

# CHINA'S BABY EMPEROR



ONE OF PU YI'S PALACES.

Photographed for the "News" by Frank G. Carpenter.

adopted to take their places, and this is the case with Pu Yi. Kwang Su had no children, so just before giving the empress dowager sent out an edict that Pu Yi should be regarded as the adopted son of Kwang Su and heir to the throne. This was done, notwithstanding Prince Chun, little Pu Yi's father, who was the brother of the emperor. Kwang Su was still living and that is why other country he would never have become the emperor. The new emperor is thus really the nephew of the old emperor, but he is his son by adoption.

In 1909—after the shadow of the Pink Forbidden City, as near its actual palace that I can without being there himself, I write of little Pu Yi as baby emperor of China. Of all the millions on earth he ranks first in importance. He has under him a country bigger than Europe, and his subjects are one-fourth of mankind. They worship him as a living god, and from now on the oldest and holiest officials will report to them as their superiors. His own birthplace is the house of his parents, and according to custom it can be used only as a temple-hall.

**HOW PU YI WAS CROWNED.**

I was in Peking the day of the coronation took place inside the Pink Forbidden City, and only the highest officials of China were present. The boy was brought forth and made to pass through the entire ceremony. Some of the emperors he might only perform by proxy, but Pu Yi did it himself. He made his speech, recited the charter giving his imperial actions, and according to the publications he acted as a young man rather than a baby. He was readily carried into the throne room in the arms of his father, Prince Chun, who had already been made the imperial regent. I am told he cried when he came in, and that his father quieted him by promising to buy him a pony.

The officials wore their gorgeous court dresses. The new emperor donned his robes, and ascended the Peacock Chair. The baby emperor sat down before her and made three kowtows and nine prostrations. The officials also knelt when they asked his majesty to accept the throne, and after a lot of other hubbub they placed him on the jeweled seat with his back to the south. If the regular ceremonies were carried out as is ascribed this little seven-year-old monarch then changed his clothes a half dozen times, and at the end put on another garment as a sign of his grief for the death of Kwang Su, and was dressed in a crown which was standing, and I photographed it as it passed on below me.

**PU YES FIRST EDICTS.**

All that I saw of the crowning was from the gate of Chien Men, on the top of the wall, opposite the tower which rises above the gate of the Forbidden City. I was several hundred feet away, but I could see the gorgeous officials come out of the palace and stand under the trees waiting for the proclamation of the crowning of his majesty as the son of heaven from the mouth of the Phoenix. This, according to the Chinese tradition, is a part of every emperor's coronation, and the fiction was carried out in reality as far as appearances went. A golden bird with the proclamation in its mouth was let down by a string from the tower, and was caught as it fell by the proper officials below. They took out the paper

and put it in a sedan chair which was covered with yellow silk, and then started in the direction of the Empress Dowager in the Imperial Apartments. There were soldiers to guard the procession and men with whips sent in advance to drive the common people out of the way. Incense was carried in front of the chair bearing the proclamation, and men with great umbrellas of imperial yellow followed behind. The officials who went with it were gorgeously dressed, and the whole was really impressive. The procession moved right down to the gate above which was standing, and I photographed it as it passed on below me.

**THE GOLDEN PHOENIX.**

The baby monarch began to work immediately after he came to the throne. According to law, all the imperial edicts are put forth in his name, and many have been issued which seem ridiculous as coming from the mouth of a two-year-old child. I understand that they were written by the great statesman and scholar, Tung Chi-chang, but that the people suppose that they come from the mouth of the emperor. Here is the way in which Pu Yi describes his feelings as to the death of the emperor and the old empress dowager:

"All who have blood and breath cannot but mourn. We weep tears of blood and beat upon our hearts. How can we

express our feelings. The late emperor has ascended the dragon to be a god, and we have received the commands of the empress dowager to enter upon the succession. We have submitted to earth and heaven, and we stretch out our hands, wailing our inefficiency. We had hoped that her majesty would be vigorous and live to be 100 years old, that we might receive her instructions. But her toll day and night weakened her, and on the 21st day of the month, when the late emperor ascended the dragon, she died. Her grief was so excessive that the end suddenly came. On the following day she took the fairy ride, and ascended to the star country. We shall strive to be temperate so as to comfort the spirit of the late empress dowager in heaven."

