

CHINA'S FIRST LADY.

The Empress Dowager Said to Have English Blood.

Remarkable Intellect and Wonderful Characteristics of the Woman Who Rules the Destinies of the Chinese.

Few people are aware that the empress dowager is credited by well-informed people in China, Japan and India to have British blood in her veins.

Very few of the millions whom she rules with an iron hand have ever seen the empress dowager. As regards all outward forms and ceremonies, she is intensely conservative, and it is said that she even discourses high affairs of state through a door and through a curtain.

Take-Hsi enjoys wonderful health, and nowhere is her remarkable intellect more shown than in the matter of doctors and hygiene. She early grasped the fact that European women owed their strength of body and mind to their habit of taking a great deal of exercise.

It is believed that the empress' own life has been attempted no fewer than 30 times, but, thanks to her wonderfully well-organized detective system, and also, it is but fair to add, to the real affection, and even respect, she inspires in her own faithful band of eunuchs, she has never been seriously injured.

The empress dowager, as her name and, indeed, early career prove, was once a very noted beauty. She has remained much interested in the art of beauty, and dresses with extraordinary magnificence.

Despite the fact that the American troops are busily engaged in "suppressing" the Filipinos, a striking demand for musical instruments from this country is being made by the people over whom Aguinaldo once ruled.

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SELECTING NOTABLES.

Judges Hard at Work in Connection with Hall of Fame.

Trying to Decide Who Are Worth a Place of Honor - Their Task Not an Easy One.

Names of distinguished men or women whose admirers are anxious to secure a niche for them in the Pantheon, or Hall of Fame, are still coming in, and the list now includes close to 5,000 names.

The work of the judges is no sinecure, for they are expected to select just 100 who shall occupy the places of honor. Of the thousands of names sent in during the past few months 100 were culled by the senate as a whole, and a second 100 names were submitted by private individuals of note and seconded by members of the senate.

John S. Billings, one of the resident judges, said, in an interview: "Not much is expected to be done in that direction until about the middle of September, when the work of the judges and all those directly interested in this great undertaking will be pushed with vigor."

The final vote is expected to be submitted by the committee of judges during the first week in October, in fact, by October 1, so that the month of September must necessarily be a busy one for those chosen to make this initial selection.

It is not yet settled whether there shall be a meeting of all the judges, who represent every section of the country, but it is generally believed that such a meeting will be held before the final vote is taken.

The names thus far submitted to the judges are divided into 15 classes: Authors and editors, 23 names; business men, 6; educators, 15; inventors, 16; missionaries and explorers, 21; philanthropists, 9; preachers and theologians, 26; scientists, 19; engineers and architects, 16; judges and lawyers, 11; musicians, painters and sculptors, 7; physicians and surgeons, 6; rulers and statesmen, 37; soldiers and sailors, 20; and distinguished men and women, outside the above classes, 3.

OLIVE CROP IN FRANCE.

Impression Prevailing in the Country That It Will Fall Short as It Did Last Year.

"An impression prevails that the olive crop in France will be a disappointment this year, as it was last," writes Consul Skinner at Marseilles.

"Spain and Italy, with cheaper land and cheaper labor, and more particularly Tunis and Algeria, are offering a competition too severe for southern France. The French colonies last named are especially adapted to the successful prosecution of the business."

GREAT DISCOVERY BY TESLA.

Simple Method Which Prevents Electricity Escaping from the Wires.

A patent has been granted to Nikola Tesla for an invention which, if his claims are borne out, will prevent the escape of electricity from a wire.

Tesla's invention, it is claimed, solves the insulation problem in a simple manner. He insulates the wire by passing through it or near it, air kept at a low temperature, producing a coat of ice on the wire, which, the inventor finds, cannot be broken through by the strongest currents and at the same time gives an insulation that costs practically nothing.

By means of this latest discovery the loss of electricity or electrical energy in transmission, it is claimed, can be rendered so small as to be insignificant, and that power can be transmitted to great distances by means of underground wires.

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CASTELLANE IN STRAITS.

Chateau de Marsala, His Magnificent Country Place, to Be Sold at Auction.

Financial disaster is fast overtaking Count Boni de Castellane. It is announced by starting placards in the village of St. Cherou, 30 miles from Paris that the contents of the beautiful Chateau de Marsala, the country home of the Castellanes, will be sold for the benefit of the count's creditors.

The count has been forced on several occasions of late to take extreme measures to raise funds and has parted with many valued family relics. A magnificent wardrobe, costing \$250,000, was sold to M. Chiffeyon, a Parisian art dealer. Some of the art collections in the palace of the Bois de Boulogne were turned over to J. Pierpont Morgan for \$5,000,000.

FLOUR MILL IN PARA.

Its Erection and Operation Will Be Keenly Felt by American Manufacturers of Flour.

