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CHINA—NEW AND OLD.

Mukden, China.

Editor Star and Herald:—The Emperor is dead! Long live the President! is the cry of the advanced thinkers of the once great Chinese Empire. When one looks back on the formation of our own great republic and thinks of the trials and vicissitudes our forefathers had to undergo they can get some idea of the situation confronting the people of awakening China. On every hand is evidence that two thousand years ago the Chinese were the progressive people of the far East, and when one reads of the achievements of the Chinese of that period, and comes face to face with their present condition, the query rises in our own minds as to when shall come the decay of our own land.

'Tis an old proverb, "You must advance or go back." There is no standing still, and to future generations of Americans must surely come a lower level of things if the history of other nations is any criterion.

The formation of a Republic by a people who for thousands of years have had monarchial form of government, covering a vast area and peopled by over four hundred millions, is a stupendous undertaking, and China will have much trouble in the fulfilment of her dream.

There are about fifty different dialects spoken in China, but the main division of opinion as to the wisdom of her present move seems to be divided by North and South China. China has been ruled for years by the Manchus and they are loath to let go and the masses of North China believe that the people are unfit for a republican form of government, believing that it is necessary to have a drastic, forceful government to rule her people. The South China or Cantonese people are the ones responsible for the revolution, and the first President Yohn, is a South China states-

man of great force and if rumor be true, an able statesman. Although one finds more evidence of the lack of progress on the surface in Canton and South China than in North China.

The city of Canton is a wonder spot among the segregated inhabitants of the world. It is just as it was 2000 years ago. The streets are but six to eight feet wide and to get about the city one must go on foot or be carried in sedan chairs by coolies under the care of a trusted guide, otherwise one would be completely lost in the maze of streets thronged with countless people.

On visiting every seaport, such as Hong Kong, Shanghai, etc., you are confronted by the wonderful foresight of the British Empire. Each is a great vantage point for commerce and when one stops to think that there is not a port of importance from Shanghai to Gibraltar that is not English, it is easy to understand how little England, producing practically nothing, has been in the fore-front as a commercial nation in the world's trade markets.

The formation of the Chinese Republic is a sort of amalgamation of the American and French Republic. They have a President, a Vice President, a House and a Senate. The House and Senate members are elected by the people and the President and Vice President by the House and Senate. Just now they are in Peking trying to organize, and are having many trouble in doing so. One evidence of their copying America is in the fact that they have had two or three fist fights on the floor of the House.

I personally believe it was a mistake for the United States not to participate in the Chinese loan instead of giving the five European powers all the leverage on the property that must come with the development over here. China is rich in resources and has fertile soil and from my point of view it is only fair that the future generations of the United States should share the profits as well as the burdens that come with the education and development of China. I believe the statistics will show that America makes more progress in the actual education and development wherever her great benevolent hand touches than any other nation.

I am writing you this letter from Mukden, a scene of one of the great sieges in the Japanese-Russian war, situated in the heart of fertile Manchuria. On every hand is evidence of Japanese progress. They have the railroad and are gradually tightening their hold on this portion of China until it will sooner or later, possibly at the cost of many lives, become a part of the Japanese Empire. On

every hand are Japanese soldiers playing war, and from all appearances it is their intention to some day stop playing.

One of the seven wonders of the world is the great Wall of China. This great snake of stone and masonry, climbing up like a huge dragon over lofty mountains for hundreds upon hundreds of miles, is certainly one of the great achievements of the ages, and as I stood upon it and marveled at its greatness and thought of the Chinese in their present condition there came to me the mournful thought, "How have the mighty fallen."

Peking, the capital city, is picturesque and beautiful. 'Tis here you see the Tibetan road which for thousands of years has been the road way to carry the products to and fro from China through Siberia to Tibet. On this great nature railroad is to be met conveyances of all kinds, the most picturesque of which are camel trains of from thirty to sixty camels, laden with the products of one country for the other.

If John Chinaman is anything he is a business man from the top of his head to the soles of his feet and you will have to get up before you go to bed to get the best of him. He is a great judge of values and when working for himself is tireless in his efforts. Apparently he has forgotten country for commercialism which is dangerous for any country.

We are working by easy stages to Harbin, Russia, where we take the Trans-Siberian Train DeLuxe for Moscow and St. Petersburg, a distance of about six thousand miles.

Siberia, once the exile ground of Russia, is fast developing into a wonderful empire in itself and I am looking forward to be disillusioned of my boyhood idea—Nihilist and Snow—if half the prospectus says is true.

It is a long road round Mother Earth and I give thanks each day for being carried safely nearer and nearer to the goal of all true American hearts—home.

Sincerely your friend,
FRANK L. SMITH.

NEW ROAD LAW.

Among the important laws passed at the late session of the legislature was what is known as the Tie good roads bill, officially known as house bill 843, and being "a bill to revise the law in relation to roads and bridges."

It purports to codify, revise and amend the present road laws and renews the present road law entirely, although the most of the provisions of the latter are embodied in the new law, generally, however, with considerable change and amendment.