It was at this time that the baby emperor sent his first telegram to the world, and it was addressed to the minister of foreign affairs.

Again the imperial family is unfortunate. Again we have met great calamity. The 22nd day of the present moon, our holy grandmother, the great empress dowager, was taken up by the fairies to the far-off land. Our mourning and lamentations have no limit. Prostrate, we reflect how the gracious countenance and excellent virtues of the late departed are now gone. All beyond the sea, China has long been on terms of friendly intimacy with the United States and your excellency, the president, on receiving this news will surely mourn with us."

**WHERE THE BABY MONARCH LIVES.**

I wish I could take you into the home of little Pu Yi. From now on he will live in the palaces of the Pink Forbidden City, the most sacred part of Peking. To this city strangers are never admitted, except that he may be members of the foreign legations or ladies invited to visit the empress. Such visits have been made only within the past few years, and it is a question whether any but the ministers will be admitted in the future.

I have information, however, from confidential sources among the highest Chinese officials, that he will have one or two visits at these royal quarters. The palaces are surrounded by a yellow tiled wall more than two miles in length and many feet high. There are huge towers over the gates to this wall, and officers in uniform stand just below. They keep out all but the servants of the palace and the highest officials, and the ordinary Chinaman has no voice of vent goss on within. It is only by standing upon the wall of the Tartar City that a stranger can see anything, and then only the roofs. All he sees is a wilderness of high broad buildings covered with bright yellow tiles, which glister like gold under the sun. The buildings run up and down both sides of a lake upon which are built islands, and inside upon a small island is the home of Kuan Su, the last emperor, who was confined by the great dowager when he would not do as she commanded. It may be that as Pu Yi grows older he may obey the orders of the present empress dowager and have the same prison-home for him.

**THREE THOUSAND EUNUCHS.**

The imperial baby will have many attendants. There are something like 10,000 souls in the palaces and the buildings about it and it is their duty to do as the empress dowager wills. There are men servants and woman servants, as well as princes and ladies in waiting. One of the largest classes of the household is composed of eunuchs. They have been the servants of the Chinese emperors as far back as the time of Christ, and they are mentioned in Chinese history about 1000 B. C. There are more than 2,000 of them employed to serve his imperial majesty, and each has a job of his own. The eunuchs belong to 48 different departments. Some are mere servants, others take care of the imperial silk, jewelry and all sorts of treasures, and some wait upon the emperors and empresses. The empress dowager has her own force, and there are also lama priests, who supply the spiritual wants of the household.

**PI-TSIAU-LI THE SQUEEZER.**

At the head of these eunuchs is a man who can cut a big figure in the recent history of China. He was for years the favorite of the great dowager, and was charged that he largely ruled China. He was a man who committed all sorts of extortions and has made a great fortune by squeezing the officials up through him, got the ear of the old empress dowager. It is sure that he is now a man of enormous wealth. Indeed, he had so much money in the Chinese banks of Peking that he created a panic when the old empress dowager said that she was going to withdraw her deposits.

A half dozen banks then failed on this account. This man's name is Li Lin Tai, or as he is sometimes called, Fa-Tsiau-Li or "Tubular Li" because he is the son of a cobbler of Tung Chow, about 10 miles from Peking. Li was taken into the palace as a boy, and grew up under the empress dowager. He was in charge of her toilet and personal service, and later became her business manager. He took immense sums of money in paychecks and in loans at high rates of interest, and organized a system by which millions of dollars came into the palace. Toward the last he was placed in charge of all of the servants, and at the great dowager's death was the head of her imperial household. I understand that he holds the same position today, and that the new empress dowager has made him the chief of the emperors.

**THE NEW EMPRESS DOWAGER.**

But before I go farther let me tell you something about the new empress dowager, the woman whom Pu Yi from now on must regard as his mother, and

## ALL ABOUT LITTLE PU YI, THE RULER OF FOUR HUNDRED MILLIONS.

and the present crown prince of Japan goes everywhere. China is so rapidly changing that it is impossible to tell what the people may allow their emperors to do before he grows up. It takes the actual rule in his hands if he lives, he will surely be the master of 400,000,000, and of what may then probably be the richest and greatest manufacturing nation on earth.

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J. W. ROGERS, Superintendent.

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