

AMERICAN WHEAT IN CHINA

How the War and Famine Are Opening Up the Celestial Markets to Our Cereals.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

China's Food Supply and Where It Comes From—Rice and Rats a Small Part of It—American Wheat vs Chinese Wheat—A Look at the Great Wheat Fields of North China—How the Grain is Cultivated—It is Planted in Hills and Hoed—Chinese Flour Mills, and a Description of a Modern Mill Erected by Americans at Shanghai—Big Chances for American Corn—The Chinese Will Eat It, and Their Market Might Add a Hundred Million Dollars Annually to Our Corn Crop—Queer Features of Chinese Gastronomy—Horse, Mule and Camel Flesh for Sale—How a Missionary's Servant Feasted on Poisoned Dog, and a Bible Society Man Ate Dead Buffalo.

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Shanghai, November 1, 1900.—Every farmer in the United States has a personal interest in the Chinese situation. China will eventually be one of the biggest markets for our cereals, and the time is ripe for pushing our wheat and corn to the front. There is already a demand for them at the ports, and if the merchants had them in hand they might be shipped in quantities into the interior this winter. The northern part of the empire is now on the verge of a famine. Some of the provinces have had short crops for several years. The famine of 1899, and the wants of the people have had much to do with fomenting the Boxer uprising. Chihli is in a bad way. The Peking valley has been devastated, the lands about Peking are laid waste, hundreds of villages have been destroyed and hundreds of thousands of people have left their fields, either to serve in or follow the army. This destitution exists throughout a large part of northern China. It is only in some sections that the people have enough left up for the winter, and when the cold weather comes on the suffering will be intense. The Chinese rely chiefly on food and clothing to keep themselves warm. Such an extravagance as food to increase one's bodily heat is unknown. The houses are not warmed, and the cold of nature will be doubled by the lack of food to resist it.

CHINA'S FOOD SUPPLY.

Few people realize the enormous amount of food it takes to supply the Chinese. There are about four hundred million active stomachs trotting about inside these yellow skins, and each of them cries for meals three times a day. The general opinion at home is that they are kept quiet on rats and rice. This is a mistake. Rats are such poor eating that only the lowest of the people touch them, and rice costs so much that its consumption is largely confined to the rice-raising regions of south and central China. Most of the northern Chinese cannot afford rice. They live upon millet, corn, barley, beans, peas and sorghum seeds. They raise some wheat, eating the bran as well as the meal. They know just how much it takes to sustain life, and they are

anxious to get the best and cheapest food that the world can supply.

AMERICAN FLOUR IN CHINA.

The most of our flour which comes to China costs too much for common consumption. It is being eaten, however, by the well-to-do, and thousands of sacks of it are consumed as a cooking for sweet cakes. We shipped fully twice as much last year as we did in 1898, and in 1898 the total amount was 50,000,000 pounds. We are increasing our shipments now to the garrisons of foreign troops stationed in German, English and Russian China, and the soldiers now at Tientsin, Peking and in Shantung and Manchuria will require tons of thousands of additional sacks.

