

SINGAN, CHINA'S OLD CAPITAL.

The National Advantages Have Made It an Important City for 2,000 Years.

Singan is practically the Chinese terminal of the great trans-Asiatic highway along which the silks of the Seres were first carried to Rome.

The fortress which guards this exit constitutes the key of the east, as the Kiaukwan constitutes the key of the west for the possessors of Shensi and Kansuh.

We may begin now to realize the political and commercial importance of a city which dominated this great highway and thus mediated the entire traffic between North China and the countries beyond.

The Sung, who reigned from A. D. 960 to 1125, made Singan their first capital. It has been besieged, destroyed and rebuilt.

Lemon Market in China. I know a rancher who is engaged all these days in shipping lemons to China, says a writer in the Los Angeles Times.

He Was a Union Man. "Lady," said Tattered Toby, reproachfully, "you do me great injustice when you speak of me as a tramp."

A Misanthrope. Bowersy Staggerer—When a fellow's down everybody tries to shove him under!

Mell—Huh! You talk like somebody'd been offering you the presidency.—Puck.

WIT AND WISDOM.

Woman is a commandment that man can't guess, but he is unwilling to give her up.—Chicago Daily News.

The Impossible He.—Hewitt—"I advertised to-day for an office boy who couldn't whistle." Jewett—"You don't expect to get any answers, do you?"

"Curious isn't it?" "What?" "A man's handwriting is never so bad that his name can't be read when signed to a check."—Philadelphia North American.

An Atomsion girl who several years ago had a startled fawn look in her eyes has cultivated the look to such an extent that she now looks like a scared rabbit.—Aitchison Globe.

"Have you read my new book?" asked the author of his friend. "No," was the reply; "I have been quite ill, and the doctor has warned me to be careful!"—Atlanta Constitution.

Stub—"You say he is very sensitive about being called awkward?" Penn—"Yes; when he accidentally gashed himself with a razor he tried to make people believe he had attempted suicide."—Philadelphia Record.

Miss Streeter—"I should think it would be horrid standing before the counter all day." Miss Kaabkaller—"Not nearly so bad as standing in front of it for only a little while.

There are no bargain crowds on my side, you know."—Boston Transcript.

Willie—Pa, I've got to write a composition on "The Stage," and I'm afraid I'm using the phrase "theatrical profession" too often. Isn't there something just as good that means the same thing as profession?" Pa—"Yes, indeed, and even better. "Walk in life," is more expressive."—Philadelphia Press.

OUR BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

Gets Information on Everything, from Building Log Schoolhouses to Eskimo Translations.

The United States bureau of education was originally established to collect information concerning the schools and school systems of the different states and of Europe, and to make it accessible and of use to all the people of this country.

The bureau printed and distributed thousands of reports of these discussions. Last year was published the early history of the kindergarten in St. Louis, the first city in America that introduced kindergartens.

Palisades are principally employed in the defense of ditches in front of large earthworks and are formed by driving stout, pointed stakes into the bottom of the ditch, the stakes being further secured by longitudinal beams called "ribbands," so that when the attackers leap into the ditch they run every chance of being impaled.

Short List of Elderly Brides. King Alexander of Servia's marriage to Mme. Draga Maschina is by no means a sporadic case of young men marrying elderly ladies.

Secrets Known to the Chinese. In the making of confectionery it is said the Chinese possess secrets that Europeans would like to get hold of.

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HINDER AN ARMY'S MARCH.

Obstacles That Are Thrown in the Way of an Invading Military Force.

The use of obstacles in warfare is as old as war itself, and between the turf-covered holes and castles of Bruce at Bannockburn and the modern "military pits" and "crowfoot" there is little difference, says Pearson's Magazine.

The obstacle which best fulfills the required conditions and which has practically only one drawback is "wire entanglement."

It does not afford cover to the enemy should he gain possession of it. It is difficult to remove or surmount, and special tools, such as cutting and nippera, are required for its destruction.

It is difficult to see, and if exposed to artillery fire cannot be set alight. On the other hand, it is an obstacle to a counter attack and in bulk rather cumbersome to transport from one place to another.

"Wire entanglement" may be either "high" or "low." In the "high" variety stout stakes are driven into the ground in rows about six feet apart, about four feet being left above ground; the wire is then taken diagonally from the top of one stake to the bottom of another, and afterward horizontally between the stakes, the whole forming a network very difficult to get through.

In the "low wire entanglement" the stakes are only 18 inches above ground and the wire is stretched diagonally and horizontally between the heads of the stakes.

"Low wire entanglement" is more easily concealed than "high," and also takes a shorter time to erect, but it is not so much of an obstacle and large masses of men soon trample it down.

