

THE FREE ZONE OF MEXICO

Study of Territory Along United States Frontier and Its Duty Regulations.

The "Free Zone" is a strip of Mexican territory 12 miles broad extending along the entire frontier between the United States and Mexico. It was first established as far as Matamoros in 1855, when goods were admitted free of duty. In 1885 it was extended along the entire border, and duties, amounting to about 25 per cent of the national duties, including fees for certificates, were assessed. A reduction of 50 per cent in duties admits of considerable importation of goods from Europe, which cross the United States in bond and then come into direct competition with American goods in the stores of the "Free Zone."

JOHN N. BONNET

COMMERCIAL TRAVELERS.

Best Method of Promoting American Trade Interests in Canada.

If called upon to name the most efficient instrumentality to promote American trade interests in this consular district, I would say commercial travelers. Commercial travelers are not taxed in Windsor, and while there are plenty of them representing Canadian merchants and manufacturers, there is scarcely one representing American markets or American merchants and manufacturers. The mail comes flooded with inquiries from all parts of the United States, representing all classes of merchants, manufacturers and producers, asking the consul to furnish them purchasers for their respective goods and wares. Windsor furnishes a most desirable field for good American commercial travelers, drummers, or salesmen to put upon the Canadian market American goods that ought to readily find sale. A commercial traveler or sales agent ought to find profitable employment both for himself and for his firm, and for that matter he might represent a half dozen different products and still have no competing antagonism among them. The salesman or traveler is now the best agent between the producer and consumer; he studies and understands the wants and tastes of the people and knows how to meet their wants and gratify their tastes. The commercial traveler in Canada, at least in this district, can live and travel cheaper than he can anywhere in the United States. Sample cards, circulars and letters may do much to promote trade, but there is nothing that equals in value the personal appeals and persuasive words of an agent in person. The live, active traveler or salesman is the man to promote and advance the interests of American trade.

JOSEPH T. HOKE

Bankruptcy in England.

The optimistic finds hopeful business signs in the annual report of the board of trade on bankruptcy in 1903, which is published this week. Though the total number of failures increased as compared with those of the preceding year, the aggregate of the liabilities was smaller and the number of large failures fewer. The heaviest failures was that of a firm of solicitors (lawyers) handling the money of clients not engaged in commerce. Though the ordinary trade failures increased both in number and in total liabilities, it is argued that the bankruptcy figures, on the whole, indicate that business is settling upon a firmer basis than in recent years. Speculation has become less rife, and great prudence in conducting business transactions is noticeable. One of the chief causes of disaster in late years has been the eagerness of people with a little spare money to buy shares in irresponsible limited liability corporations. The Whitaker Wright concerns were illustrations on a colossal scale of hundreds of wildcat schemes, not necessarily fraudulent, which took almost impossible chances of succeeding. Even legitimate companies find difficulty now in marketing their shares.

FRANK W. MAHIN

Transmuting Vegetables.

The discovery of a means of metamorphosing radishes into potatoes has been made in so solemn a place as the academy of sciences, Paris. M. Mollard takes a very young radish. "Pasteurizes" it in a certain way, and it grows up into a fine potato. More scientifically, the young radish is cultivated in a glass retort, after a process invented by Pasteur, in a concentrated solution of glucose. Starch then develops plentifully in the cells of the radish, which swells out, loses its pepperness, and acquires practically the consistency, flavor and especially the nutritive properties of the potato.—St. James Gazette.

LET IDLE THINGS DO GOOD

Unused Articles About the House That May Be Turned to Good Account.

Go up to your attic, look about your house and see how many things are lying around that you can not only dispense with, but which are also really in your way, that would bring a measure of comfort and happiness to others less fortunate than yourself, says Orison Sweet Marden, in Success Magazine.

Look over your old clothing and pick out the articles that you will never wear again, but which would prove a real Godsend to some poor girls out of employment or who have so many depending upon them that they cannot afford to buy necessary clothing for themselves. Do not keep those things until they become useless, thinking you may need them some time. Let them do good now, while it is possible.

