

Minister Conger--Iowa People in China

DES MOINES, July 12.—"We have been worrying about the Pekin situation for weeks," said Mrs. Ida H. Conger, widow of the brother of Minister E. H. Conger; "even longer than the people generally have. This was on account of the letters we received from our relatives in Pekin. The minister repeatedly cautioned his family from giving to the public information conveyed in his letters, especially of a political character, and the people have not known how much we have worried over the situation, which did not appear to them grave until about three weeks ago. In a letter which we have just received, Minister Conger tells us about being alarmed, and the facts in the official message which was given out at Washington this week have been known, to some extent, to us for a long time. I hope against reason. Almost all the news of rumors—which is all we have had for a month—is capable of being construed as good news. The remainder of the Des Moines relatives of the minister and his family are more sanguine than I am."

The Des Moines relatives are: Mrs. Ida H. Conger, Miss Anna Conger, daughter of Mrs. Ida Conger; Edwin C. Williams, nephew of Minister Conger; Mrs. L. A. Conger, aunt of the minister; Willard C. Pierce, Charles H. Pierce and Loren Pierce, nephews of Minister Conger and brothers of Miss Mary Conger Pierce, who has been a member of the minister's party in Pekin since last February; Miss Elizabeth Conger, Miss Hazel Conger, Miss Emma Conger, Dr. Alice C. Hunter, Miss Irene Courtney, Miss Lillian Courtney and Mrs. Will Nelson, cousins of Minister Conger.

Pekin Life Delights Mrs. Conger.

Mrs. Conger, wife of the minister, and her daughter, Laura, visited Des Moines friends last winter. While here Mrs. Conger exhibited a ring with which she had been presented by the empress of China. She was delighted by the Pekin life. When she returned to China she took with her Minister Conger's niece, Miss Mary Pierce, aged about 22 years, and whose three brothers are business men in Des Moines. Laura Conger, daughter of the minister, and the only child, is about 28 years of age. She married, eight years ago, a wealthy young man named George Lendum. He inherited his money and was unable to conserve it. Mrs. Lendum finally secured a divorce and her maiden name. Lendum enlisted in the war as a member of the Forty-ninth Iowa, got as far as Florida and died within ten days.

In the Conger party at Pekin there were, when the last letters were received here, the following: Minister Edwin H. Conger, Mrs. Conger, their daughter, Laura Conger; Minister Conger's niece, Miss Mary Pierce, all of Des Moines; Mrs. Morgan S. Woodward and daughter, Ione Woodward, of Evanston, Ill., who were formerly residents of Des Moines and next-door neighbors of Minister and Mrs. Conger; Second Secretary W. E. Bainbridge of the legation was a resident of Council Bluffs. His wife was with him. F. D. Cheshire, interpreter, was a former resident of Iowa, but for twenty years has resided in Pekin as interpreter for the American legation. Miss Isabelle Paine of Chicago accompanied the Woodwards as French companion. Miss Mary Condit Smith, sister-in-law of Governor General Wood of Cuba, is said to have been a guest of the Congers at Pekin. H. G. Squiers, first secretary of the legation, was a resident of New York. His wife and three children are with him. Three of his children are attending school in this country, two daughters in New York City with relatives and a son in Harvard.

Minister Conger's salary is \$13,000 a year, that of his first secretary, Mr. Squiers, \$2,650, that of Second Secretary Bainbridge \$1,800 and that of Interpreter Cheshire \$3,000.

Conger Starts as a Farmer.

Mrs. Conger was Miss Sarah J. Pike of Galesburg, Ill. She and the minister were married June 21, 1868. Mr. Conger was then a struggling lawyer, a graduate of Albany law school and Lombard university, a veteran of the war, into which he went in 1862 as a private and from which he came a major five years afterward, and 25

years of age. Being born and having always lived in Knox county, Illinois, he formed an excellent opinion of Iowa land. Soon after his marriage he bought land in Madison county, Iowa. Madison county is immediately southwest of Polk county, in which Des Moines, the capital of the state, was and is located. His farm was half a mile south of the town of Dexter, which then had 500 population and has grown a little along with time. Conger farmed for five years, then he went into the banking business in Dexter. He was successful. He took in a partner named G. G. Pierce, who was the father of the young girl with the Congers in Pekin. He also established a bank at Stuart.

