

HOW WU TING FANG ENTERTAINS.

The Chinese Legation Is Very Popular In Washington Society. Special Correspondence of THE STAR.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2.—The president's New Year reception sets the social ball rolling in the national capital and formally opens what promises to be the most brilliant season in recent years.



THE CHINESE LEGATION.

ready acquired fame for its generous hospitality. In these days, when we are talking so much about the "open door" to China, there is a peculiar interest attached to things oriental, and the establishment of China's diplomatic representative here, apart from the engaging personality of the minister himself, is one of the most attractive and interesting places in Washington.

It may be fairly said that China could not have a more enlightened, courteous and efficient envoy than she has in the person of Wu Ting Fang. He is not only an amiable man, but a thoroughly accomplished diplomat, with an excellent command of the English language, acquired in Hongkong and perfected in England, whither he went to study law, being admitted to the bar at Lincoln's Inn.

At the conclusion of his studies in London Mr. Wu returned to China and began the practice of law. But he became known to Li Hung Chang and was soon attached to his staff as legal secretary. He subsequently was appointed superintendent of railways and while holding this office supervised the construction of the first railroad ever built in the Celestial empire, a circumstance of which he is very proud. He is a progressive man and keeps abreast of the times. Mr. Wu took a prominent part in the peace negotiations between China and Japan, acting as first secretary of the peace mission and plenipotentiary to exchange ratifications for the treaty. Later he was named chief director of the Tien-tsin university.

Socially the Chinese minister has scored a great success during his residence here, and the present season will unquestionably add to his prestige in this respect. He has all the attributes that go to make a man desirable in society and, dressed in the picturesque costume of his country, is in constant evidence at social functions. He entertains, too, assiduously and lavishly, and no cards of invitation are more highly prized and eagerly accepted than those which come from the Chinese legation.

Mrs. Wu, the minister's wife, is a bright faced, dainty and attractive wo-



WU TING FANG, CHINESE MINISTER.

man, with the tiniest of feet and the gentlest of small voices. She did not speak much English when she arrived in this country, but has added to her vocabulary until she now gets along very well with visitors. She shares her husband's progressive ideas and takes a lively interest in Americans, their customs and their doings. She is of equal rank with her husband, a fact indicated by various ornaments that adorn her costume, and is entitled to enter and leave the room at the side rather than behind him. Her gowns, of rich brocade, heavy with embroid-

ery, are beautiful, and no woman in Washington society wears more magnificent jewels or a greater profusion of them.

There are about 50 people connected with the Chinese legation, all living under the same roof with the minister and his family, and the house occupied is one of the largest and most elaborately furnished in Washington. Most of the attaches are socially inclined and are seen much at the theaters and private and official entertainments. Several of them are extremely popular and are frequently seen escorting daughters of congressmen and other young women about the city. In such circumstances they are most considerate of small details and always provide the finest flowers that can be had and in other ways look after the comfort and pleasure of their companions. They are a generous people, and the personal friends of the members of the legation fare well at their hands in the matter of tea that costs \$20 a pound, if you could buy it at all, rolls of soft, shimmering silk and other gifts of the products of the orient.

At the social functions at the Chinese legation there is a quaint blending of oriental splendor and American simplicity which is to be found nowhere else in Washington, for Minister and Mrs. Wu entertain in a manner peculiar to themselves. No better dinners are given in the city than those over which Mrs. Wu presides, and her afternoon teas are very popular. There is at all events a general rush to the Chinese legation on its reception days. If the host and hostess are ever bored, they give no sign of it, but smile and say pleasant words as the long procession of men and women, mainly the latter, file by with curious, eager eyes. It was your correspondent's good fortune to attend a recent reception at the Chinese legation.

Upon entering the big, square hall, with its heavily paneled oak ceiling and wainscoting, its polished floor covered with softest rugs, and window curtains and portieres of unique Chinese design, one is immediately conscious of an air of oriental splendor and notes the scent of some rare perfumes of the far east. At the foot of a beautifully carved staircase sat the minister's little son, dressed in a soft, clinging robe, with cap and pigtail complete. He was taking the cards from the usher and passing them to the minister's nephew, also in robe, cap and cue, who carefully numbered them for future reference. After giving up their cards the guests were passed on to the next usher, who upon entering the reception room announced their names with tremendous solemnity and appeared to say: "Behold the lord mayor of Timbuktu and the lady mayoress," while in truth, presumably, he gave only the modest names of the visitors. Upon the impressive



MRS. WU, WIFE OF CHINESE MINISTER.

announcement Mrs. Wu looked up with her big brown eyes and smilingly extended her hand, as did also the minister. The reception could not have been more cordial and whole hearted. The smile of the little lady from the orient spoke volumes of welcome, as did the gracious and simple words of her distinguished husband.

Mrs. Wu was seated in a high chair, her tiny feet, incased in pointed gold slippers, peeping out from beneath a petticoat of wonderful texture. The oriental gown was of soft heliotrope, elaborately embroidered with pearls, and on her head was a close fitting black cap, in which were fastened jewels of great brilliancy and value. The little gold slippers were scarcely large enough for an American child a year old.

