

THE EMPEROR'S ANCESTORS BURNED.

WHEREFORE THE RULER OF COREA ISSUES A REMARKABLE EDICT.

"The North China Daily News" recently printed the following and otherwise remarkable description of a fire in the palace of the Emperor of Corea at Seoul:

On Saturday night last the city of Seoul was illuminated by a huge blaze of fire from within the palace inclosure. The building sacred to the memory of ancestors, and containing the pictures and tablets of the founders of the illustrious dynasty, took fire, no one knows how, in the early hours of the morning. His Majesty, sans ceremony, was hustled out of his apartment into a redhot bath, just in time to see the tablets and benign faces of his ancestors disappear in a most horrible holocaust. Without waiting to tie on garters, arrange skirts or do up his hair, he fled from the inclosure, through the rear gateway, along the lane between the British Legation and the Customs compound, turned to the left and made for the Library Building, a host of eunuchs, dancing girls, sorcerers, fortune tellers, geomancers, grave vendors, exorcists, astrologers and medicine men fleeing hard after him. A most fearful disturbance took place in the Library Building. The shades of all the twenty-five dead kings of this dynasty had it out for once.

On the other hand, the uproar in the palace inclosure calmed down. Nothing but the crackling of flames was to be heard. In a few minutes the Japanese were on hand with their fire engine, and tapped gently on the garden gate—peace gate I mean. "What do you want?" said the guard. "We'll help you put out the fire and save the pictures," said the Japanese. "No, thanks," said the voice from within, "we're getting along very nicely here," or something to that effect; and the fire was left to work its will. When morning came there was an investigation, and it turned out that the Imperial storehouses had been looted by the guards and soldiers left in charge. Even the sacred sleeping chamber of His Majesty had not been violated. Several hundred arrests were made and a dire tussle is pending. While it goes on goods from the palace will be passed round for sale cheap, and the stealer and the buyer will rejoice together.

The Emperor has sent out a notice: "The pictures of my ancestors have been burned. I shall refuse to hear any music for a month, schools shall shut down and affairs of State may go to thunder; the question with me is my ancestors. New pictures must be made, many sacrifices offered and great attention given." It is a holiday for the geomancer. The matter of the Queen's grave has been already talked over, at a cost of 1,500,000 yen (these figures were given me by a trustworthy authority), but her picture was burned on Saturday night, so that the whole matter must be taken up from the beginning. There are rumors that the palace is now rendered unpropitious by the fire, and that another must be juggled for.

MONEY SAVED.

From The Louisville Times.

There's a good story told on a young fellow here noted for his closeness. He went to spend the night with a friend. During the entire night he betrayed much restlessness, which kept the host wide awake, and finally the slumberer betrayed signs of violent emotion. "He's going to have a nightmare," said the friend, "but he always grumbles so when you wake him up that I hate to disturb him." He waited a little longer, sitting up in bed staring at the miserable sleeper, and finally, becoming alarmed, he roused him. "The close young man sprang up in bed, glared wildly around and said: "Where am I? I don't see the storm."

"Why, here in my room," said the host, soothingly. "You remember you stayed all night with me. I beg your pardon for waking you up, but you carried on so I had to." "Beg my pardon?" gasped the guest. "I shall never be grateful enough to you. I dreamed I was out with Miss Bud, and a terrible storm came up, and my shoes were new, and I was just ordering a coupé for two when you roused me. Old boy, you have saved me a dollar."

And the host says he was actually afraid to go to sleep that night for fear the coupé would come.

RICH BOYS' CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS.

From The Syracuse News.

A street urchin crouching peering into the window of a toy shop one evening just before Christmas watching a prosperous father buying presents. Bigger and bigger the boy's eyes grew as the purchasing went on. Finally, when it was all over and the man left the store the lad sidled up to him and with great diffidence asked:

"Wuz all them things you bought fer one boy, mister?"

"Why, yes, certainly," said the man, patiently, as he turned away with his bundles under his arms.

The street boy's eyes grew bigger yet.

"Gee whiz!" he whispered under his breath. "Rich men's boys must wear big stockings!"

HIS MENTAL RESERVATION.

Washington correspondence of The Chicago Record.

The Judge of the United States Court in Porto Rico bears the musical name of Sulzbacher, and comes from New-Mexico, where he learned Spanish and became the friend of Senator Elkins, which accounts for his appointment. That Judge Sulzbacher is a diplomatist and a man of ready resources a little incident in his judicial career will prove. Before the policy of Congress and the Administration toward our new possessions was developed Judge Sulzbacher prematurely decided that the Constitution follows the flag. This judicial precedent might have troubled other people, but it gave him no concern whatever, because the first time any one questioned his decision he replied:

"It is true that I held that the Constitution follows the flag, but I did not say with what speed it does the following."

GENERAL CHAFFEE'S BLUNTNESS.