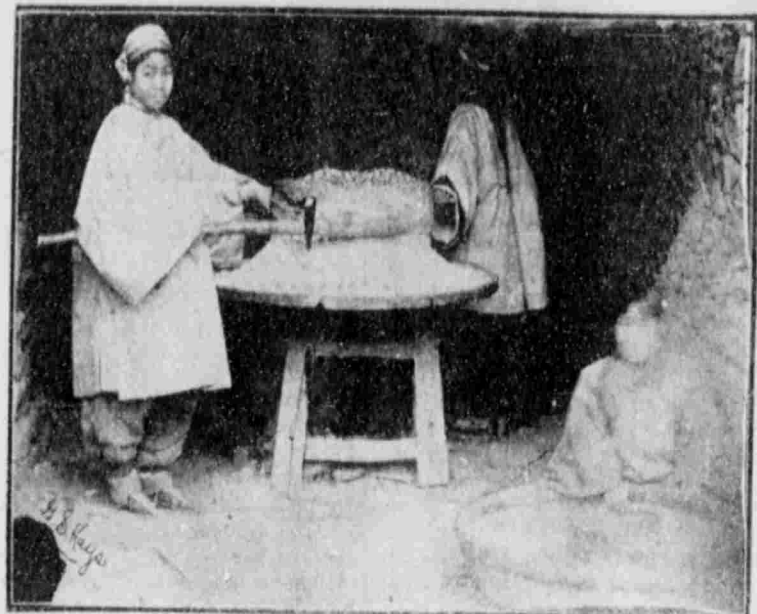
From the importing houses here I have learned how the flour is brought across the Pacific. It is put up in cloth sacks of fifty pounds each, and these are retailed over the country. The wheat is ground in the mills of California and Oregon. The flour is carried across the ocean to Shanghai for a freight rate of \$3 per ton. When it reaches here, a wholesale price of 4 cents and upward, silver, is put on it, and this is materially increased by the freight to the interior. This makes it a luxury to most people. Indeed, the cakes which were formerly made of wheat flour are now made of rice flour and only varnished over with wheat flour. Such cakes are for sale on almost every street corner. They are of the size and shape of an apple core and look not unlike one. They are boiled, and it is as boiled food that most of our flour which comes to China is eaten. The Chinese do not know what bread is. There is but little pastry or cakes. Biscuits are not seen, and such things as coffee and rolls are never eaten outside the houses of the foreigners.

HOW THEY MAKE FLOUR.

On the farms of the interior the wheat is ground between stones, which are turned about by the women of the family. In all the small towns there are little flour mills. I visited one of these the other day. It was moved by two water buffaloes, each wearing wooden cups as big as a saucer over his eyes to blind him as he dragged around the

mill stones. The stones were of the size of the largest cart wheel. They rested one on the top of the other, and the grain was poured through a sort of a box-like funnel into a hole in the top stone, the flour flowing out at the bottom. In the same room two half naked Chinese were bolting the meal, shaking the bolting cloth by rolling back and forth a log to which it was attached. They kept the cloth moving by hopping up and down upon pegs driven into the log.

Such mills are the roller patent process.



CHINESE GRIST MILL.
The Wheat Is Ground in Mills Turned by Women.

ess of flour grinding in interior China. Nearly every flour store has machinery of this kind in the rear, and sometimes a dozen sets of stones will be moved by as many bullocks.

A BIG AMERICAN FLOUR MILL.

The only modern flour mills of China are at Shanghai and at Wuhu, on the Yangtze River, about 240 miles north of here. The Shanghai mill will soon

be doing a big business. It has been put up by a practical American miller, with the finest of American machinery. It has all the latest improvements, electrical and otherwise, and it is, I am told, as good as any mill in Minneapolis, though not so large. It has cost about \$100,000, is owned by Chinese, operated by Chinese capital, and will be fed with Chinese wheat. The Chinese proprietors visited the United States, carrying two or three bushels of wheat along with them to see whether our machinery

would work equally well with their grain. The amount brought was so small that no test could be made, but there is no doubt as to the success of the undertaking.

CHINA'S BIG BREAD BASKET.

One of the big bread baskets of the Chinese empire is the great plain which extends north of the Yangtze. There are hundreds of miles of this region, which are covered with wheat. The plain from north to south is as long as from New York to Cleveland. It is almost as wide as from New York to Pittsburgh, and a great part of it contains good wheat soil. Much of the land is too high for irrigation, but the soil is so rich that in ordinary seasons it produces good crops.

I had a chat the other day with Capt. W. W. Rich, the foreign adviser to Sheng, the head of the Chinese imperial railways. Capt. Rich has traveled over most of the empire, surveying railroads and reporting on mines and other matters for Sheng. He is from Minneapolis, and ought to know wheat when he sees it. Said he: "The wheat fields of the great Chinese plains remind me of the bonanza farms of the Dakotas. They extend on and on for miles. There are no fences and no barns—nothing but wheat! wheat! wheat! Here and there is a clump of trees. Each of the tree clumps marks a Chinese village, ranging in size from a few houses up to hundreds. The farmers live in the villages and go out from there to their work. The land is owned in small patches, but to the stranger it has no visible boundaries."