His first step in politics was in 1878. His success was phenomenal. He was first elected treasurer of Madison county. He was then elected treasurer of the state. He served as state treasurer between 1882 and 1885. He was elected as congressman from the Seventh district in 1885 and held this office three terms.

President Harrison made him minister to Brazil and he served in this capacity at Rio de Janeiro until he was removed by President Cleveland, but as soon as President McKinley was elected he was selected to take the Pekin mission, leaving Thomas C. Dawson, first secretary of the Brazilian legation, in charge of our relations with Brazil until Conger's place could be filled there. This



F. D. Cheshire, H. G. Squiers, Minister E. H. Conger, W. E. Bainbridge.
AMERICAN LEGATION AT PEKIN

transfer was made about three years ago. Minister Conger has visited Des Moines but once since his appointment.

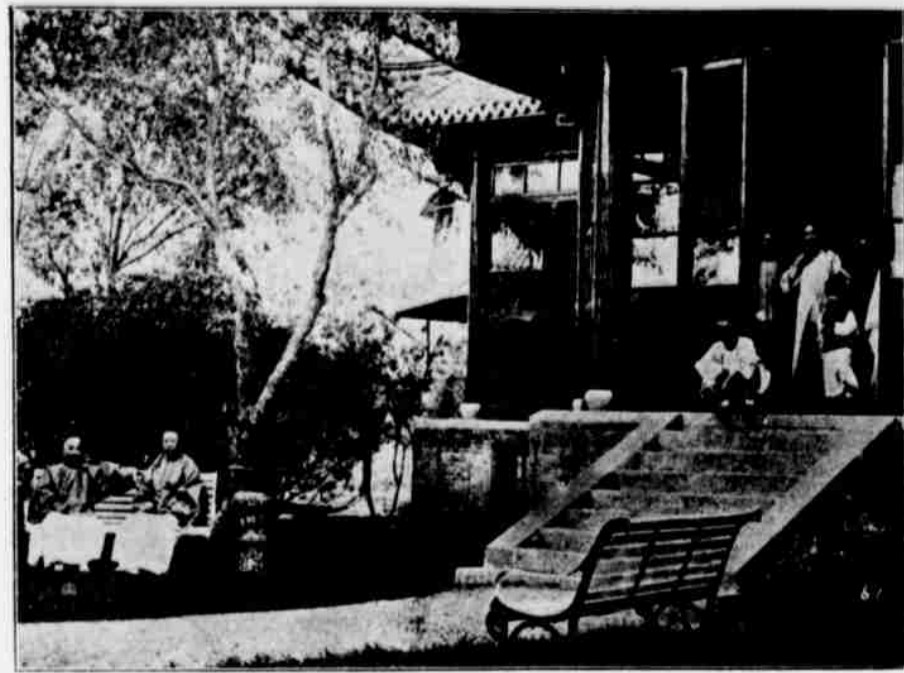
If Minister Conger is dead Edwin Ankeny Conger of Los Angeles, Cal., is the oldest male Conger living and to him will descend the family traditions and honor. There will be no wealth. In his business and office-holding Mr. Conger is generally reputed to have gathered about \$100,000 at one time. This has been dissipated to the four winds—not by dissipation, for Minister Conger was always an abstainer, but by unfortunate investment. The California Conger is a nephew of Minister Conger, whose brother married the daughter of General R. V. An-

keny of Des Moines. General Ankeny started Conger in his political career by setting the pins which elected him county supervisor in Madison county before he was elected treasurer of the county. General Ankeny's daughter is dead.

