

SMART CHINESE BOY.

BEATS ALL GRADES IN 'FRISCO SCHOOLS.

Stands at the Head of Thirty-Seven Thousand Pupils—The Chinese School Examination Reveals Some Astonishing Facts.

There is a public school of Chinese pupils in San Francisco, and it has just made itself felt with something of a jolt in the understanding of the great white men who make the educational wheels go round in the "velly big city." At the recent examinations this school of Celestial youngsters reached a higher percentage than any other public school having no grade higher than the seventh. The percentage was 100. One of its pupils, Wong Bock Yue, attained a higher percentage than any other pupil of any grade or color in the city. The highest average of any white student was made by Robert Dougherty of the ninth grade of the Mission Grammar School. He got through with 94 per cent, or 3 per cent less than was attained by Wong Bock Yue, who is just promoted from the seventh to the eighth grade. There were several of Wong Bock Yue's classmates who gained as high a percentage as Robert Dougherty, the highest white boy. The seventh grade of the Chinese school ran from 84 to 97, a remarkably high average. In the fourth grade (primary) an individual percentage of 99 was attained, while no pupil ran lower than 82. In some of the white



WONG BOCK YUE.

grades pupils ran as low as zero, while one entire grade averaged only 16. Whether it is more difficult for a ninth grade pupil to reach 97 per cent than for a seventh grade pupil to reach 84, depends, of course, upon the relative severity of their respective studies, as, for instance, whether it is harder for a 15-year-old boy to learn multiplication than for a 13-year-old to learn addition. Assuming the most logical theory, that each is given work corresponding to his ability to grasp it, we must give Wong Bock Yue the credit which the figures stand for, and call him the top-notch pupil in the lists. There is a daily attendance of about 37,000 pupils in the San Francisco public schools. Wong Bock Yue has, approximately, 36,999 competitors. He holds a higher record than any. Is he the superior of them all in precocity? Wong Bock Yue's school is one of those unique places in the city which not even the old residents, who think they have seen everything of interest that is to be found here, have ever discovered. It is a familiar fact that San Francisco contains many such odd corners, which no one seems to know the location of when eastern friends are to be entertained with sightseeing. The Chinese public school is one of the most interesting of them all and probably quite the most novel to a stranger taking a survey of our city. It is presided over by Miss Rose Thayer, who is assisted by five associate teachers. There are five grades in the school, most of them primary. Only Chinese pupils are in attendance. These number about 150. Superintendent Webster is attracted by the unusual features of the Chinese school to the extent of having formed some speculative ideas upon its effect in local education. He thinks that the ladies of the school are doing great work. He does not know in what degree to compare their pupils with the white pupils whom the other teachers of the city are given charge of, for, as he says, there are many circumstances which make the instructing of Chinese children a very different matter from that of teaching the white idea how to shoot.

Wild Excitement on a Carrette.
People who imagine that the carrette is a sedate and quiet vehicle, fit only for old women and elderly men who wish to avoid excitement, are cherishing a delusion. As a typical carrette experience a trip from the river to Madison street, recently, may be cited. Directly in front of Central Music hall the carrette, which was on the wrong side of the street, collided with a heavy truck loaded with coops containing live chickens. The truck driver expostulated with the carrette driver, and ordered him to take the other side of the street at once. The latter declined. Hot words followed, and a moment later a challenge to a duel was given and accepted. Both men drew their whips and stood up on their seats. The lashes flew, and the horses, thinking the blows intended for them, started up and pulled the vehicles apart. The carrette turned out so quickly that a beer wagon almost took its wheel off. A moment later, while the passengers were recovering from the excitement, a cable train swept round the corner of Madison street and was stopped within three inches of the venerable equines attached to the carrette, while the passengers scrambled out in confusion and alarm.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

THERE IS NO GRETNA GREEN.

