

WILL RUSSIA GRAB IT?

DIPLOMACY HAS PUT CHINA IN THE POWER OF THE CZAR.

Why the Enormous Loan Was Made at such a Low Rate of Interest—Richness of the Oriental Nation—Prospects of Russian Railroads All Through the Empire—Capitalists Seeking Railway Privileges—How Chinese Taxes Are Stolen.

There is a small-sized army of English, German, French and American representatives of capital travelling now in different parts of China, seeking concessions for railroads and business enterprises. A small familiarity with the situation as it exists in the Orient will indicate clearly that Russian aid in China means considerable just at present.

Since the war with Japan more has been learned of China's resources and wealth than in the previous ten or twenty years. The sum of it all is not large, yet it is sufficient to indicate that the commonly accepted idea that the country teems with natural wealth is not wrong. Near the close of the war, and especially during the negotiations for the money to pay the indemnity imposed by Japan, strong attempts were made to learn something definite of the resources of the government.

There is in Peking an official publication known as Hui Tien which gives what purports to be an account of these resources, what they consist of, and amount they severally yield the government. First of these are the land taxes collected in the different districts, called "Chi-hsien." They amount to about 40,000,000 taels. Then there are the levies on beans, rice, and other cereals, of which rice alone, commonly known as rice tribute, nets the government 2,800,000 taels. This tax is partly paid in natural products and partly in the money equivalent. The Pekinese Hui Tien says the weight of cereals of all kinds which the government receives as contributions from the different provinces amounts to about 4,356,000 piculs a year, equal to about 5,808,000 pounds, which represents a value of 7,500,000 taels, or 5,800,000 gold dollars.

Next in line comes salt, which is regarded as a monopoly by the government, and which adds

ENORMOUS SUMS

to the treasury. It is under special control of an imperial salt commissioner, and the government not only collects transshipping dues, but also has an interest on the profits of the producers. In the last year the government collected on salt about 9,680,000 taels.

Foreign customs, called the Imperial Majesty's customs of China, are duty collections on all kinds of goods exported from China to foreign countries, as well as those received from abroad. The supervision of the foreign customs has been in the hands of foreigners since the Taiping troubles in the sixties. Sir Robert Hart, who was appointed English Minister to Peking at that time, administers this service. Under his management as Inspector-General the revenues netted 22,000,000 taels last year, against 5,000,000 in 1860, when the service was first placed under foreign management, but with the distinct understanding that all duties collected had to be turned over to the Chinese authorities, who kept these receipts.

Besides customs there are levies placed on opium and on all kinds of concessions. Taxes on pawn shops, merchants, brokers, and partly on agriculturists along the Yangtse River, especially those cultivating reeds, and also on tea cultivators, mines, real estate, etc. It is estimated the government receives from these sources about 1,500,000 taels.

The most important of all resources of the Chinese Empire, as far as collections on goods for transshipment are concerned is the so-called likin. Likin, or, better, "town dues," are a great burden on imported goods received in the different treaty ports to be forwarded into the interior. A deal of delay is caused in forwarding the goods on account of these taxes. There is always protestation, involving long official correspondence between the foreign Chamber of Commerce in the treaty ports and the foreign ministers and consuls against the Chinese authorities.

MANDARIN RED TAPE

is worse than any other, and as the Chinese have a right to collect these internal taxes the prospect for betterment is slim. Naturally on all kinds of goods, Chinese as well as foreign, these likin taxes have to be paid at different places designated by the government. This department is poorly managed and from it the government receives only about 10,000,000 taels.

The total receipts from all these sources credited up by the government is not far from 77,000,000 taels. But this far from represents the sums that are collected. China's revenues are gathered in with the exceptions noted by mandarins. The world had opportunities to see something of their character in the accounts sent out from China during the war. A more ruthless, conscienceless set of thieves does not exist elsewhere on earth. Only a proportion of the taxes they collect ever reaches the government. The return on the land tax is estimated to be less than 50 per cent. of the money actually paid to the mandarins. Salt, which yields nearly 10,000,000 taels, it has been suggested by students of the elaborate methods of robbery which characterize the administration of the monopoly, should bring the government at least 30,000,000 taels. The likin taxes are the greatest source of wealth to the favored mandarins who are allowed to supervise their collection. In all probability at least four times the sums turned over are collected and the surplus pocketed by the mandarins. So it is easily seen China's revenues, were they administered as those of this country, for example, would make the government one of the richest in the world.