"Is the country thickly populated?" "Yes," replied Capt. Rich. "Much more thickly than I supposed at first. I was surprised at the number of people in a village. The families are large, and you find eight or ten persons in one house. Nearly every village belongs to a clan or family. It has its head men, who act as their governors, and who are well posted on all matters connected with their localities. I talked with many of these old men. They told me that it took all the wheat they could raise to feed the local population. They could not give me any encouragement as to export. You see, I was looking up freight for a possible railroad. I asked them what they did when they had a big crop. They answered that they stored it in public granaries against the times of famine."

HOW THE CHINESE CULTIVATE WHEAT.

During a house-boat trip up the Yangtze valley I passed through a wheat region, not so large as that of the great plain, but big enough to show me something of Chinese wheat culture. The wheat is in small patches. It is cultivated in a way that would surprise our bonanza farmers. The grain is first sowed in seed bed, and the stalks transplanted, plant by plant, like rice. The stalks are set out in rows about six inches apart, in little bunches of five or six stalks. The crop is kept free from weeds. It is hoed and sprinkled with liquid manure.

In the larger wheat regions which Captain Rich saw, the wheat is sown with rude drills which drop three rows at a time. The crop is hoed and scientifically cultivated, although the plowing is very shallow.

PLANT GRAIN IN HILLS.

Several hundred miles above here in the Yangtze valley the farmers plant their wheat in hills. They hoe it regu-

larly and weed it. They cut it with a sickle and flail it out on a threshing floor.

They have a curious way of manuring the wheat. They feed the crop rather than the land. The chief dry manure is the droppings of cows or buffaloes. Little girls run about through the fields and along the roads and gather in this filthy stuff with their hands. They bring it home in baskets and there mould it into balls, which they throw against the walls of the house. As the balls strike they flatten out into great splashes about the thickness of a fat buckwheat cake and stick to the wall. When dry they are pulled off and piled up. As the time for planting wheat approaches these manure cakes are arranged in layers with dirt between them. Over the whole street is spread and the pile is set fire to. The cakes smolder and they burn, and the smoke is so filtered through the dirt that it leaves the most of the fertilizing ashes in it. At the end of the ashes and dirt form a finely pulverized sand or dust. This is mixed with the seed and dropped by the handful in the hills. The mixture is such that a handful of dirt is just fit for one hill.

A BIG CHANCE FOR AMERICAN CORN.

Uncle Sam should profit by the approaching famine to introduce American corn. The buggars will be lean, and thousands will starve. Ship loads of corn might be sent and the food thus introduced. Sooner or later China will be our greatest corn market. When the Nicaragua canal is completed the chief fleet of the Pacific will be the corn fleet. Hundreds of steamers will then carry Indian corn from the Mississippi valley to the countless millions on the opposite side of the Pacific. Asia has more than a half billion of people who want the cheapest food that will sustain life.

There is no cereal that has as much nutriment as corn. It is better and cheaper than wheat, rice, or any other, and we can raise enough to supply the world. Our corn crop is our biggest crop. We raise about two billion bushels every year, and even as things now are this has a value almost double that of the wheat crop. With the increased demand from Asia it will be worth much more and the area can be so increased that we can feed the world. At present about three-fourths of our corn is consumed in the United States, while about half our wheat is exported. In the future there will be as great a demand for corn as for wheat.

THE FAMINE AN OPENING WEDGE.

The coming famine should be the opening wedge. There will be a great demand for cheap bread stuffs, and if corn can be sent out at a low price it can be sold. A large amount could be given away at a profit. The cooks here are organized into a trades union or guild, which stretches throughout the empire. If a few of these cooks were taught now to prepare the product for the public restaurants, the food might soon become popular. It could be also given out through the famine kitchens and charitable restaurants, which at such times are often established by the Chinese, and in this way might get a foothold which would be permanent.

So far our people have not appreciated this market. Some of the Chinese have tried to get corn and failed. It was only last year that one of them, according to John Fowler, the United States consul at Chefoo, sent an order to the United States for 60,000 bushels of our corn. He offered to pay \$75,000 dollars in gold for it provided it was delivered in ten weeks. The United States government, however, was not standing this. Consul Fowler could not find an American who would take the order. He called the offer to the state department at Washington, but not a reply. Either the state department could not find an American who cared to sell 60,000 bushels of corn at \$1.25 a bushel, or what is more likely, it did not think the matter worth notice. In closing his report to the department, Consul Fowler said:

"It seemed no one wanted to sell corn, yet this offer was for fifteen hundred tons, and if carried through it would have opened up a market of twenty-nine million people who subsist on that article of staple food."

