

FARMING IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Queer Features of Country Life in Eastern Luzon.

FRANK G. CARPENTER

A Railroad Ride Through a Hundred Miles of Rice Fields—A Human Threshing Machine—The Battle of the Rice Pounders and the Regiment Which Fought Fireless—The Only Railroad of the Philippines—How It is Managed—A Typical Country Village—Some Stories of Gen. Wheeler.

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Panque, February 7, 1900.—I have been riding all day through one of the richest valleys of this island of Luzon. I have come with General Wheeler and his staff from Manila over the railroad to the little town of Panque, where the general now has his headquarters. We are eighty-three miles north of Manila and within forty miles of the end of the railroad on the Gulf of Lingayen. This island reaches for 150 miles north of that point and beyond Manila its tail extends out to the southeast, a distance of at least 250 miles further. From this you may get some idea of the great size of Luzon. It is a railroad were to be built from its southernmost point to the extreme north it would be longer than the distance between New York city and Pittsburgh. The biggest part of the island is north of Manila, where it is on the average over 100 miles wide and longer than from New York to Washington. It has an area fully as great as that of the State of Ohio, and an enormous amount of good land. I have met during my stay in the Philippines men from nearly every part of it and all speak of its fertile valleys and rich rolling foothills. It has mountains covered with valuable timber and deposits of copper and gold. Some of the officers who have just returned from the extreme north tell me the savages there showed them gold nuggets and quills of gold dust and coarse gold. They say the people wear rude rings made of pure gold, and that the Chinese travel to the north and trade with them for the precious metal. I expect to make an expedition north before I leave the Philippines, when I shall be able to give a fuller detail of its mineral resources.

THE VALLEY NORTH OF MANILA.
I wish I could show you the rich valley which extends all along both sides of the railroad from Manila to the Gulf of Lingayen. It is a vast flat rice field from thirty to fifty miles wide and more than one hundred miles long. Here and there is a little patch of corn, and above Calumpit some few plantations of pale green sugar cane, but the rest is all rice, rice, rice. There are few fences. I saw none except some that the cane fields. You can look over miles of level fields now gray with

the harvested rice, but green where the vegetation is sprouting up through the cut of stalks.
Near the railroad at least there is no irrigation. The fields are very small and each is surrounded by a little mud grass-grown wall to keep in the water, but the water comes from the floods of the rainy season, when it rains for days and days, sometimes dropping the water almost in streams. I am told that the rainfall in parts of the valley is as much as eight feet in a year, so that if all the water was held in it would almost cover the head of the average Filipino standing upon the shoulders of one of his brothers. Now everything is comparatively dry.

The walls about the fields are usually about a foot high and not more than eight inches wide. They form the paths through the country as the water falls, and some of them are quite worn. Some parts of the valley have a slight slope and in such places the fields are terraced, rising gently from one platform to another.

The valley is spotted with groves and clumps of tall bamboo, with stalks fifty feet tall and branches which quiver with every passing breeze. You see but few houses. They are in most cases hid by the bamboo, which shade them. The people do not live on their farms, but in villages and towns scattered along the roads just as do the farmers of France and Germany. Many of them walk several miles to their work every day. I am told that the roads are nearly everywhere lined with houses and that some little towns consist of a single street several miles in length.

QUEER COUNTRY SCENES.
But let me give you some pictures of our Filipino subjects as they work in their fields. You must first imagine the beautiful valley made up of a great patchwork of these little silver gray patches sewed together with wide strips of green and embroidered with wild flowers. You must add magnificent mountains as blue as the Blue Ridge or the Alleghenies, rising and falling in rugged beauty away off at the right and the left, and through the valley these tall tufts of bamboo green. Upon this as a background the Philippines stand or rather stoop, more picturesque even than their surroundings. There are hundreds of women plying in queer clothes in which bright red often forms the principal color. They have great round hats like bread bowls turned upside down, short jackets which always seem to be just about to fall off from their shoulders, bag-like skirts which are often tucked up so that half

a leg shows, and bare feet. The men wear their shirts outside their thin cotton trousers and many of them have a great hate like the women. There are also children of all ages, some dressed much like their parents and a few with almost no clothes at all. See that boy over there. He has a white shirt, the tail of which just touches his hips, with a black belt round his waist. The rest of his body is as bare as when he was born.