It is a fair inference that Russia knew what the revenues would be if honestly collected when she suddenly

entered the competition for "the big loan" following peace with Japan and by offering money at a lower rate of interest than the richest syndicates of European bankers could offer.

SECURED A PRIZE

on terms that gave her a tremendous influence upon the affairs of China and the Orient.

Strong efforts were made by the foreign Ministers and the Tsungli-Yamen to get at least the same offers as the Russians made, but without success. The united French and German groups, with the Rothschilds, made cable proposals to Peking direct, but they could not bring the rate of interest for this loan of £16,000,000 sterling to the low figure of interest possible to the Russians, with government guaranty, and so finally the Chinese had to consent and take this loan from the Russian Government, with all the conditions asked.

The loan is, of course, based on the revenues of the kingdom. It is easily seen these may be greatly swollen if administered by foreigners. It is not convertible within the next fifteen years.

The extent of the concessions that the loan carries is not known yet. It seems, however, the Russians have already received the railroad concessions they expected.

Britons and Americans are seeking now for concessions to build roads to connect the Peking and Manchuria with the south of China. They are dickering with the Tsungli-Yamen in Peking and Nankin.

There is a clause in the loan contract between China and Russia providing that the Chinese shall not take up any loan or create a fresh one during the six months following the date of the instrument.

It will be necessary for the Chinese to borrow the remainder, £32,000,000, to pay that part of the war indemnity which is still due to Japan. It will, of course, accept the offer which proposes the cheapest interest. It remains to be seen whether any foreign groups will bid against Russia. The cable relates that she has already offered to lend China more money.

THE VENEZUELA QUESTION.

Something About the Country That is Causing so Much Talk in the World at the Present Time.

Although Venezuela looks but a small and inconsiderable place on the map, it is by no means a country to be sneezed at. It is more than as large as Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Manitoba put together, and contains a population equal to more than half of that of Canada. Interesting in more ways than one, it has within its boundaries the first point of the American mainland sighted by Columbus, who, during his third voyage, in 1498, entered the Gulf of Paria, and sailed along the delta of the Orinoco, the very area of which is now the matter in dispute between Great Britain and the Venezuelan Republic.

Moreover, it is a rich agricultural, pastoral, and forest country. It was a colony of Spain till 1810, when the Venezuelans rose against the yoke of that European power, and the following year the independence of the territory was proclaimed. A more or less desultory war of ten years followed and not until 1845 was the independence of her former colony recognized by Spain in the treaty of Madrid. The country is now governed under a constitution modelled on that of the United States, but with

MORE INDEPENDENCE secured to provincial and local Government. At the head of the Central Executive is the President, elected for a term of two years, and possessing no veto power. The legislation for the whole Republic is vested in a Congress of two Houses, both of which are elected for four years, the Senators being elected by the Legislature of each State, and the Representatives by "popular, direct, and public election."

South-east of the eastern boundary of Venezuela lies the British colony of British Guiana. Between the two, however, there is a debatable area respecting which a dispute of many years' standing has existed. Between the mouths of the Orinoco and the Amazon is the territory known prior to 1810 as the Guayanas. In that year a large portion of the territory became the possession of Venezuela, as the successor in title of Spain. Another portion of the Guayanas was ceded to Great Britain by Holland in 1814. No treaty had ever definitely fixed the boundary between the Spanish and Dutch possessions, and it was not long before a boundary dispute arose, which all efforts to settle have up to the present time proved unavailing. In 1887 the dispute reached such a point that diplomatic relations between England and Venezuela were broken off. The territory in dispute the Yuruari valley, in which gold mines of great richness have recently been discovered, and the possession of which would go far to put Great Britain in control of the navigable outlet of the Orinoco, the