Perhaps you have a number of pretty, but useless old Christmas presents which you have been keeping for years merely out of a feeling of sentiment. Why not make some poor children who, perhaps, never had a Christmas present, happy with those things? They made you very happy once, and they will do so again, when you know that they are making this Christmas brighter and happier for others.

LATEST FUR ACCESSORIES.

Various Ways in Which Fur Enters Into the Finish of Winter Costumes.

Winter gowns, winter hats and winter coats all have their touch of fur. It is amazing to note how many little things are done with fur. Bands of fur are put around the crowns of hats as though they were strips of velvet, says the Brooklyn Eagle.

Long strips of fur are applied to wide bands of satin and used for boas, and there are pretty little fur medallions, with a button in the center, to be used for belt ornaments.

Very narrow pipings of fur are used upon cloth gowns and upon gowns of silk at the head of founcies. And panel trimmings and other flat trimmings are bordered with fur.

Narrow strips of fur are used at the tops of kid gloves. And, when it comes to auto gloves, the heavy chamois and the all-fur gloves are worn. Everything is done to provide beautiful and warm garments at the same time.

OUR TRADE WITH SAXONY.

An Important Factor in the Commercial Welfare of the Country.

The value of exports from the consular district of Dresden to the United States was \$1,115,223 for the year ended June 30, 1904, a decrease of \$112,897 as compared with the preceding year. It is impossible to obtain any estimate of the value of the few direct importations to this consular district from the United States. Inquiries relating thereto are returned to me with instructions to apply to Berlin for the information. In addition, the chamber of commerce in this city and all kindred associations in Saxony are prohibited, by special act of parliament, from giving any information to the representatives of foreign countries, and this is strictly enforced, often to the detriment of local dealers.

The depression in the manufacturing and commercial interests of Germany during the past few years still prevails in Saxony. Although improvement was noticeable for a time, the present outlook is gloomy. The summer just ended has been severe, and no such heat and drought have been experienced in Saxony for many years. This has had a disastrous effect on agriculture, particularly upon potatoes, the poor man's crop, but all farm products have suffered to an alarming extent. The water in the Elbe has not been so low in a hundred years; navigation was entirely suspended during the past week. This has paralyzed an important traffic, besides compelling the transportation by rail of heavy, coarse freight, greatly enhancing the cost, particularly in the item of coal for steam and house purposes. The prospect is therefore gloomy, and a hard winter is predicted. But for the trade with the United States, which decreased last quarter as compared with the corresponding period of last year, the situation would be deplorable.

Each mail brings requests from manufacturers in the United States for a list of dealers in certain lines of goods in this city, which I always send. These are followed by circulars and catalogues, printed in English with prices in American currency, which have little, if any, effect. Besides, prices are usually quoted at the factory and the German people are now aware of the expensive rail transportation to seaboard cities, with cartage, commissions, etc., and for these reasons prefer to purchase American goods at Bremen or Hamburg, when they can determine the cost laid down in Dresden.

All lines of railway and branches in the United States are constantly patrolled by commercial travelers; first to secure customers and next to retain them. If our people desire to increase their trade in Saxony the same plan should be adopted. Manufacturers in France and England recognize this fact, and their agents visit Dresden frequently.

CHARLES L. COLE

HOP INDUSTRY IN ENGLAND

Restricted to Six Counties and the Present Outlook Far from Encouraging.

At a special meeting of the Hop Growers' association at Hereford recently, resolutions were passed asserting that the decline of the English hop industry was largely due to the free importation of hops from abroad; that imported hops should be marked under the merchandise-marks act, and urging the government to levy an import duty that will save the industry from destruction.

The outlook in England is far from encouraging, and to those who know the trade best it appears that hope will be imported in larger quantities and that their growth in England must continue to decline. It is suggested that American growers follow the changing conditions of this industry.

The cultivation of hops in Great Britain is restricted to some six counties of England, the total area in hops outside these counties being only 138 acres, as compared with 47,511 acres within them.