"A movement is in progress, backed by foreign capitalists—principally French—to erect a gigantic flour mill here," writes Consul Kennedy from Para.

The entire outfit, I am informed, will be purchased in the United States and an experienced American will be employed to superintend the erection of the mill. Dr. Duhonia will doubtless be selected to visit the United States, with a view to completing arrangements.

STORK BUSY AT WASHINGTON.

Two Diplomatic Establishments Welcome Little Strangers and Two Others Expect Visits Soon.

Numerous additions, other than those obtained by European and Asiatic potentates, are being made to the diplomatic corps resident at the American capital.

Senora Dona Inez Gernendia Infante, wife of Senora Don Eliodoro Infante, first secretary of the Chilean legation, received her tiny visitor the other day.

The Chilean legation will, according to the whispers of friends, soon welcome another guest. The wife of the minister, Senora Vicuna, is the favored mortal of whom these things are told.

PRICELESS TABLETS.

University of Pennsylvania Expedition to Nippur Uncovers the Library of the Great Temple.

Mail advices to the London Daily News from Constantinople announce the arrival there of Prof. H. V. Hilprecht, president of the University of Pennsylvania expedition to Nippur.

"The unexplored remains of the library," says the correspondent, "will require five years for excavation."

NEW DIAMOND FIELD.

Gems from British Guiana Said to Excel the South African Product.

Diamonds, considered by London dealers superior to those from South Africa and valued at from 25 to 50 per cent. higher than those found in that region, have been discovered at the diggings up the Mazaruni river in British Guiana.

Presently some town that has never been able heretofore to get itself put on the map, says the Chicago Times-Herald, will become prominent by being satisfied with its census.

FIRE CANNON AT CLOUDS.

French Try to Scatter Hail Storms, and Meet with Some Degree of Success.

"An effort is being made in this section of France to dissipate hail storms by firing cannon at the clouds," writes Consul Covert at Lyons.

The farmers of Denice were aroused at 1:30 o'clock on the night of June 5-6. The storm was severe. The artillerymen, from 40 to 50 strong, fired their guns and stopped the thunder and lightning.

"The wine growers are organizing to attack the hailstorms in many of the great wine growing regions of France. The two experiments thus far reported are pronounced successful."

WOMEN IN DUCK TROUSERS.

Many of Those on Yachts Adopt the White Bifurcated Garment.

With the advent of the shirt-waist men obliterating the barrier between the sexes have come the women who wear white duck trousers.

"Because a woman wears duck trousers," said she, "is not to be taken as evidence that she is out for a lark. They are the wives of yachtmen who are in the boats with them."

"None of the women wearing duck trousers have been seen on the beach. It is quite likely that they will be frowned upon by Larchmont (N. Y.) society, which is growing very strict."

SPREAD GOSPEL BY TROLLEY.

Business Man of Kansas City Places Novel Cards on Cars.

There has appeared in Kansas City, Mo., in each of the 50 cars on the Westport electric line, which runs to the fashionable Hyde Park district, a large advertising card which demands in four-line letters to know "How many minutes a day do you give your God?"

"I will say this," said the manager, "that he is a well-known young business man of Kansas City, who insisted that his name be kept unknown. He is thoroughly religious. The cards are printed by him and he buys the space. He hopes to do some good through these cards, which, following a well-accepted principle of effective advertising, will be changed frequently."

Caring for Babies in France.

It is not generally known that in France it is a penal offense to give any form of solid food to babies under a year old unless it be prescribed in writing by a properly qualified medical man.

No Chance for Misunderstanding.

According to the story of a painstaking correspondent, the streets of Peking "ran red with blood." There can be no reason, therefore, says the Chicago Tribune, for ill-informed persons supposing that streets ever run yellow with blood, even in China.

Terza Cotta Railway Sleepers.

On one of the Japanese railways Terza cotta sleepers are used. They are far more durable than those of wood.

REFORM IN GRAMMAR.

French Council of Public Instruction Orders Simplification of Syntax and Orthography.

Americans in France—and those at home who have to learn French grammar—will welcome the announcement that a decree has just been issued by the council of public instruction, the ruling pedagogic body of the country, directing that hereafter French syntax and orthography are to be simplified.

Another reform concerns nouns that were heretofore of two genders. From this time they may be spoken or written in either gender.

The council condemns examiners who, in France or in the United States, get a fustian delight in presenting as questions to be answered grammatical problems whose petty peculiarities are far better ignored. It has come out boldly in favor of a simpler style and common sense in things grammatical.

GIVEN BETTER BERTHS.

Clerks in Census Office Rewarded for Expert Work in the Punching of Cards.

Five hundred clerks are to be made happy at the census office, that number having been selected for promotion in the division of population.