KEY TO THE COMMERCE

of one-quarter of the entire South American continent. A section of the United States press says this would introduce radical changes in the commercial and political relations of Venezuela, Columbia, and Brazil. From time to time articles have been written about British demands which are alleged to be harsh, but respecting which it has never been clearly shown that they are unjust, or that they are in excess of her rightful claims. The question has been more or less made the text of anti-British trades. The London Times says that "the New York Sun keeps a leading article on this subject in type, which appears and reappears every now and then, dressed up on each occasion with more or less vehemence of rhetoric, according to circumstances." The attitude of the United States Government in the matter is that, if, under colour of a dispute about boundaries, Great Britain is endeavouring to extend her territorial possessions in America, this is contrary to the Monroe doctrine, and by that doctrine the United States Government abides. Under these circumstances, Mr. Chamberlain's reported action in instructing the Governor of British Guiana to get a provision for Maxim guns to defend the frontier is interesting.

THE HOME.

Set a Good Example.

A true mother feels a great weight of responsibility in the training of her children. If she does a certain thing for them, it may have the adverse effect, and if she fails to do it, it may hinder their development or be just the little thing which will bend the twig the wrong way. We heard a mother say the other day: "I wish I could stop living every hour of the day with my children's welfare as a direct and imperative object; stop watching every word they say, and every step they take, and every breath they draw. I have very little comfort with my children, yet I love them to distraction."

"Yes, dear," said a motherly old lady in reply, "I've noticed that you have a hard time of it and certainly the children, poor things, have not an easy one. Children never have an easy time when their parents regard them chiefly as clay to be moulded, as instruments to be played upon. The fortunate children are those who are brought up with a large admixture of wholesome neglect."

"But, what must I do?" said the mother. "Must I pass over their quarrels, tale-telling, bad temper and even laziness as if they were of no consequence? They have been talked to enough to make them real little angels but they forget all I say in less time than it takes to tell it to them. And they forget even severer punishment than a good talking to. I wish I could be a little less anxious about their morals and manners. I feel that the present strain is wearing me out."

If we mothers could only feel that home training is mainly a question of imitation, of unconscious assimilation and absorption, we would have fewer moments of worry and uncertainty over the training of our children. Our general temper, our face and tones, the pretty gowns we wear, the little songs we sing, the little stories we tell when evening comes, and the constant love and brooding as of a mother bird over her nestlings, and which is all observed by our children, though sometimes unconsciously—all these mould and have a lasting influence on their character. Sometimes when they might resist a positive order or a sharp command they would readily obey if "asked" to do so—and so instead of being ordered to do it. Praise is worth more than blame, and a reward will outweigh a punishment with our little ones.

And the example is not to be set by the mother alone, although hers may be the most potent influence, especially in baby's early years. When a son does not treat his mother with proper reverence it is too often because away back in his early years he used to hear "pa" speak cross to "ma" and he got used to it. Whatever of reproof or unpleasantness there needs between husband and wife, let it not occur in the presence of children. Let them see nothing but mutual love between father and mother and it will have a lasting influence on their entire after life. The older children will naturally follow in the same loving course, and so the example will be set for the younger ones. We once heard a young lady say: "Do you know I never mean to marry, because it would just kill me to have any one talk to me the way papa talks to mamma. Do all men do that way?" We assured her they did not. In a family of four children we know, the two older ones are constantly showing ill-temper and disobedience and now the two little ones, who at first seemed not to notice, are following in their footsteps. They are bright, beautiful children, and it seems a pity that they should grow up so unlovely just because of a bad example.

Mothers and fathers, and older sisters and brothers, cannot but realize their responsibility if they but stop to think of this matter, and if they have not been doing their duty, let them turn square around now and begin all over again, and, with God's help, set a good example.

Putting Up Stovepipes.