The total production of hops this year, estimated at 282,330 hundredweight (31,620,990 pounds), is 138,738 hundredweight (15,538,556 pounds) less than the crop of 1903, although this year's acreage of hops was only 139 acres less than that of last year. The production for 1904 escapes being the lowest on record by the small quantity of 410 hundredweight. Every one of the hop counties registers a diminished output.

JOSEPH G. STEPHANS

Yellow Corn in China.

Upon the initiative of the bureau of agriculture and commerce of Tonkin, successful trials have recently been made in the province of Hung-Yen in the cultivation of ordinary yellow corn. Up to the present experiments, only white corn has been tried in Tonkin, and its yield was almost nothing. "The experiments which have been made," says a French agricultural journal, "show that yellow corn normally cultivated in Tonkin can give the same yield as in America, the principal producer of the world."

THORNWELL HAYNES

Father of History.

Herodotus, "the father of history," declares that the inhabitants of the "lake dwellings" of Switzerland fed their horses and cattle on fish.

PEARY'S GREAT METEORITE

Mammoth Metal Body from the Heavens Discovered by the Arctic Explorer.

The largest, heaviest and most interesting meteorite ever discovered was the 27 1/2-ton chunk of iron and nickel and cobalt brought to the Brooklyn navy yard by Lieut. Peary's latest arctic expedition, and recently dragged through the streets of New York by 34 horses to be deposited at the main entrance of the American Museum of Natural History. There, on a massive pedestal reaching clear down to bed rock, this extraordinary celestial visitor, an awe-inspiring spectacle of the stupendous mysteries whirling through space, rests in its last abiding place. Like a real ghost, come to take permanent residence in order to prove vague ghastly superstitions, so this mammoth Greenland meteorite stands—12 feet long, eight feet high and six feet thick—as if to verify the declarations of science that all about us are stars and planets and heavenly bodies consisting of minerals and metals identical with those composing our own earth.

Fascinating though this meteorite is to the scientists, no less is it to laymen throughout the world, for the part which this huge boulder of metal had in maintaining human life on Greenland's most barren shore lends an interest which no other natural curiosity can have.

One of the earliest puzzles to arctic explorers was the fact that the knives, the harpoons and the other Eskimo hunting implements so necessary to the hunting of the frozen north were made of iron.

"From the 'Iron mountains' we get our iron," the natives explained to Capt. Ross as far back as 1818, and from that day to 1896, when Lieut. Peary succeeded in locating the "mountains," one of the most perplexing things to arctic explorers was the location of the mysterious source of supply.

Like many other scientific objects of search, the "iron mountains" were discovered by Peary chiefly through accident, says Raymond Porter, in Peary's Magazine. Nine years ago he happened to be staying over night in an Eskimo village on White sound, when he came across an "oodoo"—a knife used by Eskimo women. The knife was an exceedingly primitive affair, consisting of five pieces of iron fastened together with twigs.

"Where did you get this?" Peary asked of the woman. "From the great 'Iron mountains,'" answered the hostess. "It's very old. I never saw another like it; but old men in the tribe say that years and years ago, before the whalers brought us knives and blades and harpoon heads, these knives were the only ones used by our people."

Peary investigated further, was directed to the ice-bound body of water known as Melville bay, and guided by an Eskimo hunter named Teliktoinah, was led to three enormous bowlders of iron, meteorites, known to the natives respectively as the "Dog," the "Woman" and the "Tent." Here, then, was where for centuries the natives had gotten their iron; for, despite almost a century's ravages of arctic elements, the flint-hard surfaces of the masses still showed where natives had labored patiently, breaking and wearing away chunks and sections of the stone to be transformed into heads for harpoons and other hunting implements.

Grigby was a splendid agent in his own trade, but lately he has taken up a new line—a patent hair dye, relates the Chicago Tribune. He called at several suburban dwellings, but as soon as he proclaimed his business—hair dye—the door was slammed in his face.

At length he felt he must alter his tactics, when the next door was opened by a fearful looking female with a forbidding scowl and a few scanty gray locks, he commenced apologetically: "I beg your pardon—I was about to introduce a new and wonderful hair dye, but I see it would be something for which you would have no use."

