

ROYAL MARRIAGE IN CHINA.

An Interesting Description of the Emperor's Wedding Festivities.

From the Asiatic Quarterly Review. Peking officialdom was not altogether taken by surprise when it was announced on the 13th of January, 1875, that "by the will of the late emperor, T'ai-tien, the 2-year-old son of Prince Chun, had succeeded to the great inheritance. The child was carried in the night from his father's palace into the imperial palace, where he has since remained, in a seclusion unbroken except by a guarded journey to the eastern tombs or a brief visit to the ruined Wan-shou Shan.

His accession was received without much demur. One member of that remarkable institution, the censorate—which has cultivated a licensed, and in its essence honest, criticism of the throne till it has become a habit with the emperor to take his own life rather than see the names of his master left without an heir; for the child T'ai-tien had been adopted, not as heir to his cousin and predecessor, T'ai-chun, but to his uncle Yi-chu (Hsien-feng). An attempt was made to constrain the empress dowager into an agreement that the eldest son of the new emperor T'ai-tien should succeed to the throne as heir to T'ai-chun; but their strong-willed majesties bluntly declined to submit to dictation on this point. The empire at large accepted their choice with perfect indifference, for personal loyalty can hardly be expected in a country where for decades the sovereign has not shown his face to his people. And so the baby emperor began his reign, Kwang Hsu or "Glorious Continuity," in the leading-strings of his aunt and her sister empress.

Now, it has been decided that T'ai-tien has attained his majority—he is 17 or nearly so, and has been on the throne fourteen years—and that, at any rate, nominal, direction of affairs must be placed in the Emperor's own hands. Before this is done in its entirety the young sovereign must mark his manhood, as every one of his subjects does, from noble to cooly, by getting married.

Preparations for this important event have long been making. In 1885 each official of the eight banners (Manchus of the conquest) was called upon to furnish a list of his daughters between 12 and 18 years of age—to surely of all departments the most whimsical—the Board of Revenue. The maidens would attend to the palace in the following year, and there await inspection and selection by the Empress dowager. A staid member of our Consular Service in China (staid even then, though twenty years ago) was under orders to proceed from Canton to Tien-tsin. He had officially made the acquaintance of an officer of the Manchurian garrison of Canton, and on calling to take leave was surprised, and not a little embarrassed, by his host's request to escort his daughter to Tien-tsin, on her way to the palace in the coming year, and there await inspection and selection by the Empress dowager. A staid member of our Consular Service in China (staid even then, though twenty years ago) was under orders to proceed from Canton to Tien-tsin. He had officially made the acquaintance of an officer of the Manchurian garrison of Canton, and on calling to take leave was surprised, and not a little embarrassed, by his host's request to escort his daughter to Tien-tsin, on her way to the palace in the coming year, and there await inspection and selection by the Empress dowager.

The selection over the maidens chosen remained to the discretion of the Empress dowager, who was supposed to decide, after some weeks of careful deliberation, which of them was most worthy to be the consort of the Son of Heaven. In the meanwhile the Board of Astronomy (which serves as a bureau styled the Board of Astrology) was called on to name two or more fortunate days in the coming year for the Emperor's marriage. With their aid the Empress dowager selected the 28th of February for the marriage day, and the 4th of December for the day of betrothal. On the 8th of November the fate of the young emperor and the Chinese world was informed through the pages of the Peking Gazette that their Empress had been chosen. The decree of the Empress dowager read: "Since the Emperor reverently entered upon the succession to his great patrimony he has been growing day by day to manhood, and it is right that a person of high character should be selected to be his consort, and to assist him in the duties of the palace, to the end that the high position of Empress may be fittingly filled, and the Emperor supported in the pursuit of virtue. The choice having fallen upon Yeh-honala, the daughter of Deputy Lieut. Gen. Kuei-hsiang, a maiden of virtuous character and becoming and dignified character, we command that she be appointed Empress."