Place Where Romantic Marriages Take Place Has No Existence.
From the Genealogical Magazine: The novelists have woven a romance about Gretna Green and its village blacksmith which will last for all time and which for all time will supply a denouement to the wares of successive professional story tellers. The sordid facts of Gretna Green marriages and the still more sordid details of the Gretna Green registers are widely different from the picturesque romance which we associate with the days of postboys and the mad racing and chasing through Carlisle. The history of Gretna Green and its marriages rests upon the abominable marriage laws of Scotland. We call them abominable, for they are the curse of the Scottish genealogy. The marriage laws in Scotland were and are (for they remain unaltered) atrociously simple, and therein lay the temptation and attraction of Gretna Green. Probably the novel-reading public will be shocked to hear that there is no such definite place as Gretna Green; the name applies to a district comprising some number of villages or hamlets some miles apart. All that was necessary was to get over the border into Scotland and there make the necessary "contract before witnesses." The blacksmith's shop on the high road north from Carlisle was the most easily accessible and was probably the best known, but there were some houses just over the border which kept witnesses at hand and retained a register of the contracts entered into. The registers were a secondary matter and the fees demanded were frequently large and, where secrecy was an object, extortionate. Those Gretna Green marriages still occasionally take place, though now only between residents in the neighborhood, but as similar ceremonies take place all over Scotland there is nothing especially distinctive about the contracts made at these Gretna Green marrying-shops. But unless an actual and proper ceremony takes place we believe these Scottish marriages are not valid upon persons where both are of English domicile, though to those intending to elope we can offer the consolation of the fact that the preliminary residence and advertisement necessary in England are not compulsory in Scotland, and a marriage in a Scottish church is binding. So a couple of return tickets to Scotland may still carry matrimonial advantages. The British law attaches great weight to domicile and, provided domicile be established, a marriage legal under the laws of the place of domicile is held to be valid in England.

HERO TO BE HONORED.

The city of Mobile, Ala., is to do honor to the memory of Rear Admiral Raphael Semmes of the confederate navy, one of the greatest sea captains of the rebellion. Semmes was born in Maryland, the state of Rear Admiral Schley, and was appointed a midshipman in the navy of President John Quincy Adams. He served with credit during the Mexican war, and when the rebellion broke out offered his services to Jefferson Davis. His most noted engagement during the rebellion was as commander of the famous Alabama during its engagement with the Kearsarge off Cherbourg, France. The Mobile monument will be of heroic size, the figure of Semmes being eight feet



NEW STATUE OF REAR ADMIRAL SEMMES.

six inches in height. It was cast in bronze at Newark, N. J., recently.

Famous Medium Is Dead.

New York Journal: Lottie Fowler, the medium, famous once as a soothsayer of disaster, died in the Manhattan State Hospital for the Insane. Twenty-five years ago all Europe was talking about her. She amazed the Old World with her prophecies. In England she predicted that the Prince of Wales would meet with an accident while out driving and that the coachman would be killed. It came true. During a visit to St. Petersburg in 1880 she predicted the assassination of Alexander II. The crime was committed six days later. Suspected of being in league with the Nihilists, the American medium was escorted to the border and forbidden to return to Russia. In 1870, while in Bridgeport, Conn., she predicted an explosion in the factory of the Union Metallic Cartridge Company. An explosion did occur a week later, and the supervising chemist lost his life. She was arrested, and a section of the public said she should be burned as a witch. That made her fortune.

DISOWNS OUR FLAG.

AND SWEARS BY THE ENSIGN OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Why William Waldorf Astor Had a Bogus Pedigree Manufactured for Himself and Became an Englishman.

William Waldorf Astor claims to trace his lineage back 900 years or more. This wonderful pedigree, which is given herewith, is pronounced fraudulent by no less a person than Mr. Lathrop Whittington, who is an eminent English heraldic authority. Mr. Whittington has gone through the French archives and other original sources of information and found the pedigree to be a collection of nonsense, containing several falsified dates in order to make it seem probable. The alleged Astor ancestors are as follows: Pedro d'Astorg (of Castile)—Followed Raymond, Count of Toulouse, to France after the war in Spain, 1085, against the Moors, who were commanded by Yusuf Tashafin, Moslem king of the Almoravids of Morocco. Received a grant of land from Count Raymond, whom he followed as a crusader to the Holy Land, where he was killed at the taking of Jerusalem, 1100. A Spanish queen granted to one of his ancestors the arms of a falcon argent on a gloved hand in acknowledgment of the capture of her favorite falcon. The recipient adopted as his name the Spanish word Azor (the goshawk).