The lady blushed and stammered, not to say alighted: "No, I suppose not; but if it is good perhaps it might be used for something else—a brown dye, I think you said. I should like some good brown boot polish."

HOME OF WILDCAT STILL

Georgia, and Not Tennessee, Leads in Production of "Moonshine Licker."

Despite the impression which has long prevailed not only in Tennessee, but throughout the entire country, says the Nashville American, that this state, and particularly the mountainous section of it, is the natural home of the "moonshiner" and that the streams which descend from the mountains in the eastern division are flavored with the juice of corn or distilled apples, the records of the internal revenue department for the past 18 years show that there have been fewer distilleries seized in Tennessee than in any other section where "moonshining" is carried on to any extent. The remark that the chief output of the eastern section of the state is "moonshine licker" is thoroughly discounted by the facts.

The popular impression that the office of an internal revenue deputy is one of the most hazardous and dangerous occupations in the world, and that the murder of a revenue official is a common occurrence does not seem altogether justified by the official statistics either. During the past 13 years only 12 revenue officers have been killed throughout the entire United States. This is less than one a year. During that period only 24 have been wounded. These statistics cover the years from 1891 to 1903 inclusive. For the year ended June 30, 1903, there was not a single employee of the internal revenue service killed or wounded. This statement is further emphasized when it is known that during that year there were 1,396 arrests for violations of the internal revenue laws the largest ever made during any year since the establishment of the department. In 1903 there were 1,355 stills seized.

Not only did Georgia lead all the states during 1903, but this is the case for every year during the last ten. During that period from one-fourth to one-half the distilleries reported seized have been credited to Georgia, and it has furnished from one-fourth to two-thirds of the arrests. During the fiscal year 1903 less than three per cent of the illicit distilleries seized were in Tennessee. The average for other years is practically the same.

As is well known, the Second Tennessee district is composed of the counties of east Tennessee, much of which is very mountainous the kind of territory in which the moonshiner is generally supposed to flourish; yet in this district last year only 33 illicit stills were captured and but 34 arrests were made, about three times the number made in the Fifth district. In 1900, of the 44 arrests made in Tennessee, but 28 were made in the eastern district.

Although there have been comparatively few arrests made in Tennessee and the number of seizures is considerably less than that made in neighboring states, the scene of several of the bloodiest battles in the history of the department between the revenue officials and the moonshiners has been in Tennessee. During the past 20 years several of the bravest officials in the service have met death or been seriously wounded in Tennessee in the discharge of their duty. In the late '80s, Jim Davis, one of the most fearless and efficient men ever known to the service, was fired upon from ambush at the foot of Ben Lomond mountain in Warren county and fairly riddled with bullets, dying within a few minutes.

Passing of the Chinese. How Nature Is Solving the Problem of the "Yellow Peril" in America.

In 50 years—perhaps less than 50, if the present laws remain in effect and are rigidly executed—the Chinese population of the United States will become practically extinct, says a writer in the World's Work. From 1849 to 1899 they fell away from 128,773 to 119,650, a decrease of nearly 8,000, or more than six per cent. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1903, more than 1,000 voluntarily left the port of San Francisco for the land of their birth, the total deported and returning voluntarily being 5,020. A very large majority of these Chinamen were advanced in years and went home to die.

A generation ago there were in San Francisco from 30,000 to 40,000 Chinamen. The Chinese consul general there told me that, counting men, women and children, there are now not 10,000. The same proportionate decrease is seen in other places. It should be borne in mind that the total number of Chinese now in the United States includes 26,767 in Hawaii and 3,116 in Alaska, so that, at the beginning of this decennial period, there were living in the United States proper only 89,000. A generation ago there were at least 150,000.

According to the most liberal estimate there are not more than 150 legal Chinese wives in San Francisco. But the number of Chinese women is estimated at between 1,000 and 2,000. The main adult population is male, is unmarried and is rapidly approaching old age. Thus by 1910 or 1940 the main Chinese life in America will have become extinct.

HUMAN FLESH SHARK BAIT.

Method Employed by Hawaiian Chiefs to Capture Man Eaters of the Deep.

