

THREE ROUTES TO PEKIN.

Difficulties With Which the Allied Forces Are Contending on Their March on the Chinese Capital.

There is no other eighty miles in the world today which is attracting so much attention as the eighty miles of space between Tientsin and Pekin, and it is the problem of transportation and travel over this eighty miles that is engrossing the experts of Europe, America and Japan. Hannibal and Napoleon crossed the Alps, but I doubt if that was a feat that required better engineering or more endurance than would be required to transport an army from Tientsin to Pekin during the months of July and August and a part of September. Winter's cold stimulates to greater exertion; summer's heat only enervates. Climbing mountains in winter fills men's blood with fire; wading through mud and water and miasmatic swamps in the heat of summer fills men's blood with malaria and snaps away their lives. Food can be kept for a whole army in the cold of the Alps, but it soon spoils on an August day in the heat of a Chinese plain.

The trip from Tientsin to Pekin under ordinary circumstances may be made in three ways; first, by boat; second by dirt road; third by railroad, and as we have made the trip in all three ways, and at all seasons of the year, a description of how we made it may not prove uninteresting.

An American in Pekin who wishes to be married must either import the United States Consul from Tientsin or himself go to Tientsin to be married. We chose the latter method and started from Tungchou on a bright day in the early part of June. It was in the evening when we weighed anchor, which we did by unhooking the anchor from the shore, the women of the party in one boat and the men in another. The wind was not quite fair and so our boatmen concluded to row rather than hoist the sails. We travelled until about 10 o'clock when we dropped anchor by hooking ourselves to the bank out in the open country. The next morning the wind was blowing so strong as to make it almost impossible to travel, but we insisted upon moving and offered extra money for extra work. About 10 o'clock, however, the wind was so strong as to make it impossible for us to round a particularly sharp curve, and we were blown against the bank, where we remained three days and nights, the wind blowing a gale and the air filled with clouds and dust so that we could not see a distance of a hundred feet. We shut our boat up tight and concluded to wait for the storm to pass over. All day it blew and the boats being full of cracks and holes the dust and dirt sifted in on us from every side. We went to bed, and in the morning when we woke we could not open our eyes, the eyelids being glued together with mud. I cannot tell how my wife looked, but I know I was the most unattractive bridegroom that ever looked into a mirror. We arrived at Tientsin, however, after four days and were properly married in the presence of the Consul.

We went to Corea on our wedding trip, landed their first troops. We remained at Chemulpo two weeks and then went to Seoul, where he stayed two weeks, when we were asked to leave by the secretary of the legation, the present Minister, Dr. Allen. We left there at sunset, and at 5 o'clock the next morning the Japanese took the Korean King prisoner. We took passage on a river boat which was so crowded that we had nowhere to sleep but upon the hurricane deck, and when we arrived at Chemulpo we discovered that the steamers had all been taken off to be used as transports so that we could not return to Tientsin.

After two weeks, Capt. Lodgers of H. M. S. Archer offered to take us to Chefoo, and after two weeks here we returned to Tientsin.

Now came the trip back to Pekin. We hired a boat and started about 3 o'clock in the afternoon with a fair wind. We pushed or pulled ourselves with boathooks up through the maze of barges and boats until we had passed through the second bridge of boats, when we hoisted our sail and started on what promised to be the first pleasant sail of our honeymoon. Soon we discovered that the whole country was flooded, and just after we passed the native city of Tientsin the boatmen left the river course and turned off on a branch which had formed a deep stream in an old roadbed. The Chinese have a saying that 'an old road will become a river and an old woman a mother-in-law,' and we found the first half of the proverb to be literally true.

After passing away from the main bed of the river for a little distance we found the whole country was flooded, and it was not long until we were sailing through a corn-

field. As the sun went down in the west the moon came up in the east, and he continued to sail, very much on faith, for we had no compass, until nearly midnight, when we dropped anchor, still in a cornfield. The boatmen went to bed, my wife went into the cabin and I stripped and plunged into the water, the first and only time I have ever taken a swim in a cornfield.

The next morning the wind continued fair and we continued our sail, the water gradually becoming shallower as we neared Tungchou, and we confined ourselves to our old roadbed.

On the third day out I saw what struck me at the time as a rather remarkable sight. An old man and his son had been out in a boat trying to harvest some of their corn and were on their way home with a boatload. They came floating in from a side road, and as they came into our larger road stream, the old man with a rope around his body, plunged into the stream and swam across, towing the boat after him, and when he got to the opposite side, he used the rope to pull his boat up the stream. When we entered the main bed of the Peiho River we were within about twelve miles of Tungchou; in other words, we had sailed across lots about sixty-eight miles, or following the course of the river, 108 miles, for by the river it is 120 miles from Tientsin to Tungchou.