The bride-elect immediately left the palace for her father's home. The father, Kuei-hsiang, is, it would appear, a younger brother of the empress dowager, and there can be little question, one would think, that her taste majesty has determined that, if she must resign the scepter she has wielded for close on 17 years, she will still have it in her power to control the young emperor and to benefit her family. The first step in the wedding ceremony consists in the sending of the bridal presents. This is done on the day before what may be taken to be the golden marriage, the bringing home of the bride. The wedding presents, besides gifts innumerable from the empress dowager and emperor, comprise of necessity the golden ring, the bringing home of the bride, and the wedding robes embroidered with her majesty to the marriage of her adopted step-son to Yeh-honala, the bridegroom with veil of pendent pearls, and the silken wedding robes embroidered with the Phoenix—emblem of the bride, as the dragon is of her imperial bridegroom. A scepter and a seal of state form part of the indispensable paraphernalia. When all is ready these are laid out on three richly decorated tables in one of the palace courts. On the center table is placed the scepter, on the right the seal, and on the left, in a casket of gold and jewels, the tablet. Surrounding the court is an array of princes and nobles with guards, horses, chariots, banners, and attendants, all still survive, elephants. An officer of the Board of Astronomy gives the signal with a loud voice, "The hour of joy draws near." The young Emperor passes into the court to view his gifts. He is then led to a pavilion and seated, when the high officers present all do him homage by bowing three times to the ground. A herald announces, "An edict from her Majesty, the Empress dowager." Then, all kneeling except the Emperor, is read aloud the consent of her Majesty to the union of their sovereign with the Princess Yeh-honala, and the herald proclaims, "The appointed day has arrived in the name of the Lord of the Dragon Throne present to Yeh-honala scepter, tablet and imperial seal." The music plays "The Emperor's Triumph." That ceasing, the procession forms. The precious symbols on the table are delivered with all reverence to the master of the ceremonies, who places them in the dragon car. The cortege files through roads leveled and screened to the residence of the bride, preceded by banners and gongs innumerable, and escorted by princes of the blood. They

are received at the outer gate by the bride's father, who conducts them to an inner court where tables have been prepared for the imperial gifts. At the entrance to this court all fall back and kneel, while the dragon car containing the three symbols moves in. At the same time eunuchs of the palace carry into a further hall the bridal robes and crown. When the scepter, seal and tablet have been duly placed in position, the father is ordered to kneel and do homage while he listens to the will of heaven as embodied in the Empress's edict.

The next day the Emperor must rise early and pay homage to his adoptive mother. He awaits her arrival in the throne room, standing, and when surrounded by her train of ladies, she has taken her seat, does her reverence by nine prostrations. She and heaven alone receive such worship from him, who exacts or expects it from the rest of the world. Her Majesty having retired, a similar reception is held by the Emperor of his nobles, and the Empress's consent is read aloud. The audience ended, comes the chief part of the ceremony, the bringing home of the bride. A gorgeous sedan chair is borne by sixteen bearers from the palace, escorted by princess on horseback and preceded by banners, canopies and emblems, quaint and rich, while the band plays "We Come from the Phoenix." The procession reaches the bride's home, and is received as before by her father. Listening again on his knees to the edict of consent he is told that "the will of the Emperor is to receive the Empress." He is then suffered to retire and the chair being borne forward into the inner court, the Empress elect in her bridal robes is conducted by her mother and attendant ladies to the chair, where she is closely screened by curtains.

A Possible Error. From Charivari. Lady (to dressmaker and milliner): Here, I have brought the materials. This one is for the bathing suit and the other for trimming the hat.

A week later. Lady (trying on the new dress): But I fancy the bathing suit is a great deal too tight and narrow. Have you used all the material?

(Aside): Ciel! I wonder now whether I mistook the materials, and trimmed the hat with the stuff for the bathing suit.

A Smart Husband. Wife: I am a thousand times obliged to you George, for this beautiful diamond ring, but ain't you a little extravagant?

Husband: No, not at all. The ring cost \$300, but I'll get the money back in a short time.

"In what way?" "You will not need so many new gloves for a short time."—Texas Sittings.

A New Scheme. Smith and Gray's Monthly. Ally Gaiter (happening in): Hello, Percy! What the dickens is the matter with your trousers?

Percy Vere: Well, you see they've got pretty baggy at the knees, and I've resorted to a device to see if I can't even up matters a bit.

Didn't Realize It. Light. Jake: Platters looks like a freak. I wonder why he dresses so terribly loud?

Alf: Well, the poor fellow is quite deaf and I suppose he doesn't realize it.

THE LOCAL MARKET. These Quotations Are Revised and Corrected Every Day.