From The New-Orleans Times-Democrat.

"That letter in which General Chaffee 'called down' Field Marshal Count von Waldersee for German looting must have been an amusing document," said an ex-officer of volunteers. "Chaffee is a blunt, rugged old campaigner, who has spent the best part of his life fighting Indians and cussing mule whackers all over the wild and woolly West, and he knows no more about diplomatic blandishments than a Zulu witch doctor knows about modern bacteriology. His note to Von Waldersee was undoubtedly 'hot stuff,' and I can imagine the amazement of the polished and dignified German Field Marshal as he perused its contents. 'Gott in himmel!' he must have exclaimed, 'what kind of a wild man is dot, anyhow?' Chaffee was the idol of the rank and file throughout the operations in Cuba," continued the ex-volunteer, "and a good many quaint stories were circulated there illustrating this very phase of his character. One of them, which I recall on the spur of the moment is peculiarly apropos. During the engagement at El Caney Chaffee was in command of a brigade in Lawton's division, and on the morning of July 1, when the fighting began, he was saddled with 300 or 400 of our Cuban allies.

"As a matter of fact the native patriots were more of a nuisance than anything else, and Chaffee was perplexed to know what to do with the detachment. Some distance northeast of the town of El Caney and well out of the real zone of action there was a very small and dilapidated Spanish blockhouse, perched on a little ridge, and happening to notice it he told the Cuban colonel, who was an extremely pompous individual, to take his troops and capture the position, while the main



NOUVEAU RICHE—DON'T SING THOSE COMMON CRADLE SONGS TO MY CHILD—DON'T YOU KNOW ANY OPERAS?—(Meggendorfer Blätter.)

attack was in progress. There couldn't possibly have been over a dozen Spaniards in the blockhouse at the time, and the work of taking it was really child's play, but, instead of making a charge, the Cubans proceeded to deploy themselves about a mile and a half away and opened a long distance bombardment. If any of their bullets carried that far they certainly did no damage, and the Spaniards probably never knew they were being assaulted. During the heat of the general engagement the allies were forgotten, but early in the afternoon there was a lull in the action, and while Chaffee was consulting with some of his regimental officers a Cuban aid came rushing up and reported that the native division was out of ammunition. "My colonel desires that you send him immediately some cases of cartridges," he said, in conclusion. Chaffee looked at him with a sardonic grin. "I don't think you fellows had better burn any more cartridges," he said, slowly. "Those Spaniards might find out you were shooting at 'em, and if they did, they'd come over and kick your whole blankety blanked cowardly crowd all the way down to Matanzas. Tell your Colonel that with my compliments," he added. The aid turned purple and went away, boiling with indignation. I heard this story from an officer who was present, and he chuckled gleefully as he told it, for everybody had been cautioned to treat the Cubans with the greatest deference and had found it difficult to obey the order. Chaffee was probably animated by the same spirit of candor when he opened his now celebrated correspondence with Von Waldersee."

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL.

From The Youth's Companion.

A little New Zealand girl recently wrote to ask Mark Twain if his real name was Clemens. She knew better, she said, because Clemens was the man who sold patent medicine. She hoped not, for she liked the name of Mark. Why, Mark Antony was in the Bible!

Her letter delighted its recipient. "As Mark Antony has got into the Bible," Mr. Clemens characteristically remarked, in telling about it, "I am not without hopes myself."

NOT STRONG ENOUGH.

From The King.

At one of the clubs the other day two members were arguing about will power. The conceited man, who was in the habit of boring all present with his pointless tales, said that his will was stronger than his friends'. "You are wrong there," said the quiet man, "and I will prove it in this way: You go and stand in that corner, and I will will you to come out of it. You will against me, and I bet you that I will have you from that corner before I have commanded you a second time." The smart one took the bet and put himself in the corner. The quiet man said, in a commanding voice: "Come out of that corner!"



CORRECTED.

LADY TOURIST (doing the cathedrals of Scotland)—THIS IS GOTHIC, ISN'T IT, JOHN? JUVENILE VENDOR OF "GUIDES" (severely)—NO, MEM; THIS IS PRESBYTERIAN.—(Punch.)

The other grinned and shook his head. The q. m. sat down and looked at him steadily. Five minutes passed, and then the man of will said, with a sneer: "Hadm't you better give it up? I don't feel any influence at all, and I can't stand here all the evening."

"There is no hurry," said the q. m., "and I have a very comfortable seat. There is no time limit, except that you are to come out before I ask you twice, and, as I don't intend to ask you again until this day week, I think you will feel the influence before then." The smart one came out looking very foolish.

A MECHANICAL TRAIN ROBBER.

INCENTIVE PROJECT OF A SOUTHERN INVENTOR.

From The New-Orleans Times-Democrat.

"The successful methods employed by the late Mr. Barnes of Austin," said a New-Orleans inventor yesterday evening, "have suggested to me that machinery might be applied with great advantage to the train robbing industry."