We never have any trouble putting up stovepipes, writes a correspondent. If two pieces are of exactly the same size, I take any hammer having a round face and stretch the end of one piece of pipe, by hammering it, so that one end will fit neatly over the end of the other. Place the end to be stretched on the horn of an anvil, or thrust a round bar of iron through the pipe and stretch about an inch, as a blacksmith draws out a bar of hot iron, by applying repeated blows on the glowing metal. Hoop-iron and stove-pipe iron can be drawn out longer, by hammering the cold metal. When one has no anvil or large bar to hammer on, lay the end of the pipe on a hard and smooth stone, and apply the hammer with moderately heavy blows, on the inner side of the pipe at the end. If the face of the hammer has sharp corners, the acute angles of the face will cut holes entirely through the pipe. Hence the importance of employing a hammer having rounded corners. I have often united two pieces of pipe, of the same size, in a few minutes, when I had no tools besides an old hammer and a big stone. There is no excuse for fretting, worrying, tearing around in a rage and uttering profane denunciations, as many good people are in the habit of doing, simply because they are not able to make a piece of pipe enter where the entrance is too small. In case one end is too small stretch it by hammering, until it will fit the entrance exactly, neat and tight. Let a little reflection and mechanical skill be exercised and this avoid vexation and perplexity.

To "Do Up" Shirt Bosoms.

Dissolve a tablespoonful of starch in 3 tablespoonfuls of cold water. Pour in gradually 1 quart of boiling water, stirring all the time. Add 1-2 teaspoonful of powdered borax, set the vessel containing the starch on the stove and boil 3 to 4 minutes. Turn the shirt wrong side out, dip the bosom carefully in the starch and squeeze; repeat until the bosom is thoroughly and evenly saturated, then dry. Three

hours before ironing dip the bosom in clear water, using wring and roll tightly. To iron, turn, place a bosom board underneath and with a dampened napping rub the bosom from the top toward the bottom, smoothing out each wrinkle and arranging each plait neatly. With a smooth, moderately hot flat, iron from the top downward, continuing till the bosom is perfectly dry, smooth and glossy. A hotter iron can be used if the bosom is covered at first with a piece of thin muslin.

Choice Recipes.

Cream Pancakes.—Mix the yolks of two well-beaten eggs with a pint of cream, two ounces of pulverized sugar, a little nutmeg, cinnamon and mace. Rub the pan with butter, and fry the pancakes thin.

Cream Horse Radish Sauce.—Press the vinegar from four tablespoonfuls of horse radish, add to it half a teaspoonful salt, yolk of one egg, then stir in six tablespoonfuls of cream whipped to a stiff froth; serve.

Hard Sauce.—Stir to a cream one cup of fresh butter, two cups of pulverized sugar, and add the juice of a lemon or a couple of teaspoonfuls of vanilla, and a little grated nutmeg. Smooth into a mould with a broad-bladed knife, and set away to keep cool until the pudding is ready to serve.

Fine Pancakes Fried Without Butter or Lard.—Beat six fresh eggs extremely well; mix, when strained, with a pint of cream, four ounces of sugar, a glass of wine, half a nutmeg grated, the rasped rind of one lemon, and as much flour as will make it almost as thick as ordinary pancake batter, but not quite. Heat the frying pan tolerably hot, wipe it with a clean cloth, then pour in the batter to make thin pancakes.

Nature Provides Means for Cleanliness.

Unlimited prospects of vegetarian cleanliness are opened up by a report a learned professor in Algiers sends to England respecting the growth in North Africa of certain trees of the sapindus, or soap-berry order. They are amazingly prolific, and their fruit contains about 38 per cent. of saponin. A full-grown tree yields from 100 to 200 pounds of berries, capable of producing soapsuds by the gallon. If a man wants to shave he simply has to go into his garden, pull a berry, rub it on his beard and he then finds himself ready for the razor. Unfortunately, the natives in the neighborhood do not care much about cleanliness, and the berries are therefore practically lost. If an enterprising speculator could induce these trees to grow fruit with his name stamped on them his fortune would be assured.

A Curious Railroad.