Consul Fowler says that the people of Shantung know all about corn. They raise a great deal, but there was a failure of crops last year and the present crop is short. Chinese shelled corn in 1899 was worth 10 cents a bushel, and it was bringing enough to feed to this off of \$1.25 a bushel for fifteen hundred tons of an article the merchants had not seen. Two other large orders were received at the same time, and that part of China was apparently ready for American corn. The state department and the agricultural department should certainly look into the present situation and our American shippers may be able to work it at a profit.

ATE A MAD DOG.

An attempt was made a few years ago to introduce our corn in Europe. It failed largely through the prejudices of the Germans and others against a change of diet. There will be no such prejudice in China. The Chinese poor will eat anything that will sustain life. I have seen cats offered for sale, and I have myself bought dried rats.

A missionary told me last night how one of his servants made a feast upon a poisoned dog. The dog had bitten the missionary. One day it was bitten by a mad dog and began to act strangely. The mad dog was killed by the police and the missionary's doctor advised him strongly to kill his pup for fear he might bite a child. The dog staggered across the room and died at once.

"That is powerful medicine," said the coolie.

"Yes," replied the missionary, "it is poison, and I don't want anyone to eat the dog. I want you to take it out

A CRY FOR HELP.

Result of a Prompt Reply.—Two Letters from Mrs. Watson, Published by Special Permission.—For Women's Eyes Only.

March 15, 1899.

To MRS. PINKHAM, LYNN, MASS.:

"DEAR MADAM:—I am suffering from inflammation of the ovaries and womb, and have been for eighteen months. I have a continual pain and soreness in my back and side. I am only free from pain when lying down, or sitting in an easy chair. When I stand I suffer with severe pain in my side and back. I believe my troubles were caused by over work and lifting some years ago.

"Life is a drag to me, and I sometimes feel like giving up ever being a well woman; have become careless and unconcerned about everything. I am in bed now. I have had several doctors, but they did me but little good.

"Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has been recommended to me by a friend, and I have made up my mind to give it a fair trial.

"I write this letter with the hope of hearing from you in regard to my case."—Mrs. S. J. Watson, Hampton, Va.



November 27, 1899.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I feel it my duty to acknowledge to you the benefit that your advice and Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound have done for me.

"I had been suffering with female troubles for some time, could walk but a short distance, had terrible bearing down pains in lower part of my bowels, backache, and pain in ovary. I used your medicine for four months and was so much better that I could walk three times the distance that I could before.

"I am to-day in better health than I have been for more than two years, and I know it is all due to Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"I recommend your advice and medicine to all women who suffer."—Mrs. S. J. Watson, Hampton, Va.

This is positive proof that Mrs. Pinkham is more competent to advise sick women than any other person. Write her. It costs you nothing.

\$5000 REWARD.—We have deposited with the National City Bank of Lynn, \$5000, which will be paid to any person who can find that the above testimonial letters are not genuine, or were published before obtaining the writer's special permission. LYDIA E. PINKHAM MEDICINE CO.

into the middle of the river, tie a stone to it and throw it overboard.

Several days having passed, the missionary asked the coolie what he had done with the dog. He replied: "Oh, master, I thought it would be a pity to drown so much good meat, so I took puppy home and ate him. He was fat and juicy and we made quite a feast. I know it would not hurt us, and it did not."

QUEER FOOD FOR HUMANS.

The poorer classes of the Chinese eat every part of an animal and all kinds of animals. In north China horse meat, mule meat and donkey meat are everywhere sold. There are butcher shops in Peking where you can buy camel steaks.

The age of an animal or the manner of its death makes no difference as to the sale. Such beasts as die of old age and disease are marketable, and cattle taken off with pleuro-pneumonia are not allowed to go to waste. Dead dogs and cats are eaten as well as dead fow.