Romantic Marriage.

The marriage of Mr. Conger and Miss Pike was romantic. The friendship, attachment and love had its origin in college life. Both attended Lombard university and were classmates and sweethearts in college. The war took the young man away, but the attachment then formed was not broken and was consummated by marriage. A son and daughter were born to this couple. The son, Lorentus, died. The daughter is a remarkably brilliant young woman of a mathematical turn of mind, being one of the most expert accountants in the west. She returned with her mother in November, spent the winter here and returned to China with her cousin, Miss Pierce, and her mother in February.

Mr. Conger was a member of the Masonic lodge. He joined it while a soldier. The incidents that led up to this step were convincing to him of the good of the order. He was taken sick with typhoid while his regiment was under light marching orders during the first year of his army service. It became necessary to leave him behind and a comrade volunteered to remain with him. Food became a problem and the comrade visited the nearest town to obtain provisions. There he managed to secure \$0 in gold from the richest merchant in the place, despite his blue uniform, upon proving himself a Mason. Conger there and then vowed he would join the order and after being sent to a hospital and recovering by special dispensation took the three degrees



HIGH OFFICIAL'S HOUSE IN PEKIN.

the Boxers struck after leaving their home, the province of Shantung, was Chen-ting-fu, a large city lying at the foot of the mountains near the western boundary of Pei-Chih. Chen-ting-fu is an old city and has one of the finest ancient temples to be found in China, with an immense bronze Buddha, over sixty feet high. The Catholics here have a large mission, claiming over 30,000 converts, and a fine cathedral. When the Boxers attempted to loot it, a pitched battle occurred with the native Christians, in which the Boxers were beaten with a loss of seventy killed. The Catholics claim a million converts, all told, in China. Advancing northeast about fifty miles, the Boxers reached Pang-ting-fu, the capital of the province, which lies about eighty miles southwest of Pekin, and almost 100 miles due west of Tien Tsin, with which it is connected by river. Pang-ting-fu was the present terminus of the Luhan railroad, being built by the Belgian syndicate from Pekin southwest to Han-kow, a distance of about 800 miles. At Pang-ting-fu the Boxers ignored the presence of a large body of American missionaries, but attacked the party of Belgian engineers engaged on the road, and pursued them when they attempted to escape down the river to Tien Tsin, finally cutting off and killing several of the party.

A Day of Dread

Why do women cling to Monday for washing day? Where a housekeeper is also a maid-of-all-work there is some reason for it, as Sunday has usually, by comparison, been with her a day of rest, and she is better prepared for hard work. But where she has maids Sunday is with them a fatiguing day, for besides the dinner and tea they prepare they go to church and go to walk and are off to see their friends and making a gala day of it; in fact, they are too tired out when the next morning comes for such hard work as washing and it would not be remarkable if the work were done poorly.

If the tasks of some other day of the week were transferred to Monday perhaps it would be a good change—one might try it as an experiment. If, for instance, the halls and sleeping rooms were swept and dusted, leaving the parlors and other rooms of that sort to be attended to, as before, on Friday, so as to be fresh for Sunday, it would divide a heavy task as well as be of benefit otherwise; or else all the silver and brasses could be scoured, or the closets and the refrigerators cleared and cleaned. Then the clothes could be picked up, sorted, put to soak and Tuesday given to the wash with much more strength of will and muscle.

The fact is, the wash is such a disagreeable affair that both mistress and maid are eager to get it out of the way, and even this could be mended by an outdoor wash house or laundry with fire and boiler. Then, where the means permit the hire of a washerwoman weekly, it need never be known in the house that there is such a thing as washing day at all, and where the means do not permit of the extra help, still a great part of the disagreeableness in the steam and the smell of suds is taken away from the consciousness by being taken out of the house.

Not Up to Date

Chicago Post: "Isn't that young man who was with you on the beach rather forward and presuming?" asked the fond mother.