It is always necessary for people living in Pekin to get an annual shipment of stores from San Francisco, as canned foods cannot be got in Pekin except at greatly advanced prices, and as our stores were at Tientsin we had taken them with us to Tungchou. When we arrived here, however, we discovered that because of the bad roads and the Chinese Japanese War, carts and even wheelbarrow men were asking outrageous prices, and so we left our 'boy' with the stores on the boat and we sent a man from Pekin to get them, agreeing with him for so much a hundredweight. Without going into a detailed account of all the delays, difficulties and aggregations, we will only state that it took that man two weeks to transport our few stores—about three wheelbarrow loads—from Tungchou to Pekin, a distance of fifteen miles. This trip cost us \$30 and four days' time, and it is this kind of travel that the Boxers and the conservative Chinese are fighting for at the present time.

After such a description it is unnecessary to comment on the difficulties that will confront a European or American General who undertakes to transport an army from Tientsin to Pekin during the months of July and August or part of September. In the first place he is without boats. In the second place he is without men to drag, push, row or sail his boats if he had them, and in the third place he has a contending army to encounter who could harass him on every hand and as a last resort could strand his boats—if he had them—high, but not dry, in the mud and sediment of some unfriendly corn field or malarial swamp, and the redcoat and blue jacket, or Tommy Atkins and Billy Blue, would be left to extricate themselves from their dilemma in disgrace and defeat.

The Chinese have a saying that 'men may travel by dirt road or by water road, but the water road is much the preferable.' If what we have just described is the best method of travel in China one can imagine the less desirable methods.

One of the Chinese Ministers in Washington a few years ago in speaking of the various methods of travel said: 'Yes, your floating palaces and Pullman cars are all right for rapid transit, but for real solid comfort give me a Pekin cart.'

The Pekin cart is like a large Saratoga trunk on two wheels. The shafts extend out behind a foot and a half and form a platform on which to strap one's baggage. As the mule trots the cart has a rocking motion backward and forward similar to the motion one gets in riding a camel. The cart is without springs and the wheels are made sufficiently strong to carry the weight if they are without tires. The tires are put on in sections eighteen inches in length and are only to keep the wheels from being worn out on the ground. Add to this the fact that the Chinese never work on the roads, but that a road wherever the carts happen to drive, and you get some idea of the solid comfort of a Chinese cart. The passenger is bumped up and down until he wishes his brain were resting upon a patent air-cushion; he is bumped backward and forward and from side to side until it is not careful, his head will be pounded into a jelly or

covered over with scars as though it had come in contact with John L. Somebody's strong right arm. The only way to sit in such a cart is to sit tailor fashion, in which case your feet go to sleep and your legs become cramped. You are compelled to arise at 3 o'clock in the morning and travel till about 9 or 10 without breakfast and then get your breakfast in a Chinese Inn. Your bed at night in this Chinese inn is brick, and when you arise in the morning after having had mosquitoes buzzing about your ears all night, you are liable to wrap in your bedding three kinds of insects which I will not take the liberty of naming further than to say that one is an acrobat, the other goes with the bed and the third with the beggar.

For three days you must bump over these roads breathing in the clouds of alkali dust which is kicked up by your two mules or perhaps by the mules of a cart or two just ahead of you, so that when you come into the inn you are covered from head to foot with dust in a way that would make a coal digger as compared with you a respectable looking guest.

Still another method of travelling by dirt road is by mule-litter. The mule-litter is a sort of sedan chair swung between two mules, one before and the other behind. If you are not in a hurry and not affected by a sickness it may seem to you that this method is better than the cart especially if you have good mules. If your mules however are frisky, one or the other is liable at any moment to jump out from underneath his burden and disappear across a grain field, wagging his tail at the passenger he has just left and your compelled to wait until your driver is able to recapture and reharass your snorting steed. It will be well for you if you do not come down in anything worse than dust. You are just as liable to come down in the mud or in one of the shallow stream over which you must cross as on terra firma, for fording small streams is one of the peculiar antipathies of the Chinese pack and litter mule.

It should be remembered that one or the other of two conditions exist on a Chinese road. Either it is an inch or two deep with dust or a foot or more deep with mud. The former is the condition of the road between Tientsin and Pekin a good part of nine months and the latter the larger part of the other three. These other three months are July, August and September. As I have indicated in our boat trip, you may look out over the country as far as the eye can reach and you see nothing but water unless it be here and there a village of mud huts built upon some natural or artificial knoll to and from which the inhabitants are compelled to go in boats until the waters subside, and it is a condition of this kind in Shantung to which the present uprising is more or less due.