A railroad running across a lake on palm leaves, some of them twenty-five feet long, is certainly unusual. Such a railroad has just been completed on the wonderful Pitch Lake of Trinidad. This lake is situated near the village of La Brea, on the Gulf of Paria. At first sight it appears to be an expanse of still water frequently interrupted by clumps of trees and shrubs. On approaching it, it is found to consist of mineral pitch, containing numbers of crevices filled with water. The surface is not slippery nor sticky, and will bear any weight. It is about 100 acres in extent and occupies a bowl-like depression in a truncated cone on the side of a hill covered with tropical jungles. The cone consists of both asphalt and earth. A heavy stream of asphalt has overflowed the sea, forming a barrier reef for a considerable distance. Some diggings have been pushed to forty feet below the surface of the lake without finding bottom. There is a steady outflow towards the sea through the side of the cone.

One Drunk a Year.

A remarkable temperance society exists in Achylka, Siberia. The members of this society, it appears, are not permitted during the year to drink any spirituous liquor except upon one day. All the members of this community meet together on the 1st of September in church and swear before the altar they will use no wine or spirituous liquor "from to-morrow morning" during the whole of the next year. But as soon as the people leave the church door the Bacchanalian orgies begin. The whole day is spent in drinking. No man, no woman is sober. On the next day sobriety asserts its supremacy and is as religiously observed as if it were a law of the Medes and Persians; and thus it continues for a whole twelve-month. Just one day prevents those people from being total abstainers. It only wants some bold individual to lock the doors and put the key of that church in his pocket for a few hours, and then—all would be well.

A Common Error.

One of the most common mistakes, and one prevalent even among the educated classes, is that the heart is on the left side of the body. It will, doubtless, come as a surprise to most people to learn that this is all a mistake; but it is, nevertheless, an indisputable fact that it is the smaller section of the heart that is to the left side, as a careful study of the human anatomy will verify. The popular error regarding the position of the most important organ of the body doubtless owes its origin to the fact that the auricle through which the blood is forced from the heart into the viens is on the left side, and when any twitch is felt it is, of course, at that part.

A Child's Sad Death.

The four-year-old daughter of A. Freniers, of Ishpeming, Mich., disappeared last June. The city and suburb were scoured in search for her. The other morning the remains of the little girl were found shockingly decomposed in the unused attic of the building where she had lived and slowly starved to death. Her cries were heard by her parents in the rooms below.



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THE COOK'S BEST FRIEND
LARGEST SALE IN CANADA.

ST. VITUS' DANCE.

A Malady That Has Long Baffled Medical Skill.

A Speedy Cure for the Trouble at Last Discovered—The Particulars of the Cure of a Little Girl Who Was a Severe Sufferer.

From the Ottawa Journal.

In a handsome brick residence on the 10th line of Goulbourn township, Carleton Co., lives Mr. Thomas Bradley, one of Goulbourn's most successful farmers. In Mr. Bradley's family is a bright little daughter, 8 years of age, who had been a severe sufferer from St. Vitus' dance, and who had been treated by physicians without any beneficial results. Having learned that the little one had been fully restored to health by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, a correspondent called



"Now Entirely Free From Disease."

at the family residence for the purpose of ascertaining the facts, and found the little girl a picture of brightness and good health. Mrs. Faulkner, a sister of the little one, gave the following information: "About eighteen months ago Alvira was attacked by that terrible malady, St. Vitus' dance, and became so bad that we called in two doctors, who held out no hope to us of her ultimate cure, and she was so badly affected with the 'dance' as to require almost constant watching. About this time we read in the Ottawa Journal of a similar case cured by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, which gave us renewed hope. We procured a couple of boxes, and before these were all used there was a perceptible improvement. After using six boxes more she was entirely free from the disease, and as you can see is enjoying the best of health. Several months have passed since the use of the Pink Pills was discontinued, but there has been no return of the malady, nor any symptoms of it. We are quite certain Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cured her and strongly recommend them in similar cases."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are an unfailing specific for such diseases as locomotor ataxia, partial paralysis, St. Vitus' dance, sciatica, neuralgia, rheumatism, nervous headache, the after effects of a gripe, palpitation of the heart, pale and sallow complexion, all forms of weakness either in male or female. Pink Pills are sold by all dealers, or will be sent post paid on receipt of price, 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., or Schenectady, N. Y.

A wail has been raised along the Rhine because some enterprising "Dutchman from Holland" imported as hams what taste and investigation proved to be the flap "hams" of seals.