The most of the rice has been cut some weeks ago. The heads have been taken off one by one, tied up in bundles not much larger than a good-sized bouquet and carried home to be threshed. Half of the straw, for some reason, is left in the field, and people are now going through and cutting the stalks. They tie them in bundles and shock them up in low windrows and small piles. Each girl has a book like a knife, with a long handle, and she bends over low as she cuts. Some of the girls are quite brave and visions of Ruth as she gathered the straw for old Boaz come before you.

A HUMAN THRESHING MACHINE.
But what are they doing in that field over there? A man and a woman, facing each other, are hanging on to a pole nailed to bamboo stakes in the ground, and jumping up and down on the rice straw which lies under their feet. That is the human threshing machine of Luzon. They are treading out with their weight the rice left in the straw. The crop itself is threshed when the grain is first cut. The little bundles are stacked up about the hut or placed, with their heads toward the wind, on a ground inside an inclosure to dry. When thoroughly ripe the heads of the stalks are put in a mortar made by hollowing out a block of hard wood, and men or women pound upon them with great wooden pestles, thus threshing the rice from the straw. The winnowing is done by the wind, the rice being thrown into the air again and again caught in a tray.

BIRDS AND BUFFALOES.
We look in vain for cows and horses in the fields of this valley. The ponies of Luzon are raised in other sections, and the only animals visible are the water buffaloes or carabou and their ugly black pig. The carabou are everywhere. They drag great farm carts with wheels a yard in diameter; they haul sleds through the rice fields, for the ground is so soft that no wagons can be used. They are then plowing, going along with their heads down dragging rude one-handed plows like those of the Scriptures. They are rid-

den as well as driven. The men usually mount their backs to go home from the fields. You see them ridden by the children and, still stranger, they are ridden by the birds. Every other buffalo you see in the fields has a black carabou now with a great white crane roosting on him. Further on there is another with a crow on its back. Each bird is pecking at its buffalo, but the buffalo understands it. He realizes that the birds are good fly catchers and that they live off the insects which are trying to live off him.

THE BATTLE OF THE RICE POUNDERS.
Speaking of threshing rice reminds me of an incident which created quite an excitement in General Wheeler's brigade some weeks ago. The pounding of the pestle in the rice mortar makes a boom boom, boom, which in its irregularity sounds like the firing of musketry.

The insurgents were supposed to be very close to Gen. Wheeler one day when Captain E. V. Smith, of the general's staff thought he heard firing. It seemed to be about two miles off, and it came in irregular shots, boom! boom! boom! boom! He was standing by General Wheeler at the time and asked: "General, do you hear that?"

"Yes, sir," replied the general. "It sounds to me as though they were firing over at Bacolor. I think we had better go to the look-out" and find whether anything can be seen. The look-out was a tall tree, in which a man was stationed with a pair of glasses to scan the country and guard against surprise. Upon being asked as to whether he saw anything, the sentinel replied: "He did not, but he was certain there was firing about two miles off."

Upon this the general and his staff started with the regiment in that direction. As they came nearer the sound they were able to locate it, and they found that the shots came not from muskets, but from the pounding of the rice. There were a half dozen women and one man at work, and that was all. Since then the incident has been known in Wheeler's brigade as the battle of the rice pounders.

A somewhat similar case of premature excitement occurred just outside Manila near La Loma church, in which the Twenty-fifth infantry formed their actors. It was when the regiment was new to the Philippines. The soldiers had been placed there on guard, when they saw what they thought were signals flashing here and there through the darkness. They shot at them only to learn afterward that they had been

fighting the fire flies. It is said that Gen. Andy Burt sent to the men orders for them to forward him a list of the casualties.