At her side stood the minister, Wu Ting Fang, dressed in truly royal style, with yellow brocade trousers, or rather petticoats, a jacket of a darker shade of the same color, richly embroidered, and a close fitting black cap, with a big diamond set in its band. He wore the regular Chinese shoes and was surrounded by a dozen or more pretty girls from high official life, who were assisting in the reception.

Passing through the long parlors, which are mainly decorated with American furnishings, the great ballroom is reached. Over in one corner was a square table, on which glistened the party tea service, presided over by the young wife of an army officer. She was assisted in serving by several of the attaches of the legation, while the light refreshments were

taken to and from the room for replenishing by a big black "mammy," assisted by two little Chinese girls in native costume.

Most interesting of all in connection with the Chinese legation is the oriental room, which is unquestionably the finest and most elaborate apartment of its kind in this country. The soft light from the great Chinese chandelier brings out in all their beauty the details of its sumptuous eastern furnishings. There are great rugs and divans with huge pillows, chairs covered with loose scarfs of richest embroidery, crystal lamps with curious native ornaments, unique musical instruments and strange weapons of warfare, rare china and bric-a-brac and among them all great vases of roses. It is a most entrancing glimpse of the far east and a faithful copy of oriental splendor.

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THE NEW SCOTLAND.

Cape Breton and Its Extraordinary Multiplication of Identical Names. Special Correspondence of THE STAR.

SYDNEY, C. B., Dec. 29.—Sitting one rainy afternoon in the office of a little hotel on the shore of one of the Bras d'Or lakes I picked up a heavy volume titled "McAlpine's Nova Scotia Directory," and for lack of more entertaining literature I began to turn and study its pages. They were a curious index to the character of the population of the "New Scotland."

Middle names are not in favor here, and so plain John McDougalls and Donald McIntyres multiply, and their names overflow the pages of McAlpine's book. It follows naturally that there is confusion. You cannot encounter two columns of John McDonalds in a directory in a search for some one of that name without finding yourself at a loss to distinguish the object of your quest unless you know all of his distinguishing marks. And if you know them, why seek the directory, unless indeed you yourself are John McDonald and you want only the satisfaction of seeing your name on the printed page? In this case the directory, which was not printed to cater to your vanity, fails to perform its function. If you are seeking information of the whereabouts of a John McDonald, it fails to "direct," or it directs with so many fingers that you know not which way to turn. If you want to illustrate the situation, look in the directory of any large city for the name of that greatly execrated, highly respected, much multiplied John Smith. It has occurred to me often in the agony of searching a directory of New York city that there should be some enactment by which all owners of very common names should be numbered and identified by their numbers, as John Smith the twenty-fourth abbreviated, if you will, to John Smith 24 and William Jones the forty-fifth.

In this extremity the needs of local intercourse have called the fancy into play, and distinguishing titles and nicknames have supplanted baptismal names. And these titles Mr. McAlpine has found it wise to incorporate in his most interesting work, so that, as I study its pages now lying before me, I am able to learn from them something of the characteristics of many of the people whose names he has set down. There are at Skye Glen, for instance, three men who answer to the name of Miles McInnis, and all are



CAPE BRETON MERRYMAKING.

farmers. So far I am confused. But one is Big Miles McInnis, one is Miles McInnis, Neil's son, and one is just Miles McInnis. Here is the way they stand:

McInnis, Miles (big), farmer, Skye Glen.

McInnis, Miles (N's son), farmer, Skye Glen.

McInnis, Miles, farmer, Skye Glen. Nothing could be clearer. If the McInnis that I seek is not big and is not "N's son," he is plain Miles McInnis.

And so it goes even to the second generation. For here is J. McEachron, big A's son. And of the first generation there are John McDonald (Gray) and Don McDonald, A's son, and Don McDonald, widow's son, and Colin McDonnell (red) and Archy McKinnon (elder) and Alex McLean (heir) and Angus McLean (Point) and many others, some of which have evident significance and some of which have none. About the latter I question my landlord. What, I ask him, is the meaning of "bentic," printed in parentheses after a man's name? That, he explains, is the name of the man's farm. But other acquired titles have less intimate association. For example, of the many John McNells there is one who works for a man named Plant, and he is distinguished as John McNeil Plant. Another of the tribe came to Nova Scotia with a man named Dunn, and he is known now as John McNeil Dunn, just as the American slave of 40 years ago bore the name of his master.

One cause of the extraordinary multiplication of particular names in this new Scotland is the stupid custom of duplicating a name in a family. John McNeil, not satisfied with naming his first son John after himself, must needs name his second son John after his uncle and his third son John after another member of his tribe. So it is not uncommon, I am told, to find three Marys and three Johns in one brood of children. Then John the first, who is tall, must be known as "Big John" and John the second, who is towheaded, as "White John" and John the third as "John McNeil, John's son."

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