WILLIAM WALDORF ASTOR.

Pierre d'Astorg—Served under Simon de Montfort, Comte de Toulouse, at the battle of Muret, 1213, in which the King of Aragon was killed. Bernard d'Astorg—A crusader serving under Alphonse, Comte de Toulouse. Guillaume d'Astorg—Present at the Fol et Hommage rendered May, 1221, by Malnfroid de Chateaufort. Pierre d'Astorg—Seigneur de Noailiac, Linausain, in 1268. Adhemar d'Astorg—Served in 1298 in Gascony and Flanders. Bernard d'Astorg—Served against the English, 1339 and 1356. Pierre d'Astorg—Seigneur de Montbartier, Guenne, 1390, 1435. Jean Jacques d'Astorg—Married Anne de Montclair; served against the English in 1440, '42, '50. Jacques d'Astorg—Seigneur de Segreville, married Jeanne de Beaufort. Jean Jacques d'Astorg—Married Jeanne de Verdale. Jacques d'Astorg—Knight of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. Antoine d'Astorg—Baron de Montbartier (Haute Garonne). Served in Italy under Francois Ier. Married Marguerite, daughter of Roger, Baron of Montespau, Dec. 10, 1505. Antoine

CONVERTED BY MACHINERY.



M. O. WAGGONER.

Lawyer M. O. Waggoner of Toledo, agnostic and infidel converted to Christianity by sacred music issuing from a talking machine, and who is going to burn his library in that city, is the recipient of many letters. They come from men in every walk of life. The majority of them are from curious individuals, inquiring if it is true that he has been converted from a scoffer to a believer. Many of them are from infidels, who call him a fool, and one man says he must have been under hypnotic influence. One enterprising book hunter in Cincinnati has written him offering to purchase his library at a good figure. As it has become known that he is to burn his books he has received numerous letters from persons who

d'Astorg—Seigneur de Montbartier and Governor in the Diocese of Toulouse. Married Gabrielle de Golren de Lux in 1553. His will is dated Feb. 27, 1587. The Chateau de Montbartier, Guenne, was destroyed by the Ligue in 1571. Joseph d'Astorg—Marquis de Rouqueline. Married Miremonde de Mun, Nov. 10, 1592. Comte d'Aubarède Digoire, by gift of Raymond de Golrans, his aunt, Dame d'Aubarede. Paul d'Astorg—Seigneur de Aubarede, Governor of Sedan, Marechal des Camps. Married Gabrielle de Mauleona, daughter of Girard de Mauleons, Baron de Barbazon, July 31, 1629. Jacques d'Astorg—Comte d'Aubarde, Baron de Barbazon, Seigneur de Thuy, Mory Gindon and Belmont; married Hilaire de Busca, daughter of Baron de Peyrussé Feb. 2, 1652. Jean Jacques d'Astorg—Born in France, Jan. 28, 1664. Fled to Germany upon the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1665. Married Anne Margarethe Eberhard in 1692. Died in Nusloch, near Heidelberg, Baden, April 2, 1711. Felix Astor—Son of the foregoing, born at Nusloch, 1693. Married Eva Dorathe Freund in 1739. Died at Waldorf, near Heidelberg, Baden, Aug. 10, 1765. Johanne Jacob Astor—Born July 7, 1724. Married Marie Magdelene Vorfelder, July 8, 1766. Died at Waldorf, April 10, 1816. John Jacob Astor—Born at Waldorf, July 17, 1763. Removed to America in 1784. Married Sarah Todd, Sept. 19, 1785. Died in New York, March 29, 1848.

A Curious Assortment.

"I could stock a museum with queer things I have found in our books," said a librarian. "Those articles include all kinds of bills—grocery bills, gas bills and every variety of bill under the sun; hairpins and hair ornaments of every design and material; love letters galore, locks of hair, bits of lace, dress samples and watch chain charms; pen and ink, pencil, crayon and water color sketches; money orders and postage stamps, and I have also a dried human ear, which I found in a book on surgery, borrowed by a medical student probably, as they carry all sorts of uncanny things about with them. Photographs, too, figure largely in my collection. I once found an insurance policy in a book, but it was quickly claimed. The hustling advertiser cannot let even library books alone. Somebody is an agent for a certain patent medicine. He takes out half a dozen books, not to read them but simply to insert a circular."