There are two other methods of making the trip from Tientsin to Pekin by dirt road. The one is by horse, mule or donkey back, and the other is afoot. I have known members of our university in Pekin who, when going from the city to the western hills on horseback, had to dismount, strip and tie their clothing to their horses' heads and swim with their horses across the roads, which had turned into rivers.

In such condition of affairs it is easy to understand what would be the difficulties of making a trip to Pekin in the heat of August by soldiers who are unaccustomed to a climate in which a drenching rain comes up in half an hour and one's shoes are covered with a green mould over night, when they are compelled to carry with them their bedding and drag after them all the accoutrements of an army and be prepared to resist the attacks of a hostile army strongly entrenched and accustomed to all the surrounding conditions. Those who criticise the allied troops for saying it is impossible to go to Pekin before September do not know the existing conditions in north China.

The third method of going to Pekin from Tientsin is by railroad. By rail we are able to make the trip in from three to four hours with all the comforts attached to railroad travelling. Second class the fare is 75 cents, first class twice that amount, and in the postal car, which corresponds to our parlor or sleeping cars, the fare is \$2.75. And yet this is the method the conservative Chinese are fighting, as compared with the other two I have just named. Their practice, however, is better than their theory, for when they wish to go from one place to the other they go by train and not by boat or cart, and the railroad as a consequence, in spite of all the cheating done, has been paying some 20 to 30 per cent. on the investment. Of course, under the present conditions, it is unnecessary to speak of this as one of the available methods, for the railroad is more or less destroyed and probably could not be used until peace is restored and the road repaired. It is folly to talk about the Chinese having burned the large bridge at

Yangtsun, because it is made of iron and could not be burned. A few of the crossings might be burned, but otherwise it is fireproof. The smaller bridges over small streams and places where streams are allowed to pass under the railroad during the rainy season might easily be burned if the Chinese could get other fuel to pile up around them. But this is not an easy matter in a country where one may walk miles without finding a piece of wood large enough for a walking stick. However, it is certain that part of the railroad and some of the bridges are destroyed, and that when the allies wish to go to Pekin they will have to go by dirt road, the worst of bad methods of travel in China.

DEFENDS THE WAR HOSPITALS.

Dr. Ryerson flatly contradicts Rudyard Kipling's testimony at the inquiry.

Rudyard Kipling's testimony before the London Commission of Inquiry into the management of the South African hospitals is flatly contradicted by Surgeon Colonel G. Sterling Ryerson of Toronto, who was both British and Canadian Red Cross Societies' commissioner with Lord Roberts' headquarters. Kipling declared that he had to smuggle in medicines surreptitiously to the hospitals. Ryerson says there is nothing to show that they ever reached the doctors through the back door and asserts that there was no reason for taking them in by the back way. Moreover, when at Bloemfontein, Kipling appeared quite satisfied with what he had seen. He had complained of the smells at the Woodstock hospital, though he had never entered it.

Dr. Ryerson, who has just returned to Canada by the steamer Corinthian, declares that all the accusations of hospital mismanagement are virtually unfounded. He says that Mr. Burdett-Coutts never made any complaint to him in South Africa, though he was well aware of the fact that he, the doctor, had any amount of money and stores at his disposal.

The commissioner insists strongly upon the manifold injustice of the statement by Mr. Treves to the effect that the English women of rank and fortune at the scene of the conflict were in the way of the doctors and a nuisance to the hospital authorities. Apart from a small coterie of society people at Cape Town, he states that the English women at the front were of the greatest assistance to the authorities. Thus Lady Roberts and her daughters have equipped and are managing a private hospital of their own for the sick and wounded, which has been almost entirely furnished by contributions sent to South Africa from Montreal. Mrs. Bagot, formerly of Ottawa and her sister, Mrs. Murray Guthrie, rose daily at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning to serve coffee at a stall which they kept for the purpose at Bloemfontein station for the use of the sick and wounded passing down from the front, and of the troops going forward.

Dr. Ryerson saw a great many of the Boer sick and wounded and speaks in warm terms of admiration of their bravery and endurance. He says that they are extremely patient under pain and grateful for attendance.

Only a Gentle Hint.

He was an angular man, with grey ear-whiskers. He gave up his seat in the crowded tram-car with an alacrity which spoke well for the cheerfulness of his disposition. The lady who took the proffered seat was stout and hearty. She slipped into the vacant place without a word. The angular man looked at her thoughtfully; then he stooped over and said:—

'I had an uncle, ma'am, that had just the same affliction.'

'Sir!' said the stout lady, with an insulted toss of her head.

'Yes,' continued the angular man; 'he couldn't pronounce any word beginning with 'th' to save his blessed neck. That's right. He'd stutter and stammer, and the best he could do would be to give it the sound of 's.' It was a dreadful affliction. His oldest son's name was Theophilus, but he always called him 'Sophilus.' Had it long, ma'am?'