"Machinery?" said a friend, in surprise. "Certainly!" replied the inventor. "Improved labor saving machinery. When you come to think about it, train robbing is one of the very few trades in which hand work is still exclusively employed. There have been no improvements. Dick Turpin held up a stage coach in exactly the same manner that Mr. Barnes held up a passenger train, and that gentleman's record exploit has satisfied me that there is absolutely no reason why a man should risk his own life in such an enterprise."

"How would you do it, then?" asked the friend. "By means of my patent Automatic Train Robber, which I hope to have out in time for the spring trade," said the inventor, calmly. "In general appearance it will resemble a hobo slightly under the influence of liquor, but I will costume it according to the taste of the purchaser. The motor power will be supplied by a storage battery concealed in the chest, and the mechanism will be controlled by a device something like a time lock, by which it can be set for any hour desired. A large pistol will be fastened in the right leg, and all the joints will be supplied with modern #11 bearings of the most approved type. I expect to sell the machine with a guarantee for five years. To operate it," continued the inventor, "it will only be necessary to set the dial at the proper point and then deposit the automaton on top of the tender of whatever train is selected. When a given time has elapsed, a simple clockwork arrangement will start the motor, and the machine will begin to move forward toward the engine. Upon reaching the cab, a phonographic cylinder in the head will exclaim in a loud voice: 'Stop the train and lead me to the mail car!' The engineer will of course obey, and at the mail car the phonograph will direct the clerks to place the registered pouches on the automaton's outstretched left arm. Then all that remains for the machine to do is to propel itself into the night in any predetermined direction. The owner will intercept it with a wagon at some convenient point, box it up and drive off. You see, it is beautifully simple, and with such an apparatus a man may engage in train robbery without endangering his health or exposing himself to inclement weather. I don't think I will sell the Automatic Train Robber outright," added the inventor, "but will lease it on a royalty, taking, say, 10 per cent of the proceeds. Let me know if you want one. Good night."

HE PAROLED THE COW.

From The Memphis Scimitar.

This morning Pound Officer Tait had occasion to rope in a fine Jersey cow which had escaped from her owner's lot and was roaming the streets at will.

This action evoked the following letter from the owner:

"Chief Richards—Old Friend: The pound man hauled my cow into court this morning for prowling. As it was her first offence, please have her let off with as light a fine as possible." G. W. DAVIS.

And underneath the letter the chief scribbled the following instruction to the pound man: "Release the old cow referred to on her own recognizance."

HOW HE WON THE MEN.

From The New-castle Chronicle.

At one period of his career Archdeacon Sinclair used to preach pretty often both at Wellington and at Chelsea barracks. One day a sergeant-major of the Coldstream Guards accosted him, and said how sorry he was they had not heard him preach for some time. The Archdeacon explained that he had not the pleasure of knowing the then chaplain at Chelsea.

"That's a pity," replied the soldier, "for the men like to hear you. They said"—and here the Archdeacon prepared himself for a graceful compliment—"you had a voice like a drill sergeant's."

MIXED UP.

From The New-York Weekly.

Mrs. Hardhead—I can always tell what kind of a wife a man has by his views on the woman question.

Stranger—I have all sorts of views.

Mrs. Hardhead—Then you are a Chicago man.

AN AMENDMENT.

From The Indianapolis Press.

"The tornado and the typhoon," said the professor, at the opening of his lecture, "may be called brothers." "Wouldn't sisters be the better word?" ventured the little man with the scared eyes who sat well toward the rear.

NO LITERARY ASPIRATIONS.

From The Baltimore American.

Mrs. Hocorn—But, Mandy, I don't see why you don't want to marry Silas Beanblossom. He's gorgeous enough. He's just put a new "L" on his house.

Mandy—I don't keer, maw. He kin put the whole alphabet on his house if he want to, but this here literary life never did appeal to me.

A MISNOMER.

From The Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Pa," said the blooming daughter of the household, "I wish you wouldn't call young Mr. Softleigh a popinjay."

"And why not?"

"Because he isn't a jay, and there doesn't seem to be any hope of his 'poppin'."

A GRAND OPPORTUNITY.

From The Chicago Tribune.

"Do you know what I would do if I owned this place?" said Mrs. Gaswell, turning enthusiastically to the guide who was showing her the wonders of the British Museum. "I'd hold the biggest rummage sale that was ever seen on this green earth."

SOMETHING NEW IN FORGERY.

From The Chicago Post.

"I notice that a Russian has made his will by reciting it into a phonograph," said the confidence man.

"What's that?" exclaimed Jim the Penman. "Great Scott! What's to become of me if that system is generally followed in business affairs?"

"How will it affect you?"

"Why, my penmanship will count for nothing. A man will have to be a mimic in order to commit forgery, won't he?"