I had a gastronomic discussion the other night with Dr. Hykes, the head of the American Bible Society, during which he described a trip he made some years ago through the Yangtze valley. There had been great floods and nearly all the food had been swept away. He was trying to live off the country, and the only thing he could get was some poor rice. He lived upon this for weeks, when his stomach turned and would stand it no longer. They were in the neighborhood of a temple presided over by Buddhist priests, who were noted for their love of good living, and Dr. Hykes decided to go there and see if he could not get something to eat. Said he: "I called at the temple and saw a priest whom I knew was a gourmand. I told him to get me a square meal and I would pay the bill, no matter what the cost. He said, 'All right,' and went

away. That night we sat down to a fine dinner. There was a bowl of beef, white rice and several other things. The meat tasted delicious. I ate heartily of it, but was rather surprised to see the priest, who was with me at the table, leave it untouched. Thereupon I asked him why he did so. He replied: "Oh, I don't care much for meat, and besides I bought it for you and prefer that you should eat it all. The result was that I cleaned the platter."

"As we were about getting up from the table I thanked the priest for the dinner, but he told me on the fact that he, who was a devout Buddhist, must have broken the rules of his religion in taking the life of the cow from which my delicious meat came."

"Ah," said he, "you do not understand. I furnished you meat, but still I did not sin. The animal from which that meat came was not killed by me nor for you. It was not a cow at all. It was merely a steak off an old water buffalo which died down the road the other day." Concluded Dr. Hykes: "I was disgusted. I gorged, but the buffalo was so far down that I could not get it up."

A Cure for Chronic Diarrhoea.

"About five years ago I was troubled with catarrh of the lower bowels," says C. T. Chisholm, 44 Dearborn Ave., Chicago, and although I consulted several eminent physicians who prescribed for me, I found their remedies failed to in any way relieve me, and the trouble almost became chronic. After suffering several months, I one day concluded to try Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy and I beg to assure you that I was most agreeably surprised to find after taking two doses of the remedy that I was completely relieved of the disease that had cost me so much trouble and annoyance. I am thankful to say that I have not suffered from it since."



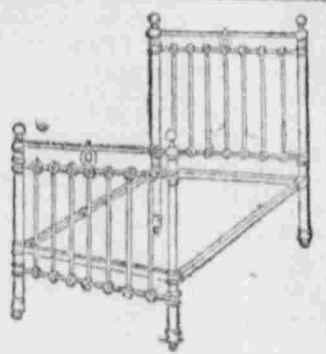
STRONGEST FORTRESS OF FEVER-STICKEN EMPEROR.

Grand Duke Michael, who, if Nicholas dies without an heir, will be the next czar, may be compelled to take refuge in this massive stronghold. The Kremlin at Moscow, which our photographer snaps so well, is one of the sights of Russia. It includes the imperial palace, the treasury, the arsenal and other important public buildings, and is surrounded by a wall sixty feet high, pierced by numerous loopholes.

Special Bargains!!

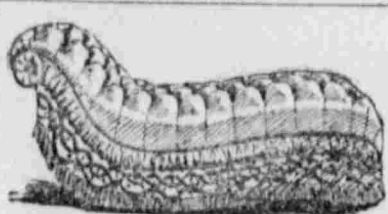
NEXT WEEK we will illustrate a few Special Bargains, taken at random from Hundreds that Abound Throughout Every Department. Lack of space prevents enumerating them all, but your fondest Bargain hopes will be more than realized when your eyes behold what is in store for you here.

Iron Beds.



Iron beds, Solid Brass Knobs, White Enamelled, all sizes. Worth \$6.50. Sale price **\$3.35**

Couches.



Well-made Couches, covered in entirely new designs of velours; most pleasing patterns; assorted colors. Worth \$10.00. Sale price **\$6.75**

Bedroom Sets.



Elegant Bedroom Sets, swell front, Quarter-sawn Oak, piano polish. Worth \$43.00. Sale Price **\$27.50**

Sideboards.



Sideboards, Solid Oak, large handsome Mirror, polish finish and hand carved. Worth \$30.00. Sale price, **\$22.50**

P. W. Madsen's Furniture Store,

51, 53, 55, 57 EAST FIRST SOUTH STREET.