"Abatis" is a favorite and effective form of obstacle, and its use depends only on the number of trees available. It may be formed either by cutting off the limbs of trees and picketing them to the ground where they are wanted, having pointed out and sharpened the branches; or, especially when the edge of the wood is being held, by half cutting through trees—

young ones for preference, as they do not catch fire so easily—binding them over in the direction of the enemy and interlacing with ropes.

"Military pits" have rather gone out of use nowadays, but consist, as their name implies, of V-shaped pits from 18 inches to three feet deep, with a breadth at the top of from two to three feet.

The pits are arranged in rows, checkerwise, and are usually covered with a thin layer of turf or brushwood, while sharp-pointed stakes are driven into them. They are useful against cavalry, but are hardly likely to repay the time and labor involved in their construction, and, if captured by the enemy, are easily converted into intrenchments for his use.

"Crowfoot" may be practically obsolete now, but may be mentioned as a relic of former days. "Crowfoot" are made of four spikes welded together and arranged in such a manner that whichever way they are thrown one spike will always be uppermost.

They are useful against cavalry, but, on account of their bulk and weight, would rarely be carried by a modern army.

We now come to an essentially Gallic obstacle, "chevaux-de-frise," which was largely employed during the street fighting of the French revolution. A section of "chevaux-de-frise" consists of a length (generally six feet) of iron piping, which is pierced with holes; through these holes pointed iron rods are passed, crossing one another so as to form a double row of spikes at the top, and at the same time to act as legs for the section to stand on.

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COSLY PAPER WEIGHTS.

Small Bronze Dogs or Lions for This Purpose Are Very Costly Articles.

"Of all the furnishings of the writing desk, none has received more attention than the paper weight and none is more expensive," said the clerk in the stationery department of a large jewelry store, relates the New York Sun.

"Those inesthetic people who hold down their papers with an ink bottle or a five-cent metal knob can never realize the thrill of genuine delight that comes to the fastidious writer who utilizes expensive little brass dogs and such things in place."

To one of this latter class it is a pleasure to open the window one in a while and let the wind scatter loose leaves seventeen ways for Sunday, just to be able to have the satisfaction of clapping down a high-priced dog in the midst of the disorder and saying, triumphantly: "There, now. Stay there, will you?"

There are cases where a proceeding of this kind can produce as high as \$50 worth of satisfaction. It all depends, of course, upon the value of the dog or whatever other animal or product of nature is reproduced in the paper weight.

Styles in paper weights are as varied as the tastes and financial resources of writers. The average business man uses a weight made of a little bar of glass which costs anywhere from five cents to one dollar, according to the solidity and detail in workmanship.

Most of the weights here come in silver and bronze and range in value from \$5 to \$75. Bronze is most expensive. It is a funny thing, but nothing stands so high in favor for a paper weight as a bronze dog or lion. Perhaps this is because the tail and head of these animals form such handy projections for the fingers to close over when the writer reaches out in a hurry for something to clap down on flying papers.

But it is not to be inferred from the foregoing remark that these two specimens of the animal kingdom monopolize the paper weight market to the exclusion of other birds and beasts. All prominent representatives of the fauna and flora of the earth are reproduced in bronze and are made to subserv the utilitarian purpose of holding down papers.

The workmanship on some of these paper weights is exceedingly fine, and that alone brings the price up to an astonishing figure. That is one reason lions come so high—there is an opportunity to put so much work on them. Here are two miniature lions, one couchant, the other rampant, which retail at \$75 each. Aren't they fine?"

The visitor gazed upon the lionine aspect of the rigid little beasts with immeasurable respect.

"But do you mean to say that people really buy such expensive things?" she asked.

"Sure," said the clerk. "We don't keep them here for fun."

VACCINE FOR CATTLE. Discovery and Application of a Prevention of That Dreaded Disease Known as Blackleg.

The most important recent achievement by the bureau of animal industry is the discovery and application of a prevention for that dreaded disease of cattle known as blackleg. This malady in some states of the union destroys more cattle than all other causes combined: Texas, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado and the Dakotas suffer very severely. In fact, over a large part of the beef-raising regions there is a loss of from ten to twenty per cent. of yearling stock annually through this complaint. It appears suddenly in the shape of a black swelling, usually on the hind quarter, and is invariably fatal, says the Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post.

Having ascertained some time ago that the disease was caused by a bacterium, the bureau set to work to prepare a vaccine which is obtained from animals that have died of the complaint. Four years ago 50,000 doses of the stuff were sent out by way of experiment, and the results obtained were so remarkable that 350,000 doses were distributed in the following year in response to requests. In the third year 500,000 doses were given away, and in 1900 over 1,000,000 will be sent out.