The stout lady was dark red from vexation. 'You are insulting,' she snorted.

'Well, I don't wonder you hate to have anybody refer to it,' said the angular man, with great cheerfulness. 'But I couldn't help noticing it when you took my seat, and weren't able to say "Thank you." I wouldn't have minded in the least if you'd said "Sank you." Oh, do you get off here? Good-day, ma'am. Never mind the thanks.' And the stout lady flounced down the street to take the next tram.

Cigarette Smoking.

Is said to cause shortness of breath. If this is so, the remedy is, leave them off. But if the short breath comes from a cold or Asthma, the remedy is Adamson's Botanic Cough Balsam. 25c. all Druggists.

Briton—Don't be so rabid in disliking us: your country was settled by the English.

American—Yes; but look how you improved after you got here!

FLASHES OF FUN.

Snodgrass: 'The world has a place for everybody.'

Micawber: 'Yes; the only trouble is, there's generally somebody else in it.'

Her Father: 'No, young man, my daughter can never be yours.'

Her Adorer: 'My dear sir, I don't want her to be my daughter—I want her to be my wife.'

'Tommy,' said the teacher, 'what is meant by nutritious food?'

'Something to eat that ain't got no taste to it,' replied Tommy.

A modern novel has the following passage: 'With one hand he held the beautiful golden head above the chilling wave, and with the other called loudly for assistance.'

Mrs. Slimdiet: 'You don't seem to like rice very well, Mr. Peck.'

Henry Peck: 'It is associated with one of the most distressing mistakes I ever was guilty of.'

'Can a lady or gentleman in the audience lend me a five pound note?' asked the professor of magic.

'On vot?' eagerly shouted the pawnbroker in the front row.

Lawyer: 'Where did he kiss you?'

Pretty Plaintiff: 'On the mouth, sir.'

Lawyer: 'No, no! you don't understand. I mean where were you?'

Plaintiff (blushing): 'In his arms, sir.'

He: 'There'll be a great struggle tomorrow at the football match.'

She (member of the Peace Crusade): 'Oh, dear! Don't you think, George, that they could be persuaded to settle it by arbitration?'

Two scavengers were quarrelling as to their respective working abilities, when one, meaning to silence his mate, said, 'Well, Bill, you can sweep the middle of the street, but you can't do an ornamental piece of work, like sweeping around a lamp-post.'

Lady (to deaf butcher): 'Well, Mr. Smallbones, how do you find yourself today?'

Smallbones: 'Well, I'm pretty well used up, mum. Every rib's gone, they've almost torn me to pieces for my shoulders, and I never had such a run on my legs.'

First Office Boy (after waiting two hours for a bite): 'I wish these fish would hurry up and bite; I've got a letter to deliver in a hurry.'

Second Office Boy: 'Look here, Smithy; if youse don't stop worryin' over yer business affairs, an' bein' so attentive, youse'll get nervous prostration.'

A gentleman lately dismissed a clever but dishonest gardener. For the sake of his wife and family he gave him a character and this is how he worded it: 'I hereby certify that A. B. has been my gardener for over two years, and that during that time he got more out of my garden than any man I ever employed.'

Props: 'You've got to cut that great scene when you light your cigarette with a £1,000 note.'

David Garrick Keen Macready: 'And, why?'

Props: 'Because the tobacconist refuses to supply another smoke until you have settled his bill of 4s. 6d.'

Mrs. Chinner: 'Ernestine, my darling, do you expect Constant to night?'

Ernestine: 'Of course, mamma. Why do you inquire?'

Mrs. Chinner: 'If he asks you to marry him, tell him to come and speak to me.'

Ernestine: 'And if he doesn't ask me?'

Mrs. Chinner: 'Tell him I'm coming to speak to him.'

A certain wealthy man has a brother who is hard of hearing, while he himself is remarkable for his very prominent nose. One evening, dining at a friend's house, he found himself between two ladies who talked to him very loudly, much to his annoyance. Finally one of them shouted a commonplace remark, and then said in an ordinary tone to the other:—

'Did you ever see such a nose in your life?'

'Pardon me, ladies,' said the wealthy man, 'it is my brother who is deaf.'

Scene: St. Peter's Churchyard Time: Sunday Bells are being rung furiously. Old gentleman is joined on a seat by a curate.

Curate: 'Do you not find it very delightful listening to the music of the bells?'

Old Gentleman: 'Will you please speak louder?'

Curate (shouts): 'How divinely beautiful the bells sound on this glorious Sabbath morn.'

Old Gent: 'I can't hear you for those blessed bells.'