"Forward and presuming!" repeated the summer-resort beauty scornfully. "Why, he isn't even up-to-date."

"But I thought I heard him ask you for a kiss," persisted the fond mother.

"That's just it," returned the beauty. "Here he's been devoted to me for the whole week that I've been at this resort and he asked me for a kiss instead of calmly taking one. What further evidence of his backwardness could be asked? Why, he doesn't even know the difference between the customs of the seashore and the city."

Reflections of a Bachelor

New York Press: A woman's idea of a skillful doctor is one that will tell her every once in awhile that her soul is wearing out her body.

Women always can get along together, because, if they haven't anything else in

common, they can always compare their neighbors.

Half the time when you hear a man calling another man a "hog," it is only because the second man has got what the first man would get if he could.

When you are eating a dinner that a woman has cooked she expects you to spend half the time it takes to eat it in talking about how good it is.

SHORT AND PITHY STORIES

Hill, Stevenson, Towne, Davis and Jones in Nebraska.

SOME THINGS SAID ABOUT THEM

Webster Davis Gives as a Reason for Turning His Political Coat His Intense Sympathy for the Struggling Afrikaners.

The Boers are a brave people defending their homes against foreign aggression. No wonder American men look upon the struggle with more than passing interest. The United States of South Africa ought to be something more than a dream.

Foreign insurance companies are quite as relentless in their attacks upon home competition, but the Bankers Reserve Life Association goes right along writing the best class of risks.

David B. Hill.

"I say, Dave," said Judge Van Wyck to ex-Governor Hill, when the distinguished New Yorker returned to Kansas City from his Sabbath day interview with our own William J. Bryan, "what hit you the hardest in Nebraska after Bryan's stubborn adherence to the doctrine of 16 to 1?"

"The complacency of the people of Nebraska. Why, do you know, Judge, they have established in Omaha a Stipulated Premium Life Insurance Company, called the Bankers Reserve Life Association, that writes more risks in a month in that state than our three big companies combined? It is only three years old, but it is a phenomenon. This fact went up against me just as hard as the 16 to 1 proposition."

Adlai in Omaha.

"Adlai," piped up a falsetto voiced populist at the Lincoln ingathering of fusion leaders Tuesday afternoon, "did you stop in Omaha on your way here?"

"Certainly, I never miss stopping in the metropolis of Nebraska when I have occasion to pass near. I always get a new idea there from somebody. This time a representative of the Bankers Reserve Life Association took my eye and really if I had not been so close to the limit of age I believe I should have taken one of those twenty-payment policies of his company. I never knew before what a stipulated premium meant. I do now. If I had not been unanimously nominated for vice president I would have asked for an Agency Contract."

Why Senator Jones was Brief.

"Senator Jones, the Mark Hanna of the democratic party," was the felicitous introduction vouchsafed the gentleman from Arkansas when he faced the yelling, enthusiasts of the capital of Nebraska. The senator took it good-naturedly, though he had no bouquets to throw at Ohio's leader.

Perhaps he would have spoken longer if he had not known that a special agent of the Bankers Reserve Life Association was in Lincoln preparing for a campaign and conferring with the leading business men who are to be on its advisory board. Senator Jones did not care to interfere with anything in the way of local enthusiasm.

Towne and a Vice Presidency.

Charles A. Towne came to Lincoln to confer with the leaders of the fusion party, and to shoot off some pyrotechnics at the ratification meeting. And he called at the Capitol. If he had asked Auditor Cornell for the report of the recent examination of the Bankers Reserve Life Association he would have learned that Vice President Latta of that successful Nebraska corporation is temporarily absent. B. H. Robinson of Omaha, the president, would gladly welcome the silvery, persuasive voice of the Duluth statesman into the insurance field. He might be very useful in building up the business if he could abandon politics for a period.



CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL AT CHENG TING FU.

In connection with the above article we print a picture of the Catholic cathedral at Cheng-ting-fu. At the beginning of the present outbreak in China, the first point