THE ONLY RAILROAD IN THE PHILIPPINES.

The railroad which goes through this valley is the only railway of the Philippines. It is now in bad condition, having been torn up again and again by the insurgents. Many of the stations are in ruins, and there are eight locomotives lying near Banban in one of the rivers, which cross the track. You see the remains of intrenchments at every few miles, and in some places the fortifications thrown up by the soldiers behind which they lay and shot at the enemy.

The railroad belongs to an English syndicate, which will undoubtedly attempt to make the Americans pay heavily for their use of the road. It is a question whether anything should be paid for the road, I am told, was operated by Filipinos, and the Filipino employees of the company were the men who did the most damage to the railroad, its depots and rolling stock.

The railroad is 120 miles long. It goes through a country as flat as a floor and its construction must have been comparatively easy and cheap. It has fifty-six-pound rails, a gauge of forty inches and rolling stock from England. The cars have been repainted and labeled with the brand of the United States government.

They are old, box-like affairs, uncomfortable to an extreme. There is first, second and third class, the first not being better than that of our emigrant cars. The roadbed is, I should judge, not over three feet above the surrounding country, and it seems to be enough to preserve it from the floods of the rainy season.

The railroad has been in operation for about eight years. It was originally built on a guarantee of eight per cent from the Spanish government. But the first contractors failed and those who followed claimed they had to pay so much to the government in the way of bribery that they could make no money. The original capital was to be less than \$5,000,000, but the road is now bonded up to the neck, and what will be done with it when peace permanently comes is not known. It should be a very valuable property, for it runs through one of the richest parts of the islands and must have in the neighborhood of 5,000 square miles of rice and sugar lands along the track. It has also other territory which it taps, connecting the northern part of the island with Manila.

OUR SOLDIERS RUN THE ROAD.

At present the road is run entirely by the soldiers. They are the brakemen and the engineers, the mail clerks and the station men. Every train has guards in uniform upon it, and at every station there is a company or so ready to defend any attack. Now and then some one shoots at the train as they go flying along. We had one such shot on the way to Panique, but no one was hurt. Until recently none but soldiers were allowed to travel on the road without a pass, but it will soon be open to both passenger and freight of all kinds, and it may be that it will be handed back to its owners in a short time.

PANIQUE.
Panique is a typical country village. At least it is typical of this part of Luzon. Nearly every section of these islands has peculiarities of its own. The dialects are so different that it is said that the common people of southern Luzon are unable to make them-

selves understood in the north. At the same time, the Tagalo and Spanish are enough to enable one to trade anywhere. The common people are not travelers.

The ordinary man does not know anything about the country ten or fifteen miles beyond him. Not long ago a priest was asked if there were not some men in his village who could guide one of the regiments over the mountains. He replied that he supposed there was not a man in the town who had ever been to the mountains. Only the fewest of the Filipinos of northern Luzon have ever visited Manila, and as a rule the average man seldom goes five miles away from home.

Outside the savage regions the houses of the people are much the same everywhere. Every village has a plaza or open space in the center with the church, the government offices and some of the best houses facing it. Back of this, often running for miles into the country, the roads are lined with thatched huts, made of poles of bamboo and having walls of woven bamboo and roofs of nipa palm. These huts are usually from three to six feet above the ground in order to be out of the way of the water in the rainy season. They are so high up that the water buffaloes and other live stock of the owner can be stabled under the hut.

This often forms a shelter for the farming tools, carts and sleds. The houses of the better class have a first story of stone and a second story of wood. There is no plaster in any of the houses. The walls are of boards and the windows, which are very large, usually consist of a lattice work filled with thin oyster shells. The best houses of the country towns, as well as Manila, use the ground floor for the stable and the lady or gentleman who goes out to call on a rich Filipino friend has often to walk carefully by the horses in order not to soil his or her dress.