How effective the vaccination is as a preventive of the malady may be judged from the statement, as made by cattlemen, that it has reduced their losses by blackleg to less than one-half of one per cent. The vaccine is furnished to infected ranges free of charge, and anybody may obtain it by addressing an application to Dr. D. E. Salmon, of the department of agriculture. Preference is given to applications made out on regular blanks, which may be gotten by anybody who asks for them.

Blackleg is one of the most widespread of cattle diseases; it is even suspected that a malady which often causes great loss among the reindeer herds of Lapland, Siberia and northern Russia is in reality this same complaint.

An Adirondack Volcano. Mount Marcy, the highest mountain in the Adirondacks, is very uneasy, with volcanic tendency. This mountain is one of the curiosities of the Adirondack section and it is said to be the first mountain in the world to have received the cooling breeze after the chaos period, and to this fact is attributed the continued salubrity of the air and general healthfulness of the Adirondack mountains.—N. Y. Sun.

Mostly Crust. The remarks of a crusty old bachelor are apt to be rather tart.—Chicago Daily News.

BEGGAR ACTOR WON A COIN.

Man Who Claimed to Have Been with McCullough Played Touching Role.

"Madam, can you contribute toward the purchase of a breakfast for one who has been less fortunate than yourself?"

There was a ring of broken pride in the voice that told of better days, and awakened interest enough to stop a busy little woman hurrying down Michigan avenue in her downtown business in the early morning, says the Chicago Inter Ocean.

The morning was very warm, yet the speaker was wrapped in a faded coat, half muffled and half ulster, which graced an athletic figure that once might have trodden the boards. To halt in her quick pace down town was something unusual for the woman, but the dissipated face, with the gray, shaggy head, appealed to her, and she asked wonderingly:

"What has caused your bad luck?" "It happened, madam," the man responded, "that the world went hard with me, among other things. I know all the stages in the descent of man, madam, and, in fact, I know the stage itself. Things were different when I played with McCullough in the '70s." He sighed as he leaned gracefully against one of the foundation pillars of the Calumet Club building, and let his eyes wander over the ruins of the burned church opposite.

The woman was compelled to admire the beggar, whose figure was as majestic as McCullough's own, and who belonged, it was evident, to the same artistic profession.

"But what brought you to this condition?" she asked, breaking in upon his abstraction as she saw a far-off look in his eyes that might have belonged to McCullough in Bloomingdale.

"Oh, I found the current too swift for me. When I got into it I couldn't get out. When a man gets to going downward," he went on, addressing the charred walls, not the woman—"when a man gets to going downward, nothing can stop him—unless it is a woman—and—and the woman died! I should have been a different man if it had not been for that. I left her in a grave back there in Donegal, and I would down with the current—left her in a grave in Donegal," he repeated, forgetting his listener, forgetting his hunger, as he drew his old cloak around his once proud form and walked away, and the soft morning breeze brought back the words, "a grave in Donegal."

The woman called to him, but he did not heed her, and then she ran after him, and put a coin in his hand for the sake of a heart gone to dust in a grave in Donegal.

When she had parted with her money she walked on reflecting that it might be only a clever bit of acting after all. "And," she finished aloud, "women are the most gullible creatures on earth!"

INVOKED SPIRITUAL HELP. College Students Consult Mediums to Get Aid in Their Coming Examinations.

Here's a new idea of students wrestling with their "exams." Just call up a medium and learn what the questions are to be.

The extreme accuracy of the work of some of the candidates at the final examination held in the gymnasium in Kampen, Holland, aroused the suspicion of the examiners, says the New York Press. Inquiries were made, which brought to light the curious story:

At a whist party, where several of the students were present, the suggestion was made to hold a spiritualistic seance, and further to ask through the medium of the table dance what work would be set at the examination. This was done and the table dance responded somewhat ambiguously, giving first Thucydides, liber 7, caput 75, and later on liber 5, caput 14.

Some of the students present superstitiously prepared these portions of Thucydides, and when the examination took place they were gratefully surprised to find that the first-mentioned portion was actually given as part of their work.

Strange to relate, the examination paper contained a mistake, namely, the omission of the word "elder," but the students, who had learned their parts by heart, not noticing the omission, translated the text in full, supplying in their translation the missing word. Comparison later on by the examiners led to the discovery of this fact, and hence their suspicions were aroused.

The students were interrogated. They stated their case and mentioned that they had prepared the two portions mentioned by the table dance among their other work, although they could not then remember what the second portion was, which had been so indicated to them. It was therefore decided to set them a fresh paper. But, stranger than even, when they got their second paper they found it was the portion from book five, which the table had also given.