Little speed was attained by the purchasers during the first few weeks of account of the inexperience of the operators, the excessive heat, and the effect of the punching beams on the eyes.

As they become accustomed to their work their speed is wonderful, and the work is turned out far more rapidly than was expected. The minimum number of cards punched must be 600 a day, while the maximum is fixed at 800.

NUN SEES WORLD.

After Forty-Five Years Spent in Cloister She Emerges to Restore Failing Health.

After 45 years spent as a cloistered nun in the Ursuline convent at Bedford Park, in the Bronx, Cecilia Lawrence, known in the sisterhood as Mother Cecilia, passed for the first time since she entered beyond the convent walls and for the first time in her life rode on a railroad train.

Mother Cecilia is a daughter of Bryn Lawrence, who lived in New York, and at his death left \$100,000 to the Ursuline convent and a like sum to his daughter. She assumed the white veil when she was a girl graduate, 17 years old.

UNIQUE GIFT FOR CARNEGIE.

Faculty of Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, N. J., Make Recognition of Generous Gifts.

The faculty of Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, N. J., has just sent to Andrew Carnegie a unique gift in appreciation of generous gifts to the institute. The gift is a section of an original 36-pound T rail from the Camden & Amboy railroad.

The piece of T rail sent Mr. Carnegie was furnished by the president of the institute, Dr. Henry Morton. The rails for the Camden & Amboy track, between South Amboy and Bocktown, were rolled in 1831, President Morton says, and were the first T rails designed or made, although the Vignoles rails, produced in France several years later, have generally been credited with being the earliest.

Characteristically Topsy-Turvy.

Labor in China varies in its efficiency according to the place, and, curiously unlike Europe, seems to vary inversely with the temperatures of the climate. At Peking and the northern port, it takes much longer to load and unload cargo than at the ports of Shanghai and Canton.

FORGOT HIS WIFE.

Absent-Minded Business Man Erases His Wife in a Restaurant and Goes Home Without Her.

Mr. and Mrs. John Kane of Clyde, N. Y., went to Rochester the other day to attend the Ota Fellows' convention. In the afternoon they entered a restaurant, and Kane, seeing a friend pass by the door, stepped out to speak to him.

The police searched for him all night and then Mrs. Kane went home, leaving the officers to continue the hunt. The first person Mrs. Kane saw when she reached home was her husband. Kane had been absorbed for half an hour in business matters after he left the restaurant, and when he had finished he had remembered that he would just have time to catch the evening train home.

TO USE MEGAPHONES.

New York Firemen to Utilize Them in Fighting Fires in the Upper Floors of Tall Buildings.

When fighting fire in tall buildings heretofore the New York firemen will use large megaphones in transmitting orders from the street to the upper floors of the burning structure, or vice versa. Great inconvenience has been experienced in the past in transmitting orders from or to the upper floors of skyscrapers.

Little speed was attained by the purchasers during the first few weeks of account of the inexperience of the operators, the excessive heat, and the effect of the punching beams on the eyes.

HUNTINGTON ART COLLECTION

If Sold at Auction It is Thought It Would Bring at Least \$2,000,000.

The late C. P. Huntington's art collection which he died and at auction would probably bring \$2,000,000. In the course of the last six years his commissioners have spent about \$200,000, it is said, in buying the works of American artists.

One part of his collection is a series of pictures of Roman Catholic prelates, from popes to bishops, for which he paid \$6,000 francs. His gallery contains also many of Gustave Doré's works. Fine tapestries were always sought by Mr. Huntington. One piece now in his home as a portiere was designed by Teniers and cost 6,000 francs.

GIRL AFFECTED BY STORMS.

Lightning Shock Leaves Young Woman with a Peculiar Malady.

A strange case has come before the Grant County Medical society at Marion, Ind. Miss Emma Steeleman was knocked unconscious by a bolt of lightning that struck her father's house about two weeks ago. She recovered from the effect of the shock, but during a number of electric storms that have passed over Marion since that time she has had a peculiar sensation.

As soon as a storm approaches Miss Steeleman is seized with a high fever and she thinks that she is burning up. As soon as the storm has passed she recovers from the fever, but is left in a critical condition.

It is not known whether she has a fever or it is an imagination brought on by temporary insanity caused by fright. There is no indication of fever, but the girl declares she is on fire.

WANT CANAL BUILT.

Nicaragua Willing to Concede Anything to Secure the Great Inter-oceanic Waterway.

Gen. P. Alexander, who was appointed by President Cleveland arbitrator in the boundary dispute between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, has just returned from those countries on the completion of his mission. An interesting feature of Gen. Alexander's work lay in the fact that his labors on the boundary questions were the cause of a close survey of the line of the proposed Nicaragua canal.

Central African Railway.

The Uganda railway already has a length of over 260 miles. The rolling stock includes 24 locomotives and 943 cars.