I do not know how the country stores look in times of peace. Just now they are very, very small. I should think \$50 would buy all the dry goods in Panique and leave considerable change after the purchase was made. The average store is a small hut open to the street, the goods being spread out on the floor for sale. The merchant is usually a woman, who squats down among the goods as she waits for her customers.

GEN. JOE WHEELER IN THE PHILIPPINES.

I have spent some time with General Wheeler at his headquarters in the field. His vitality is wonderful. He is as active at sixty-three as he was when he was at the head of the cavalry forces of the confederacy now more than thirty-five years ago. He spends a part of each day in the saddle, and has been in active service ever since he came here. He has been in fourteen different engagements and has done remarkable service in his dashing military way. At Panique last September he charged over the enemy's breastworks and took the town, driving the insurgents into the mountains. He was in the thick of the fight at Angeles in November and at Banban his troops were under fire directly in front of the enemy's fortifications. He was in a number of skirmishes, and it was a great regret to him that he was not given General Lawton's command in the south after that hero was killed.

The fact that General Wheeler has kept well, notwithstanding his age, is an evidence, so he thinks, of the salubrity of the climate of the Philippines. He says these islands are as healthy as any part of the United States. He tells me he has not had a sick day since he



And pretty maids' tresses blow free; There's comfort awaiting at home—Japan's best and most fragrant tea.

Pride of Japan

(Tree) Tea

Quality never varies.



came here and that notwithstanding he has marched for days with his clothes wet to the skin, has slept on the ground and undergone all sorts of hardships.

At one time I am told that some of his officers objected to allowing the troops to march further on a certain day. The general thought it was important to reach the next town, twelve miles distant, and he said:

"I will not ask my men to do anything which I am not willing to do myself. Here, captain, you take my horse. Give it to that sick soldier and I will carry a gun and walk." With that, as the story goes, he took the soldier's gun and marched with the regiment. He kept up all the way, making the twelve miles in less than four hours, and came out of it without being especially fatigued.

At another time he had charge of the provisions for Gen. MacArthur's division. It was very important that some 25,000 rations be moved across one of the principal rivers. These rations weighed about 150,000 pounds. The soldiers needed them immediately, and there was no bridge or boat to get them across the river. When the general arrived at the stream he found that the soldiers had built a raft which would carry only about 300 pounds at a time. He saw that with such means the train would be delayed for days, so he decided to build a pontoon bridge. The only wood was on the other side of the river, but he took twenty men with him, and, stripped to the skin, they swam the river, with their axes, and cut the bamboo necessary to make the bridge. Notwithstanding that he was several hours without clothes, he says he experienced no evil results from this action. His work resulted in the rations being carried across that river in less than four hours.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

ALL AGES TO FIGHT.

The Boers at Pretoria are making vast preparations for the threatened siege. As burghers from 15 to 60 years of age have been called to arms.

AS TO OUR NEW POSSESSIONS.

Information About Them in a Public Document.

A COMPILATION OF VALUE.

Gives Area, Population, Resources, Exports and Imports—We Control 1,725 Islands.

Special Correspondence.
Washington, March 15.—The Senate of the United States and the country is indebted to Senator Lodge, chairman of the committee on the Philippines, for a publication containing condensed information of the islands which is far better than anything else that has yet been compiled on the subject. Under a resolution of the Senate Senator Lodge's committee was directed to make a brief compilation of all the latest information and suggestions to be obtained, including areas, population, races and tribes, mineral resources, agriculture, exports and imports, forests and harbors, of these islands. In a pamphlet of 29 pages there is condensed all the information that the average person wishes to acquire concerning the islands unless he is personally interested in some particular subject, and in this same pamphlet he can obtain references which will give him the additional information. It is more than likely that there will be a great demand for this document on account of the growing interest in the islands which were acquired from Spain and which will in the future be the principal topic of discussion and have such a great influence upon the politics of the country.