Flowers Tell Married State. The married and unmarried women of the United States of Colombia, South America, are designated by the manner in which they wear flowers in their hair, the senoras wearing them on the right side and the señoritas on the left.—N. Y. Sun.

Woman and the Map. He—Another ambiguous cablegram from Shanghai. She—Shanghai? Oh, yes; that's where all those funny-looking, long-legged chickens come from.—Indianapolis Journal.

Helping Him Out. "When was Louis and a reded, dad?" "Oh? Seeded? Why, I 'pose it all depends on what they expect to grow. Don't ask me no more such fool questions."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

GETTING INTO MANILA.

Voluntaneous Information Is Required of All Who Are Permitted to Enter the City.

It was easier for that man to pass through the eye of a needle than to enter the gates of Heaven, so said the Teacher of old, and a more modern teacher has arisen to ordain the same difficulty as regards entry into Manila. Why? Is this city a much-to-be-dreaded paradise? Surely those who have had much experience of it will say "No!" (with a capital N). And yet, before one can enter here, one has to write a perfect and complete little history of one's self, authenticate it and hand it over to the special department which holds the key of Manila.

Upon embarking on board a steamer at Hong-Kong bound for Manila one is handed a large sheet of paper, and on this paper is an array of questions, all relating to the would-be voyager's most private and personal concerns—an array fit to frighten the timid traveler and cause him to change his mind as to the destination of his journeyings. First in order, of course, is the column for the full name—half the name or the initials will do, says the Cleveland Plain Dealer. A stern fate decrees a truthful statement of your age. No giddy young thing of 49 is allowed to pervert the truth and drop any of her years. She must not figure on this document as "23 years and seven months." "Sex" is the next question and John Thomas Smith must be careful to announce that he is not "feminine," even though he may possibly be effeminate! Whether you run in single or double harness must next be confessed to or woe betide the prevaricator. Occupation, whether able to read or write, nationality, last residence, passport for landing and final destination in the Philippines are some of the further questions to be asked and then, to prove that the intending traveler is no would-be stowaway, he must state the facts of his possession or otherwise of ticket to his destination, and further, more be or she must even say whether the ticket was purchased with his or her own or other people's money. Then the condition of one's finances must be declared and the actual sum of money constituting one's worldly possessions, and "if 30 or less" how much cash one has so that if one has "30" one must be very careful not to under or over estimate the amount.

Is the immigrant going to join a relative?—that relative's name and address must be given. If he has ever before been in the Philippines, whether he goes to work, under contract or otherwise, are vital questions to be truthfully answered.

Whether he has ever been in prison, almshouse or lived on charity, probe deeply into his most intimately private affairs. For, though he might never have been in prison, the truth-telling traveler might feel that he should say if he has not he ought to have been, while the answer "Not yet!" to the question whether he is a polygamist won't pass.

Finally, the condition of his health must be stated—his mental as well as physical—and if he tells the truth when he arrives at this stage of the self-examination he will be very apt to say, "bordering on insanity." And then, to close up, he must state whether he is crippled or deformed. If we have only the \$30, made so much a point of, he may be mentioned as crippled financially, and by the time he gets through he will in all probability conclude that there are other green fields and pastures new and direct his footsteps toward them.

BOERS THEIR OWN GUNNERS. Don't Hire European Experts—Krugers Look Into the Future.

"I wish to correct the impression that generally prevails as to the presence here of foreign experts," writes Allen Sangree, in Ainslie's. "No greater mistake is current than this. The Transvaal artillery, which is supposed to be managed by Russian and German gunners, is really in the hands of young Boers, and the engineering feats that have been accomplished must be credited to the Transvaal farmer. He it is who builds pontoons out of railroad ties, hauls a 12-ton cannon up a mountain and executes 'damage with artillery.' To belong to the latter one must be a burgher, and nearly every gun to-day in the Boer forces is sighted by hands between 17 and 21 years old. The foreign attaches will all testify to this, and, furthermore, bear me out in saying that better marksmanship with big guns is not to be seen than behind the Boer parapets.

"In hiding good-by to Mr. Kruger. I asked him if he and his people would accept an asylum in America, to which he replied that it was impossible. 'We are a peculiar people,' he said, 'and if God wills that we lose our independence then it is better we should all pass away. Whenever a Boer would live he must ever brood over his thoughts. The women will never forget that their husbands died at the English hands; the children will grow up to hate the conqueror, and wherever is such bitterness there could no happiness be. No, it is better that we die, for then each burgher can say to himself: 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth I leave it up to me a crown of righteousness.'"

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