from the sea. Great stone docks wall out the water and the mountain has been cut down to fill in and form a foundation for magnificent buildings. The central part of the city would do credit to London or New York. There is not a finer bank building in the world, I venture, than that of the Hongkong and Shanghai bank. The Hongkong club cost \$350,000 and the Hongkong hotel would be a big hotel anywhere. Back of these buildings are many fine residences. They rise out of the trees along streets which are so shaded that you can climb the hills and keep out of the rays of the sun.

The population of Hongkong is about 250,000, of whom less than 5,000 are whites, the remainder being Chinese. There are 3,269 Europeans and Americans, not counting the Portuguese, 2,233 Portuguese, 1,148 East Indians and 272 Eurasians. There are 2,374 British, 223 Americans, 366 Germans, 118 French, 106 Spanish and 163 Jews. The Chinese quarter is down near the water, although a great part of it surrounds the English business sections, and you find Chinese merchants and factories everywhere. Just beyond the post office is one of the most densely populated parts of the world. There are 150,000 people living and doing business there on an area smaller than a 100-acre farm. There are more than a thousand to the acre or 250 to a village lot. They are Chinese and as busy Chinese as you will find anywhere in Asia. They do everything under the sun. Some of them have large stores. Some have rice factories. Some are silversmiths, others are bankers, and there are laborers of every sort, both women and men.

HUMAN MUSCLE AT LOW PRICES.

I am surprised at the work done by women. Human muscle is the cheapest



MOUNTAIN TRAMWAY.

How the mountains are climbed back of Hongkong by means of a cable.

meat in Hongkong, and human muscle the cheapest muscle. This town has been made out of the muscle of the Chinese. They are the pack animals, the beasts of burden, the drays of the city. All the building stone and bricks, all the clay, mortar and sand for putting up the big houses on the hills are carried up in baskets by women and girls. I see long processions of this kind going all day long from the boats up the mountains. Every woman has a pole on her shoulders with a basket fastened to each end of it, and the baskets are filled with bricks or stones. She carries from fifty to a hundred pounds at a load, and her wages are ten cents a day.

It makes one feel like a king to travel about Hongkong. You get so much for your money. I am hauled about in jinkis for 2 1/2 cents a trip and for 10 cents I can have a man pulling me through the streets for an hour. I am frequently carried about in a chair on the bare shoulders of two big Chinese. The regular charge is about 5 cents gold for fifteen minutes, but by the law the charge is 25 cents for three hours, and you can have a chair all day for \$1. The men want more when they pull up the steep hills, and the generous Hongkong residents sometimes add 2 1/2 cents for good measure. There is a regular charge for boat trips in the harbor and the coolies on the street work for 2 1/2 cents an hour, or 17 cents of our money a day.

THE FACTORIES AND CHINESE CHEAP LABOR.

Hongkong is fast becoming a manufacturing center, and its condition in this regard is an example of what might be done in the Philippines with Chinese immigration. Ordinary labor in China cost from 2 to 10 cents a day, and skilled labor ranges from 18 to 22 cents per day. The wages are higher than this at Hongkong, but still less than in the Philippines. There is a big margin for profit.

There are already three large sugar refineries here. They use the raw sugar from the Philippines and refine it for the markets of the far east. There is a big rope factory, which consumes a quantity of Philippine hemp, and there are ice factories, cement works, glass factories, match factories and several engineering works. A paper mill fitted out with the best of English machinery is in operation and there is a large cotton mill with 50,000 spindles. Much of the cotton used is imported from China, some from India and some from the United States. The Chinese make soap and dye stuffs. They have rice mills, bean curd factories, tooth powder factories and cigar works. They also do considerable boat building, furniture making and glass blowing.

A TOWN OF STOCK COMPANIES.