Crisis in the Cigaret Trade.

In 1889 the total production of cigars in the United States was 2,100,000,000. For the next eight years there was a steady increase in the number produced. In 1897 it reached the astonishing total of 4,063,000,000. Then came the agitation against cigars, and the tax was advanced from 50 cents to \$1.50 a thousand. The effect was that in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1899, only 3,735,000,000 cigars were made. In spite of this fact the exportation of American cigars has steadily increased. In 1889 the total taxes paid on cigars amounted to \$4,203,000, an increase of \$610,000 over the previous year.

1,030,300 Notes an Hour.

The record of the greatest number of notes struck by a musician in twelve hours is said to have been made by Paderewski, who struck 1,030,300 notes.

FIRE THE FIRST GUN

AND A FILIPINO PICKET DROPPED DEAD.

Dramatic Story of the Initial Shot That Brought on the War in the Philippines—William Grayson Believed That He Was Right.

William Grayson, who fired the shot that culminated in the Filipino-American war, strangely enough, joined the Nebraska volunteers because of love of adventure. He has lately been discharged and is now in Nebraska. He says that the Filipinos are being supplied with provisions by the English and not by the Germans. He says of the shot that started the war: "It was just a question of killing that Filipino before he killed me. That is the way I felt when I leveled my gun at him, and those were my feelings when I heard him groan in the dust. "After it was all over I felt 'queer'—nervous and unsteady. The only thing that seemed to steady my nerves that night was to shoot again. "That was the first shot of the war against the insurgents, and my target was the first Filipino ever killed by an American. "When I went on outpost duty that night I was mad enough to fight the old scratch. For days and weeks before the Filipinos had been calling us the worst names men could think of. "Uno Filipino mas bueno cinco Americanos." That was their taunt: 'One rebel can lick five Americans.' They would have spit in our faces if we had waited much longer. "Orville Miller of company D went out with me that night for outpost duty near Santa Mesa. We went heavily armed and kept our eyes open, for we had been warned by our superior officers. The end of our beat was close to a lot of old buildings and bamboo thickets. Whenever we saw a suspicious figure we would get under cover and watch. If any one tried to cross our line he would be halted or shot down. "About 8:30 o'clock I saw three men not more than thirty feet from us lying flat on the ground. They had just discovered us. At that moment I heard a whistle from their direction. It was too dark to see them plainly. The signal was answered from the brush by another low whistle. Then signal lights were seen from Filipino block-houses, and Miller and I knew what was coming. "Halt!" I yelled, as the rebels began to get up, clicking their rifles. "Alto!" (halt) was their reply, and we had been challenged. There was no time to lose, and so I brought my first Filipino down; and I tell you, there was a little feeling of safety and satisfaction when I heard him groan. Then I knew the war was on. "We at once ran back to where four of our men were on guard and lined up for battle. Then we made for the pipe line back toward the camp, and I shall never forget that little trip that night. "It seemed that a thousand men were firing at us on all sides, and it looked as though we would never get under cover from the bullets. My hat was lost somewhere near where I killed my rebel, and I found it there the next morning. "I admit that I was scared when I got back out of reach of that lead. It is a serious thing to fire a shot that starts a war. None of us ever expected to get out of the hole at the pipe line, which made good breastworks, though we were joined by the entire outpost—thirty men—and we all peppered away at the enemy. "Then the action spread from the right to the left, and in fifteen minutes the engagement was general from Calocan to the bay."



WILLIAM GRAYSON.

Sad Ending to Festivities.
The cable announces that young Viscount Castlereagh, eldest son of the Marquis of Londonderry, has suffered concussion of the brain through a fall from his horse and will be confined to his bed for several weeks at least, even if no more serious complications develop. The accident will put a sudden and sad ending to the festivities in honor of the coming of age of the young nobleman. The birthday has been celebrated at Mount Stewart, County Down, one of the seats to which the viscount is heir. One day last week more than 1,000 tenants were feasted on the estate. Viscount Castlereagh, who was educated at Sandhurst, the English West Point, is a second lieutenant in the Royal Horse Guards, and is heir to 50,000 acres of land.