NUMBER AND LIMITS.

This pamphlet gives the names of the more important islands of the group and also the area as far as known. Quoting from the coast and geodetic survey, it is stated that 948 of the islands are reported to be on large scale charts some 1,725. The total area of the islands, the smaller ones being estimated, is 119,542 square miles, while the shore line is 11,444 statute miles. One of the principal reasons given why it would be impossible to have free trade with the Philippines is because the islands are so numerous and the shore line so great that it would make it absolutely impossible for the United States to prevent smuggling and that it would soon become the principal industry of the islands. The same statement is made in regard to Cuba, and the fact has been pointed out that the Philippines the United States, with a fleet of war vessels and 60,000 soldiers, has been unable to prevent the smuggling of arms and ammunition to the Philippines and that Spain was unable to prevent with her entire fleet, the smuggling of war materials to the Cubans. These are among the reasons given in the pamphlet why there never should be free trade between the Philippines or Cuba and the United States.

THE PEOPLE OF THE ISLANDS.
The population of the islands is estimated at 8,985,124, although the agent of the census bureau, from whom this estimate is taken, says that he believes the basis is too low, and the pamphlet gives the figure at 8,000,000 in round numbers. There is an interesting chapter upon the various races and tribes which compose this population, and it is asserted that the inhabitants of the Philippines belong to three sharply distinct races—the Negro, the

Indo-Chinese and the Malayan. The first is said to be disappearing tribe, and their number is estimated at 25,000. The Indonesian is estimated at about 200,000 and the rest is largely Malayan. Considerable space is devoted to the habitation of the different tribes that compose the races given above, and also there is a discussion of the civilization of the various peoples and the progress which has been made among them. There are not very many Japanese in the Philippines, but a considerable number of Chinese.

COMMERCE, RESOURCES, ETC.
The commerce and resources of the islands form a very interesting feature of the report, or those who desire to have such information in compact form. It relates to transportation, the exports and imports, a great deal about minerals, showing where the gold, silver, iron, lead, copper, coal and marble and other articles are found and what progress is being made in the way of prospecting and working the mines. There is also a discussion of the woods and forests, which are valuable and which, it is expected, will form an important feature of the exports of the islands.

TELEGRAPH IN ALASKA.

It looks now as if Alaska was to have a telegraph line, even though it be a line constructed, operated and controlled by the army. The secretary of war has asked for an appropriation for such a system, to cost between \$400,000 and \$500,000. The scheme is to start at Valdez, running north to the Yukon, connecting with all military stations along that river, and then from St. Michael's, under Norton Sound, to Cape Nome, the newly developed gold field. A strange feature of this telegraph line is that it is to be laid most of the distance upon the ground. It is most essential to the development of the great Territory of Alaska that there be some telegraphic communication between the leading points, and it is expected that if this local line is once established it may be an incentive for laying a cable to Alaska from some point in the State of Washington. There is a demand for a cable to the Philippines, but the people of Alaska say it is just as important that there should be an all American line from the States to Alaska.

FRANCO-BELGIAN

Steamship Line Projected to China and Other Oriental Points.

Under date of January 30, 1900, United States Consul Atwell, of Roubaix, writes as follows:

"The French chamber of commerce at Antwerp has under consideration a project to establish a Franco-Belgian steamship line between Antwerp, Dunkirk (headquarters of the company), Indo, China, and the extreme orient. The project is recommended by the French minister and consul general at Brussels, the French minister for foreign affairs, the colonies and commerce; also, by the chamber of commerce of Dunkirk. The French minister of commerce says that the opening of the port of Dunkirk to direct trade with the far east will greatly facilitate the commercial relations of manufacturers and merchants in the north of France with Asiatic markets by relieving them of the necessity of shipping merchandise to the orient, and trade through foreign ports. It is thought that trade with the orient will receive great impetus by the creation of a service of ships sailing under French colors. The company now forming proposes to start with six ships of 4,000 tons each, having a speed of 11 knots. Three of these ships are to be built in France and three abroad. The chamber of commerce of Dunkirk recommends that every facility be afforded the projectors of the scheme in order to insure success, as the line is regarded as imperative in the interest of French commerce and particularly desirable for northern France."