Hongkong is one of the financial cen-

Hongkong Now the Chief Shipping Port of the East—Its Trade Amounts to \$250,000,000 and 50,000 Vessels Call at It in a Year—The City of Victoria—Its Enormous Buildings—How Hongkong is Governed—Queer Stories of Justice and Crime—Hongkong Money and the Postal Arrangements—English Society—A Town of Golf, Polo, Football, Theaters and Yachting.

world. In our country the criminal classes are careful to keep away from the court rooms. The other day two Chinese thieves entered the chief hall of justice in Victoria, while the court was in session. One of them had a ladder, which he placed under the clock. He held it there while the other climbed up and took the clock off the wall. One of the policemen asked the men what they were doing. They replied: "Wanchee make fix." The policemen thought they had been ordered to take the clock away for repairs, and did not object. Since then neither clock nor Chinese have been found. This is the next thing to stealing a red-hot stove, a thing that I doubt not the Chinese could do, if they knew the virtue of asbestos gloves.

THE FINANCES OF THE COLONY.

Hongkong is a free port and the government has to raise its revenues chiefly by stamps and by taxing its citizens. You pay \$50 on every contract, \$2 on every deed and \$50 in stamps if you make your will. Every check has its 2-cent stamp, and the bank must pay 1 per cent annum on the average amount of its bank note circulation. Bonds of all kinds pay 10 per cent taxes, and every broker's note pays 10 cents. Auctioneers are charged \$200 a year for their licenses. Billiard tables must pay \$50 each, and every pawnbroker must give \$500 annually to the city if he would do business.

In addition to this the government gets something from the land. It receives \$15,000 a month from its opium farms and less sums from other factories. With all this it is easily able to meet its expenses. Its revenues are about \$2,000,000 a year, and its expenditures are considerably less. Its debt is less than \$2,000,000, and it pays an interest rate of only 3 1/2 per cent.

HONG KONG MONEY.

And what kind of money do they use in this English colony? Pounds, shillings and pence? No. They use the silver dollar, which is worth just as much as the value of the silver it contains. Many of the dollars are made in Mexico, and some of those in circulation have been plundered and sweated until they are worth less than par. Nearly every dollar that you get at the bank has a black mark stamped upon it guaranteeing its circulation by the last man who handled it. If you want clean dollars, that is new dollars, the Hongkong and Shanghai bank will charge you 2 per cent extra for them. All kinds of Hongkong money are at a discount in Shanghai. Even the bank notes of the Hongkong and Shanghai bank are at a discount by the Shanghai branch of the same bank if presented at Shanghai.

There is a great deal of speculation in money. The silver dollar is in value from 43 to 50 cents gold, and it bobs up and down, according to the rise and fall of silver. Some Chinese merchants deal in silver in bulk, taking everything by weight. Their unit is the tael, containing one and one-third ounces avoirdupois and worth about 70 cents. Their copper coin is the cash of which it takes more than a thousand to make one of our dollars. Hongkong has a mint, where it mints dollars and half dollars of its own. It has also subsidiary coins imported from England; the most beautiful of these is the 5-cent piece, a little disc of silver worth 3 1/2 cents in gold.

SOME QUEER POSTAL METHODS. Hongkong is the center of the British postal service for China. The post office is on Queen's road in the very center of the city. There are mail boxes at the corners of the streets and collections and deliveries are regularly made. There are private mail boxes in the office, which are rented for \$10 a year in advance. Every box holder has to provide himself with two stout bags marked on both sides with his name in English and Chinese. Without this ticket he cannot get the mail. The local postage rates are equal to 1 cent of our money per half ounce. The chief officials in the post office are English, although the Chinese are the cashiers and handle the money. This is so in the banks, the Chinese clerks being the best accountants.

THE SOLDIERS OF HONGKONG.

Hongkong is defended by a garrison of British soldiers. The city and island has, in ordinary times, about 4,000 men, and more now on account of the war. There are three companies of garrison artillery, a corps of engineers and a battalion of infantry. There is also a volunteer corps, consisting of a battery of light field artillery, three machine gun companies, an infantry company, an engineer company and a band. The approaches to the harbor are well forti-

FOR PACIFIC STATION.