The new law abolishes the present state highway commission and creates a state highway department, the officers to consist of three state highway commissioners, to be appointed by the governor; a chief state engineer, an assistant state engineer and necessary subordinate officers. The salaries of the state highway commissioners is \$3,500 each and their actual and necessary traveling expenses.

Among the uses and duties of the state highway commission are:

To have general supervision of the highways and bridges constructed, improved and maintained in whole or in part by the aid of state money.

To prescribe the duties of all persons employed in the state highway department and of the various county superintendents of highways.

To aid county superintendents of highways and town and district commissioners of highways in establishing grades and preparing suitable systems or drainage and advising them as to the construction, improvement and maintenance of highways and bridges.

Generally speaking, they are to be prepared to furnish advice to the road officers all over the state.

The chief state highway engineer and the assistant state highway engineer are required to be competent civil engineers and experienced and skillful in highway construction and bridges.

The engineers are to be generally subject to the orders of the commissioners and they may at all reasonable times be consulted by county, town and district road officers.

There is to be a county superintendent of highways in each county. The county board is to submit to the state highway commission a list of from three to five persons, residents of the county, and the commission determines which is the most fit by a competitive examination. The term of office of a county superintendent is to be six years and his salary is to be fixed by the county board, as is the case of the other county officers.

Among the duties of the county superintendent will be:

To prepare plans, specifications and estimates for all bridges to be built by the county subject to the approval of the state highway commission. To act for the county in the supervision, construction and maintenance of roads and bridges constructed by county aid.

To visit and inspect the highways and bridges in each town or district of his county at least once in each year and to advise and direct the highway commissioners as to the best methods of repair, maintenance and improvement of highways and bridges.

The county superintendent is to all intents and purposes the deputy of the state highway engineer.

The law provides a system of state aid in building roads and bridges. Roads so constructed are to be known as state aid roads.

Within thirty days after the passage of the law the county board is to prepare and forward to the state highway commission a map designating the roads in the county that shall come under the provisions of the state aid law. The highways to be designated are to be as nearly as possible those connecting with the principal cities and trading points in their counties.

The total mileage is not to exceed 20 per cent of the public road mileage of the county, not including the highways within the corporate limits of a city or village.

The state highway commission is to make the roads of adjoining counties to connect so as to make convenient through roads between cities and trading points of different counties. The legislature shall make from time to time appropriations for carrying out the provisions of the state aid law.

The state highway commission is required to allot each year to each county an amount that shall bear the same ratio to the total appropriations for that year that the total amount levied in each county for roads and bridges bears to the total amount levied in the state for the roads and bridges.

The county board is required to provide and appropriate an amount equal to the amount allotted out of the state fund. If it fails to provide for the county's share the state allotment will be forfeited and allotted to the to the counties.

The county board may initiate proceedings for the construction of a section of state aid road and provisions are made for directing the resolution to the state highway commission, which is to investigate and approve the proposed amendment.

The county board may submit to a vote of the people the question of issuing county bonds to raise money for highway purposes. Provision is made in the statute for the letting of contracts and supervising the construction of state aid roads by the county superintendent and state highway engineer.

The present system in regard to county and for building bridges is amended to conform to the new plan.

The county board may, if it is deemed expedient, build a bridge entirely at the county expense or at the joint expense of the county and town. The county superintendent is to prepare plans and specifications.

The present system of township maintenance of roads and control of roads not included in the state aid provisions is amended in several important particulars, but the main features of the system remain about the same. There are to be three commissioners of highways in each town, as at present, except that provision is made for abolishing the board of commissioners by vote of the people in any town and electing a single commissioner, who will have about the same powers as the highway commissioners where three are elected. The vote to adopt the single commissioner system is to be taken at a special election of the town called on the petition of not less than twenty-five of the legal voters.

The present system of district road tax paid in labor is abolished. The commissioners or single commissioners will determine the amount of road and bridge tax to be levied in each town, the rate not to exceed 61 cents on the \$100.

The town clerk is made clerk of the highway commissioners.

The supervisor of each town is made ex-officio treasurer of the road and bridge fund.

The salary of single highway commissioners is fixed by the board of supervisors and is not to exceed \$4 per day. Where three commissioners are retained they are to receive \$2 per day. The new law differs from the old in many minor particulars, but as before stated the general system remains about the same except as above shown.

THAT REMINDS US—

That a young man called on his girl the other night, and before the girl came down a small sister went and got on the fellow's lap. When the older sister put in an appearance she said, "Why, sister, aint you ashamed of yourself. Get right down." The little one replied, "Shant do it! I got here first." * * *

That a mother sent Willie to a neighbor's house with instructions to ask how old Mrs. G. was. When Willie came back his mother asked him what she said. "She says it's none of your business." That created some surprise and the mother asked Willie what he said: "I asked just what you said. How old is Mrs. G.?" Willie's mother will be a little more careful how she words her requests hereafter.

Schoolma'am—"Johnnie, can you tell me why the race is not always to the swift?"

Johnnie—"Yes'm, it's because sometimes their tires bust."

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