NOT ALWAYS REDCOATS.

The British soldier has not always worn a red uniform. White was the prevailing color under Henry VIII, and dark green or russet in the time of Elizabeth.

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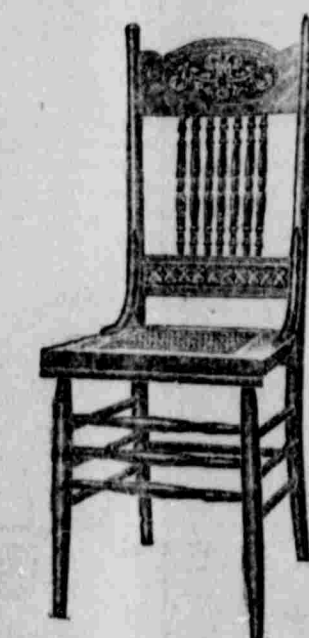
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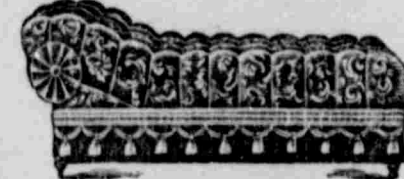
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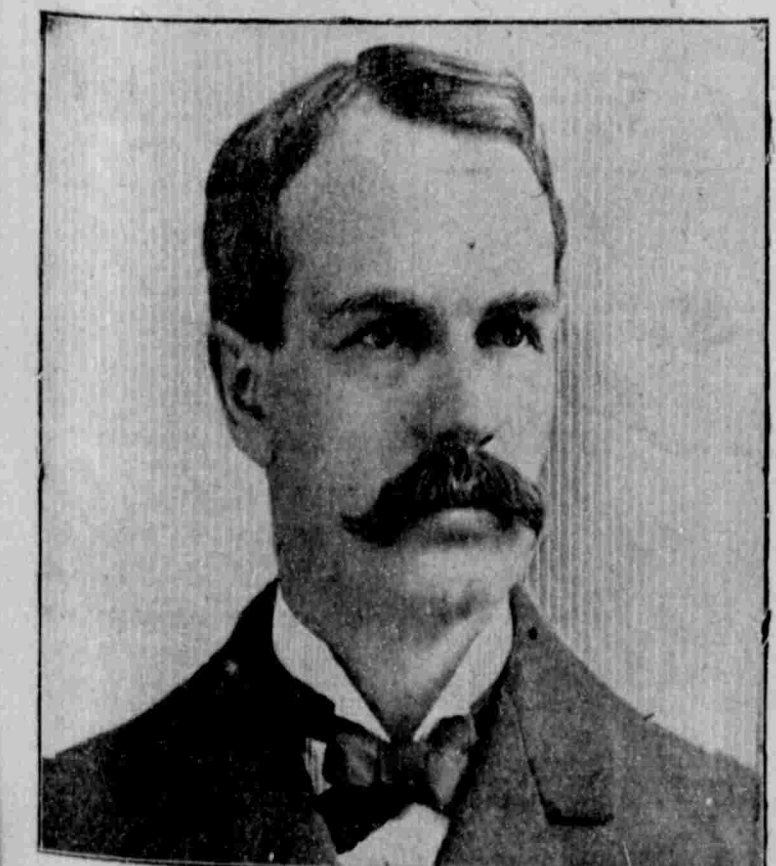
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Professor Bernard Moses, who has just accepted President McKinley's appointment to the commission of which Justice Taft is the head. Professor Moses is of the University of California and is now in consultation with his colleagues.