Rear Admiral Casey to Succeed Admiral Kautz in Command



With the battleship Iowa for his flagship, on January 29, Rear Admiral Casey will assume this important post. The change will involve many important transfers among the staffs.

fied, the batteries, consisting of well mounted earthworks armed with the latest of breech-loading guns. The colony is an important naval station, Hongkong being the headquarters of the China squadron.

A CITY OF AMUSEMENTS AND CLUBS.

The foreigners live well in this part of the world. Many of them make a deal of money and all spend a great deal. Victoria is a town of clubs. There is a cricket club, a football club, a polo club, a golf club, a hockey club, a rifle club and a yachting club. The Portuguese have their association, the Chinese have a club and the English have clubs of every kind. Even the ladies have clubs. They have their tennis courts and pavilions, in which they periodically go to carve up their neighbors. Hongkong has its annual races, its regattas, its athletic exhibitions and its swimming matches. It has an amateur dramatic club, which gives regular performances in the city hall, and it has two large Chinese theaters.

It has big hotels, one of which has 150 rooms. It has gas and electric lights. It has good waterworks. It has churches, colleges and schools. It has three daily newspapers published in English and four daily papers published in Chinese. It gets its cables daily from all parts of the world, and it is on the whole as live and as up-to-date a colony as can be found on the Lightning Express of Modern Progress, which is pushing its way through the dead civilizations of the far east.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

FIRST REAL PACKER.

A Partner of "Old Hutch" Who Was Called Father of Option Trading.

Albert Emmett Kent the pioneer packer of the West and the originator of the option system of trading on the Chicago board of trade died Tuesday at Genoa Neb. Philip D. Armour was one of the men who followed in the path blazed out by Mr. Kent, and forty years ago Nelson Morris drove hogs to Mr. Kent's packing house at Twenty-second street and the river.

For a number of years Mr. Kent had lived in California, but at the time of his death was on a visit to a niece. Mr. Kent was 70 years old, and was known by nearly every business man of prominence in Chicago.

Albert Emmett Kent was born of an old New England family at Suffield, Conn., September 1, 1830. Of the same family came James Kent, the jurist, who was known as the "American Blackstone." With such a predecessor young Kent naturally turned his attention to law. He entered Yale when he was 19 years old, and was graduated in 1853. Among those who graduated in the same class with him were Edmund C. Steadman, the poet, Justice Shiras, of the United States Supreme court, Wayne MacVeagh, Randall Gibson, ex-senator from Louisiana, and George W. Smalley, the journalist.

Two years after he left college Mr. Kent was admitted to the bar in Birmingham, N. Y. After practicing law for six months he gave up his profession and came to Chicago, where he began a commission business in furs.

In 1859 Mr. Kent gave up his commission business, and with his brother, Sidney E. Kent, went into the packing house business, under the title of A. E. Kent & Co. At first the company began business by bringing frozen hogs in from the country and packing them. A year later, however, they built the

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first real packing house in Chicago, and then they began to bring in hogs on the hoof and to kill them in the packing house. It was at this time that Nelson Morris was one of Mr. Kent's hog drivers.

The civil war made prosperous times for the Kent company, and after the struggle between the North and the South was over A. P. Hutchinson—"Old Hutch"—joined the Kent brothers, and a new company was formed, known as the Chicago Packing and Provision company. Under its new title the company went into the grain business in connection with its packing.

It was at this point in his career that Mr. Kent turned his attention to the board of trade, and his option system of trading was then put into effect. He is called the father of option trading on the board of trade.

The business of Mr. Kent's company went on successfully until 1886, when he retired. In the meantime he and Mr. Hutchinson had established the old Third National and the Corn Exchange National banks.

Mr. Kent was a great reader and a hard student. After retiring from business he took up languages and made himself familiar with the German, French, Italian and Spanish tongues. He also had a great taste for the sciences. In 1885 he gave \$75,000 to Yale university, and the money was used in building the Kent chemical laboratory.

Chicago Record.

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