Sugar—Granulated, per 100, "C" light brown, \$0.82; pulverized, H. A. New York, \$13.20; loaf, \$13.10; maple, P. B. 25c. Coffee—Market strong; green Rio, 19624c; Santos, 19622c; Java, 19622c; Mocha, 37c; roasted Rio and Costa Rica, 26c; 27c; roasted Caribao, 32c; roasted Mocha and Java, 36c; Arabica, 35c. Tea—Japan, 35c; English breakfast, 40c; Gunpowder, 45c; extra Young Hyson, 55c. Pickles—Per keg, 15, \$1.25; 24, \$2.00; 26, \$2.50; 100, \$3.90-4.50. Timothy—Per cwt, 85. Potatoes—California, 2c. Cabbage—Per cwt, 85. Eggs, per case, \$5.00-6.00. Butter, per lb, 35c-40c. Cheese, per lb, 20c-25c. Fruit—Dried apples, per 5-lb packages, 75c; ditto sliced, 50-lb boxes, 14c per lb; peaches, Salt Lake, 10c; apricots, 25c; evaporated ditto, 25c; blackberries, 15c; raspberries, 30c. California fruits, \$5.00-6.50 per case. 2-lb standard tomatoes, 85.50. 2-lb standard corn, 83.00. 2-lb standard peas, 83.50; seconds, 82.75. 2-lb string and Lima beans, 82.75. Dried Beans—Navy, \$6.00 per 100 lb; Lima, \$7.00; Bayos, 86.25. Wheat, No. 1, per 100 lb, \$2.00. Corn, cracked, per 100 lb, 81.75. Bran, per 100 lb, \$1.50; bran and shorts per 100 lb, \$1.25. Flour—Per 100 lb, Pillsbury's best, \$4; Ogden, \$3.50; Strague "Pulsy," \$3.00. Salt meat, per 100 lb, \$1.50. Fat meat, per 100 lb, \$1.50. Lard—15c. Fresh Meats—Pork 15c; beef 80c; lamb, quarters, 75c-1.00; mutton 70c-1.50. Salt Meats—Ham 10c-12c; bacon 15c; corned beef, per 100 lb, 12c-15c. Coal—Per ton, hard 81c, soft \$0.50. Wood—Per cord, \$4.50. Hay—Per ton \$25.00. Straw—Per ton \$12.00. Oats—Per cwt, \$2.00.

TRAVELER'S GUIDE. TRAINS ARRIVE.

10:20 A. M.—From the South, East and West—Fremont Butte at 9:40 A. M., connects at Silver Bow 9:44 A. M. with the Utah & Northern Railway. 1:35 P. M.—From the North and East—Leaves Garrison 10:15, Deer Lodge 10:26, Warm Springs 11:02. Connects at Garrison with the Northern Pacific from Helena, Missoula and the Bitter Root Railway. 5:20 P. M.—From the South—Direct from Butte 4:30, Silver Bow 4:44, Gregson 5:01. No change at Stuart. 8:20 P. M.—From the North, East, South and West—Butte 7:30, Silver Bow 7:44, Gregson 8:06, Garrison 8:20, Deer Lodge 8:37, Warm Springs 9:20. Connects at Garrison with Northern Pacific from San Francisco, Portland and Tacoma, Seattle, Phillipsburg, Missoula, Helena, St. Paul and Eastern States. TRAINS DEPART. 8 A. M.—For South and North—Arrives at Gregson at 8:20, Silver Bow 8:26, Butte 8:50, Warm Springs 9:00, Deer Lodge 9:22, Garrison 10:09. Connects at Garrison with Northern Pacific for Helena, Drummond, Missoula, Phillipsburg, and all points on the Bitter Root Railway. 10:30 A. M.—For the South—Change cars at Stuart for Gregson 11:21, Silver Bow 11:33 and Butte 12:01. 3:40 P. M.—For North and South—Arrives at Gregson 3:33, Silver Bow 3:47, Butte 4:00, Warm Springs 4:52, Deer Lodge 5:16 and Garrison at 5:40 P. M. Connects at Garrison with the Northern Pacific East to St. Paul and Eastern States, and West to Tacoma, Portland and San Francisco. 6:10 P. M.—For the South—Arrives at Gregson at 6:52, Silver Bow 6:56, Butte at 7:00 P. M. Connects at Silver Bow with Utah & Northern Pacific for Denver, Kansas City, Omaha and the Eastern States, and for the West to Portland and San Francisco.

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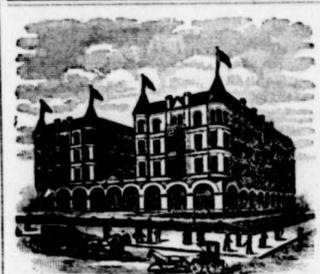
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