The Most Wonderful.

From Harper's Round Table: Uncle Reuben had just returned from his Christmas holiday in New York, and his mind was a confusion of cinematographs, self-playing pianos, automobiles, phonographs, etc. When he was asked which had impressed him most he solemnly replied: "By gosh, the horseless piano beats 'em all."

LONDON'S "BIG BEN."

How do People Keep Well Who Have to Hear It.

The striking mechanism of Big Ben is a Broodingagian affair in every way. It is some thirty or forty feet up above the clock, which occupies a room in the center of the tower, says the London News. The striking machinery is driven by weights of about a ton and a half, hanging in a sort of chimney shaft 174 feet deep, and to wind them up from bottom to top—though, of course, they are never allowed to run quite down—is a fair day's work. When fully wound up, Big Ben's tormentor—the massive iron hammer head—will go pounding away for four days without further attention. It needs a pretty ponderous hammer to fetch the full tone out of a bell weighing fifteen or sixteen tons, and the marvelous thing is that this massive mechanism keeps such beautiful time as it does. The clock, with which it is connected by iron rods, gives it its cue with such astonishing precision that the chiming got through their preliminary performance and the great hammer falls on the mighty Ben within one second of Greenwich mean time—at least, that is what it is supposed to do, and the astronomer royal, who keeps a vigilant eye upon the great public timepiece, says that it does not vary a second a week all the year round. The only unsatisfactory thing about the whole performance is the horribly bad "B" that Ben sends forth. The wonder is, not that a sick person finds it torturing to him to have it booming out all night long, but that people who are deemed to be continually hearing it are not made ill by it.

WEDDINGS IN JAPAN.

Old Ceremony in the Land of the Chrysanthemum.

When a young man has fixed his affections upon a maiden of suitable standing he declares his love by fastening a branch of a certain shrub to the house of the damsel's parents. If the branch is neglected the suit is rejected, if it be accepted so is the suitor. At the time of the marriage the bridegroom sends presents to his bride as costly as his means will allow, which she immediately offers to her parents in acknowledgment of their kindness in infancy and of the pains bestowed upon her education. The wedding takes place in the evening. The bride is dressed in a long white silk kimono and white veil and she and her future husband sit facing each other on the floor. Two tables are placed close by; on the one is a kettie with two spouts, a bottle of sake and cups; on the other table a miniature fir tree—signifying the strength of the bridegroom; a plum tree, signifying the beauty of the bride, and, lastly, a stork standing on a tortoise, representing a long life and happiness, desired by them both. At the marriage feast each guest in turn drinks three cups of the sake and the two-spouted kettie, also containing sake, is put to the mouths of the bride and bridegroom alternately by two attendants, signifying that they are to share together joys and sorrows. The bride keeps her veil all her life and after death it is buried with her as her shroud. The chief duty of a Japanese woman all her life is obedience—while unmarried, to her parents; when married, to her husband and his parents; when widowed, to her son.

AN EMINENT GERMAN.

Paul Heyse of Munich will leave a great gap in the social and literary life of the fatherland. In the social life of Munich he has for years been a



PAUL HEYSE.

prominent figure. Almost six feet tall and weighing upward of 200 pounds, he carried himself with the soldierly bearing gained by service in the army. Best known as a novelist, he is also a poet of much merit, as well as a noted wit. As a young man no one would have predicted for him a literary career. He never read books for pleasure and it required coercion on the part of his parents to get him to finish college. Early in life he had an unfortunate love affair and went away to hide his sorrow in Italy. There the literary fever seized him and shortly after he wrote his first book, "In Paradise." His best-known novel is "The Children of the World," which has been translated into almost all the modern languages. The Heyse villa, near Munich, has been for years a center of attraction for famous people.

Their Favorite Colors.

The Sultan of Turkey's favorite color is dark red. The German Emperor likes his uniforms blue and red, and covered with gold embroideries. The King of Greece, who dons his uniforms as seldom as possible, has a marked preference for light colors. The Emperor of Austria has a preference for gray, while the Emperor of Russia likes dark green uniforms, and the King of Italy, excepting the rare occasions when he appears in a general's uniform, generally wears black.