It appears that the Hawaiian chiefs of some years ago were much addicted to the use of human flesh as bait for sharks. It came cheaper than pig, says Forrest and Stream, was equally acceptable to the shark, and gave the chief an opportunity to kill anyone whom he disliked. The victim was cut up and left to decompose for two or three days in a receptacle. Kamehameha I. was a great shark hunter, and kept these of his victims who were intended for bait penned up near the great temple of Mookini.

Mrs. Beckley gives a particularly interesting account of another method of capturing the huge niuhi, or man-eating shark, followed by the natives. They first of all captured a large number of the small common shark, saved their livers with a portion of the flesh, wrapped them in ki leaves and baked them underground. From 50 to 100 canoes were loaded with the baked meat and large quantities of the pounded roots of awa, mixed with a little water, and contained in large gourds. The fleet would sail many miles out to sea in the direction in which the niuhi is known to appear.

Arrived at a comparatively shallow place, the canoe containing the head fisherman, the priest and the scribe, who was supposed to be indispensable, would cast anchor; meat and the baked liver would be thrown overboard, a few bundles at a time, to attract sharks. After a few days the grease and scent of cooked meats would spread through the water many miles in radius. The niuhi would almost always make its appearance after the third or fourth day, when bundles of the baked meat were thrown to it as fast as it could swallow them. After awhile it would become comparatively tame, and would come up to one or other of the canoes to be fed. Bundles of the liver with the pounded awa would then be given it, and it would become not only satiated, but also stupefied with awa.

A canoe was then slipped over its head, and the fleet raised anchor and set sail for home, the shark following, a willing prisoner, and the occupants of the nearest canoe being careful to feed it upon the same mixture from time to time. It was led right into shallow water until it was stranded, and then killed. Every part of the bones and skin was supposed to confer unflinching bravery upon the possessor, and the actual captor, that is the one who slipped the noose over the niuhi's head, would also, ever after, be always victorious.

Stay-at-home Missourian. Natives of the State Seem to Have No Desire to Go Out Into New Fields.

Missouri is one of the largest states in the country and the most populous of the states beyond the Mississippi. Into it have gone by thousands each year immigrants from other states, but from it few emigrants go and a "man from Missouri" is therefore a rarity in most parts of the country, particularly in the east and along the Atlantic seaboard, says the New York Sun.

There are only 3,300 natives of Missouri in the state of New York, a smaller number than there are natives of either Georgia, Michigan, California, North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Illinois or the District of Columbia. Small as is the Missouri colony in New York, it is larger than the Missouri colony in any other city of the country, with the single exception of Quincy, Ill., which is near enough to the Missouri boundary line to get frequent accessions from the state. Missouri people do not come east except for brief visits, and few go to the northwest, though that is largely made up of newcomers, not only from European countries but from other American states. Moreover, by the last census there were only 490 natives of Missouri in Galveston and only 1,200 in New Orleans. In the latter city there were 2,000 natives of Virginia.

The people of Missouri have not much of the migratory disposition which characterizes the natives of most other states. They are satisfied to stay at home or to move from one part of Missouri to another. The Missouri society in New York has in recent years been recruited by many men distinguished in professional or literary life, yet while the colony has become important its membership continues smaller than is the case from most other large states.

Progressive Indiana. The belief that educated Indians relapse into savagery when no longer under the influence of government schools is not borne out by statistics—which, happily, the schools are now taking pains to keep. At least one Indian is mayor of a city, and another is vice president of a bank; but these men do not count for so much, when one views the question in a large way, as the hundreds of graduates who are earning a living as farmers, carpenters, shoemakers and blacksmiths. A disposition to work and stick to it marks the distinction between the civilized man and the "savage" of any color.—Youth's Companion.

Exhibition of Quackery. An exhibition of everything relating to charlatanry, now taking place at Breslau, contains some interesting things. An entire library of works on a certain famous "cure" is there, one of the books in it having sold to the number of more than a million volumes. Among the nostrums shown are things called "hearing oil," "universal gastric salt," "negative electric water," an invisible audiphone and an anti-epidemic mask.—N. Y. World.